CLAUSEWITZ AND AFRICAN WAR

Politics and strategy in Liberia and Somalia

Isabelle Duyvesteyn

FRANK CASS
LONDON • NEW YORK

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This book shows that wars that have hitherto been mainly interpreted as driven by economic, resource, ethnic or clan interests (such as the conflicts in Liberia and Somalia in the early 1990s) do have an overriding political rationale, which revalidates Carl von Clausewitz's nineteenth-century understanding of war.

Isabelle Duyvesteyn is a lecturer at the Department of History of International Relations, Institute of History, Utrecht University, the Netherlands.

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FOR MY FAMILY

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Wars in the past few years, in particular African wars but also those in the Balkans, have been interpreted as fundamentally new and distinct. Not only the actors involved but also the reasons for which they fight have been described as not having been seen before. It has been suggested that these wars no longer concern the state and that war is no longer an instrument of state policies. We are said to have moved beyond the age of the state, and wars are now concerned with warlords, drugs barons and other enterprising individuals and their personal interests. In particular, ethnic and resource considerations are important factors motivating individuals to take up their weapons. This study aims to contribute to this debate on the nature of war. It will argue that these wars are not so new as they might have appeared at first sight.

What the new interpretations have in common is, first, that they are concerned with civil or internal wars instead of international wars. Most wars today are indeed civil conflicts. Civil conflict is generally considered to be a conflict that finds its origins within a state, as opposed to between states. Since the end of the Second World War, civil conflict has been the dominant form of war. Second, these interpretations share a focus on the explanatory factors that are responsible for the interactions between the warring parties. The already mentioned ethnic and economic factors have been prominent here. Third, the interpretations share the view that the state is no longer useful in the analysis of war. In effect, these interpretations fundamentally question the validity of the ideas of Carl von Clausewitz.

Clausewitz, a nineteenth-century Prussian general, wrote one of the basic texts in the discipline of the study of war and peace. The validity of his writings for understanding the nature of war and warfare has been questioned before, but since the early 1990s his critics seem to have found widespread support for a final dismissal of his ideas. Clausewitz's famous view of war as the continuation of politics with the admixture of other means is no longer the truism it once was. The aim of this study is to demonstrate the continuing validity of the insights he gained almost two

hundred years ago. By applying his concepts to two cases of state collapse, in which they are, according to the critics, most unlikely to hold, namely, Liberia and Somalia, this study aims to show that we might have been too hasty in throwing his ideas overboard.

Since the completion of the manuscript the problems in Liberia have reached another climax. While this study describes the problems that occurred in the first half of the 1990s, in several respects the most recent crisis showed striking analogies to the earlier developments in the conflict. Two rebel movements built up pressure against the capital and President Charles Taylor, forcing him in August 2003 to leave the country. The perspective presented in this study of opposition movements constituted of opponents of the regime mounting an armed challenge seems to have a familiar ring in the light of these recent events.

This book is the end product of a PhD process that started at the Department of War Studies at King's College London. However, my interest in the topic of warfare and intervention pre-dated my arrival in London. Therefore, first and foremost a word of thanks goes to Jan Geert Siccama, my great mentor, for awakening in me a passion for my subject and for being a constant source of advice and wisdom. For the Liberian case study my thinking about the subject greatly benefited from discussions and correspondence with 'Funmi Olonisakin, Stephen Ellis and Klaas van Walraven. For the Somali case study I consulted among others Roland Marchal and Mesfin Gebrekal. The discussion on African war and the more general political science components of the argument were formulated after extensive and fruitful exchanges with members of the departmental staff at King's College, in particular Jan Willem Honig, my supervisor, Christopher Dandeker and Joanna Spear. Also, my examiners, Mats Berdal and John Mackinlay, were instrumental in provoking important developments in my thinking. Jan Angstrom and all the participants of the War Studies Research Colloquium at the Department of War Studies at King's College London deserve a mention for their sometimes painful yet constructive criticism during our long discussions. I also benefited from comments from my present colleagues at the History of International Relations Department at Utrecht University in the Netherlands, in particular Maarten Kuitenbrouwer and Bob de Graaff. None of the individuals, however, bears any responsibility for any shortcomings in the arguments that are presented in these pages.

This study aims to link discussions in the fields of political science, war studies and African studies. Part of my training, however, is as a historian. This study should therefore not be judged as treating exhaustively the debates in the aforementioned fields. Rather, it should be seen as an attempt to bridge the barriers that exist between the fields and to present a

multi-disciplinary perspective on the problems of understanding the essence of war, in particular in Africa.

In this respect I have also benefited from conferences and expert meetings where I had a chance to present my ideas: the British International Studies Association Annual Conference, London School of Economics, London (December 2002); the conference on New Directions in African Leadership, Department of Peace Studies, University of Bradford (June 2000); the International Studies Association Annual Convention, Los Angeles (March 2000); and the MacArthur Conference on Regional Security in a Global Context, Barnet Hill, Surrey, England (April 1998). Greatly appreciated financial assistance for the completion of the thesis was provided by the British Council, the MacArthur Foundation and the Department of War Studies at King's College.

The material for the case studies has been gathered from monographs, with an emphasis, where possible, on locally produced literature, including journalistic accounts of the events, newspaper reports and academic journals. To investigate the particularities of the wars, day-to-day reconstructions have been made of them, as summarised in the case studies. For the reconstructions, the most important sources have been newspaper reports of daily events. Even though news-gathering in ongoing wars is often difficult, a wealth of information can be obtained from newspaper sources. Many papers had journalists operating in conflict zones in Liberia and Somalia. Several of them have published their experiences in books and long articles, such as Mark Huband, Scott Peterson and Keith Richburg, who during the wars wrote respectively for the *Guardian* and the *Financial Times*, the *Daily Telegraph*, and the *Washington Post*. These authors do not claim academic prudence and rigour. However, their material was very helpful for this research in detailing the movements of the armed forces and their operation, even though the frequent descriptions of these wars as chaos and madness were unsatisfactory.

Even though I have travelled in Africa before, I have conducted no field research for this study. Not only was the security situation at the time of writing still very precarious, but extensive sources for investigating this topic were available in Western Europe and North America. In any case, although visiting a place may be potentially fruitful for such an investigation, it does not necessarily guarantee more thorough insights and a better understanding of the conflict concerned. The extensive travels of Robert Kaplan in West Africa, for example, produced his widely discussed ideas, also treated in this study, which, according to many experts, misinterpreted the essence of African war. In order to ensure academic rigour, all the empirical material that is presented in this study has been cross-referenced with other authoritative sources, most importantly with material from regional experts.

My mother, father and sister helped me to realise my dreams; a large part of my gratitude goes to them for their constant support. And last but not least, thanks to my husband, Mark Tawil, for everything in particular. To the four of them this book is dedicated.

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I.G.B.M.D.
Utrecht, November 2003

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
IGNU	Interim Government of National Unity
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
LDF	Lofa Defense Force
LIC	low-intensity conflict
LNTG	Liberian National Transitional Government
LPC	Liberian Peace Council
MOD	Marehan–Ogadeni–Dolbahante
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SNA	Somali National Alliance
SNF	Somali National Front
SNM	Somali National Movement
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement
SSA	Somali Salvation Alliance
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement
UN	United Nations
UNITAF	United Task Force
UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNOSOM I	United Nations Operation in Somalia I
UNOSOM II	United Nations Operation in Somalia II
USC	United Somali Congress

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CLAUSEWITZ, THE NATURE OF WAR AND AFRICAN WARFARE

War

Understanding the nature of war was the main ambition of Carl von Clausewitz when he wrote his magnum opus, *Vom Kriege*.[1] Clausewitz developed his ideas on the basis of his first-hand experiences during the Napoleonic wars. In particular, the defeat of his native Prussia at the hands of the French army proved to be a catalyst for him to put his ideas to paper. Clausewitz started by analysing war as a phenomenon that tends towards extremes. Left to its own devices, war tends to become limitless. Clausewitz saw the Napoleonic wars as coming closest to limitless war. This he called absolute or ideal war. In practice, war is always tempered by several factors, the most important of which he identified as politics. Therefore, he postulated famously that war was the continuation of politics with the admixture of other means.[2]

War, furthermore, was made up of three elements: the government, the army and the people. War, according to Clausewitz, was a political instrument at the disposal of governments. The army could be used for the protection of the interests of government and people. This idea of warfare is also called trinitarian because it consists of three essential elements.[3] First, the government has ultimate authority over military force. Second, military power is used and exercised by an army, which again is under control of the government. In this way military force is an instrument of politics. Third, the government uses the army with the aid of the people; people fight in the army's ranks on behalf of the state. This trinity forms the essence of war, according to Clausewitz.

Clausewitz's attempt to dissect the nature of war and study the phenomenon objectively has influenced many generations of military thinkers since the nineteenth century. His interpretation of war has formed an important part of almost any theoretical debate about the nature of war.[4] His identification of politics as the main operative factor in war has long been seen as the closest thing the field of strategic studies has had to a 'law'. Clausewitz influenced the thinking of politicians and military

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commanders alike: 'Clausewitz stands at the beginning of the nonprescriptive, nonjudgemental study of war as a total phenomenon, and *On War* [Vom Kriege] is still the most important work in this tradition'.[5] However, Clausewitz and his interpretation of war are now said to have lost their relevance. This is not the first time that Clausewitz has been declared obsolete.[6] For example, during the nuclear war debate in the 1960s, the threat of total nuclear annihilation precluded any rational approach to war and therefore, according to the specialists, had made Clausewitz irrelevant.[7]

Clausewitz himself seems to have been in two minds about whether his theories were supposed to be applicable to all wars at all times. Most of his examples in *Vom Kriege* are based on the Napoleonic wars. According to Beatrice Heuser, the young and idealistic Clausewitz, when he had just started putting his thoughts to paper, did aim to write a universal theory. Clausewitz the older and more realistic writer revising his extensive manuscript, however, did not clearly restate this claim.[8]

This introductory chapter will first treat in more detail the non-trinitarian interpretation of war. Second, shortcomings in this argument will be pointed out. There then follows an outline of an interpretation of why Clausewitz continues to be relevant for understanding the nature of war, which forms the main argument of this study.

Non-trinitarian war

Several thought-provoking studies have appeared since the early 1990s which question Clausewitz's interpretation of the nature of war.[9] One of the main observations has been that the state and its adjunct the army have been creations of modern times.[10] In the pre-modern age, a knight and his followers, rather than the state, conducted warfare. Just as the age of the knightly wars came to an end, so too we are now witnessing the end of the age of the state.[11] In order to conduct war, entities other than the state have now taken centre stage. Warlords, bandits, drugs barons and other enterprising individuals are seen as the main actors in warfare today.[12]

When the state is no longer an actor, it is argued, war becomes divorced from politics. No longer are political interests dominant among the reasons for which people fight. Rather, religion, existence and personal wealth are among the reasons ascribed to the actors fighting in war. It has also been argued that war is not necessarily a means to an end. War purely for the sake of war is likely to occur.[13] Several interpretations have been put forward. First, wars have been described as concerned with questions of identity such as ethnicity, community and religion.[14] Second, war as divorced from the state has been interpreted as being dominated by resource and economic considerations.[15] These suggestions are very com-

pelling because they touch at the heart of the basic values and driving forces of human beings.[16]

Ethnicity has a very broad definition: culture, religion, race, language, tradition, tribe, heritage, history and myth are all used to define and delimit it. Ethnicity and ethnic identity have been linked to tensions that can erupt in war. Whether ethnicity is a given and set element or a social construct is a topic for debate.[17] Ethnicity can be seen as an inherently conflict-promoting or -producing element.[18] It can also be interpreted in an instrumental way with emphasis on the role of the leadership and elite, who use ethnicity to their advantage. Social networks and social interaction, which are outside individual control, have also been put forward as the link between ethnicity and conflict.[19]

An ethnic security dilemma can arise. While the original security dilemma in international relations theory has been formulated with regard to the international system of states, ethnic groups can experience the same dilemma.[20] A security dilemma can arise when one state feels insecure and decides to arm. Other states witnessing the arming can feel their security threatened and can decide to arm too. This has the effect of decreasing even further the security of the state that started out arming. For ethnic groups, when a decline in ethnic security occurs, the ethnic group can feel a need to arm.[21] One ethnic group arming can prompt the same reaction from other ethnic groups. Arming to acquire security could avoid costs in the future of fighting a war against a stronger opponent. The effect is an overall decrease in security, a decrease that can lead to the outbreak of war.

Not only is ethnic rivalry a force that can cause wars to break out, it can also compound the fighting and polarise the parties. As a permanent or given element it will play a role throughout the war. As an instrument, it can be manipulated by leaders, in order to create a following. Ethnic rivalry can be a reason for both leaders and individuals to continue fighting.[22] Ethnic interests can become more important during the course of war, when other ethnic groups prove stronger or when other categories for common identity are absent.

Religious factors have also been identified as important in the nature of wars. Ethnic and religious identities are often difficult to distinguish because ethnic identity can be (partly) based on religious distinction.[23] However, religion as a separate factor in war warrants attention, not least because the spread of Islam, in particular, has been identified as contributing to armed conflict.[24] Religious conflict is likely to occur in times of crisis and uncertainty.[25] Religious identity and religion can be an inherently conflict-promoting factor, an instrument in the hands of leaders, or it can be a product of social construction.[26] Apart from considerations of ethnic and religious identity, economic and resource explanations have also been found important.[27]

Armed conflict can break out when a chance for financial benefit is recognised. Furthermore, conflict, after it has broken out, might be driven directly by the financial interests that develop in a war economy. These interests might become so important that those involved will do anything to keep the war machine going. Pillaging, blackmailing practices, trading stolen goods, forcing labour, extracting mineral resources and stealing humanitarian aid – all these, among others, are ways to enrichment.[28] These economic interests develop under the circumstances of war. Once interests in the maintenance of this informal economy become vested, the formal economy can be replaced. Wars, according to this interpretation, are actually economic undertakings. There are economic motivations to start war and economic incentives to continue war.[29]

War becomes both a means and an end for economic advantage. Warfare is an economic instrument for gain and, at the same time, a condition in which new economic interests are established. To paraphrase Clausewitz, war is here the continuation of economics with the admixture of other means. Important roles in this explanation are reserved for international business, multinationals and entrepreneurs operating internationally.[30] These ideas of ethnic and resource factors defining the nature of war put a different perspective on Clausewitz's idea that war is in the hands of political actors and is used as an instrument to further political aims.

Together with the state as an actor and political interests, another of Clausewitz's elements, the army as an instrument of the state, is said to have lost importance in these non-trinitarian explanations. More important in the understanding of today's wars are private military forces or military factions. The way the military instrument is used has also changed. Armed force is no longer seen as a means to an end. Force can be used for its own sake. The use of weaponry is not geared towards the defeat of an enemy and no longer shows a centre of gravity. However, when military power is used to achieve an end, this end is no longer political but is described in ethnic, religious and resource terms, as outlined above.

When the military instrument is used, the type of war that ensues has been described as 'low-intensity conflict' (LIC) or guerrilla war.[31] These wars are not literally low in intensity but mostly involve developing states, irregular armies and indirect fighting techniques. It has been argued that the concept of strategy is not universally valid but can be linked to distinct historical periods. Strategy defined as '[t]he art of "using battles in order to achieve the objectives of war" presumes that the two sides have considerable armed forces and that those forces are distinguishable from each other, separated by geography, and at least potentially mobile'.[32] This is no longer the case, according to these interpretations. War is fought on many different levels and at many different points characterised by an irregular nature.

People, the last of Clausewitz's elements, can no longer be counted on

to fight a war on behalf of a government. When the state is not the most important actor and force is not used towards political ends, the people fighting will have to be recruited along different lines. Suggestions have been made that people are mostly interested in fighting in armed factions in order to attain ethnic safeguards, personal wealth and glory. Equally important is the observation that there is no organisation present that clearly binds these people together. Individuals operate alone or in very small groups. War has become a conflict of all against all, resulting in anarchy and chaos.

These interpretations present a picture of war in which the concept of trinitarian war no longer applies. To understand war, other entities, different reasons and distinct ways of conducting war have to be taken into account. Despite these thought-provoking suggestions, there are, however, also indications that the Clausewitzean concepts continue to be relevant to understand war.

Trinitarian war

This study will argue that despite the contributions on the changing nature of war, a trinitarian perspective is still applicable.[33] Several points indicate that this is the case. The make-up of actors that are taking part in armed conflict in the developing world have characteristics similar to those of state actors:

> The Clausewitzean idea of all military effort as being driven by an interaction between the trinity of government, military and people may have been based on the idea of the state, but it is easily adaptable to forms of warring social organizations that do not form states.[34]

It might very well be the case that these social organisations or actors are themselves political actors. They could exhibit the trinity of a political leadership, a following and a military potential. It thus needs to be investigated whether these non-state social organisations involved in war are in fact political actors and whether they command military force with the support of a substantial number of people.

Despite the valuable contributions of war for its own sake or war to keep a system of profit going, social organisations involved in armed conflict have fought throughout the ages for political interests. Even before the birth of the state, social organisations would take up arms to defend what was important to them. Pre-state organisations in every part of the world used military force as an instrument with which to fight for political interests.[35] It thus seems very possible that actors can fight for their political interests without a state being present. In the cases of state collapse,

e.g. the problems in Somalia, it might thus very well be the case that political interests play a role in the armed conflict.

Concerning the army: could it not be true that the picture these wars present to the outside world causes them to be interpreted as low-intensity conflict, insurgency or chaos because other ways of categorising them are inadequate, rather than because they are actually fought in ways that correspond to the ideas of important insurgency theorists?[36] The fact that these wars take place in the developing world deserves more attention in this regard. We may note that

> Where resources are available, as in Ethiopia and Angola, [war] can turn into full-scale conventional warfare, including air combat. Where the fighting factions cannot afford sophisticated weaponry, as in Mozambique or Sierra Leone, violence easily degenerates into brutalizing terror, plumbing the depths of depravity.[37]

When resources to fight war are limited or scarce, this might very well be the form that wars take. The common occurrence of cruelty and looting might signify that these are expressions of violence in cases where resources to conduct war are lacking.[38] It does not discredit war as an instrument, let alone war as a political instrument. When looked at from a historical perspective, for example, the operation of armies in early modern Europe exhibited a similar picture of unruliness and living off the land. In the end, however, the armies were a military instrument and operated in order to further interests of those paying or commanding them. It should be investigated whether these biases towards the description of war, as conventional and relatively 'clean', obscure the interpretation of wars as instruments through which to further aims, specifically political aims.

All these indications that the concept of trinitarian war is still valuable in explaining war are limited by the fact that they have been based on general observations and fall short of systematic and rigorous empirical investigation. With the aid of empirical evidence, this present study aims to shed a different light on the non-trinitarian explanations of war. The two case-study conflicts that have been selected, the civil wars in Liberia and Somalia, can be seen as the most likely candidates to confirm the propositions of non-trinitarian war. They are important examples of wars in which the state has collapsed. The state is no longer an actor, and a divorce between the state, political interests and war is most likely to occur. Interests other than political were at stake, with powerful individuals, resources, ethnic groups and clans being prominent. The ways in which the actors operated were generally characterised by plunder, looting and starvation, which seem far removed from anything resembling the organised use of the military instrument for political interests.

Three main elements can be identified that require further investigation. The debate about trinitarian and non-trinitarian war has drawn attention to the actors, their interests and the instruments they use.[39] Are these actors political actors, or social entities created around another common theme, or do they completely lack organisation? Can the interests these actors fight for be termed political, or are they ethnic, economic or something very different? Is military force used as an instrument or employed for its own sake? These are the main questions this book will address. It will demonstrate that even though entities other than the state are involved in warfare, these are political actors. These political actors fight with the aid of armed force and people. This is closely linked to the interests for which these actors fight. Arguments will be put forward to demonstrate that actors strive to realise political aims, even when the formal political structures of the state have collapsed. This study will, furthermore, argue that, linked to the political aims of the warring parties, they use armed force as a political instrument.

African war

Together with the wars in the Balkans, African armed conflicts have provided the main inspiration for the works on new wars. Ethnicity and tribalism are terms that have often been used to explain the occurrences, as have the labels barbarity, chaos and anarchy. In a quantitative perspective, Africa, together with Asia, is the region in the world which has been most war-prone.[40] Particularly in Africa, war has been a constant element since the Second World War. The African conflict experience is marked by civil or internal war.[41] Most of these wars have a tendency to spill over into neighbouring states. This phenomenon leads to what is called transnational war or regional conflict complexes.[42] There is reason to believe that these trends of endemic war and the spill-over of internal warfare will continue for some time into the future.[43]

Many African military forces involved in or responsible for these armed conflicts had received military training and supplies during the course of the Cold War from one or sometimes both of the superpower rivals. Liberia had received substantial US military aid. Some US military installations were even housed in the country. Somalia was courted by both the Soviet Union and the United States. Both saw a strategic interest in the country in view of its geographical location *vis-à-vis* the Middle East and Asia. Both provided the Somali armed forces at one time or other with material, to such an extent that the Somali armed forces were among the largest on the African continent.

The armed forces have often played important roles in African states, not only in their traditional domain of protecting the national territory but also as a force in politics.[44] The weak and contentious structures that many

African states were left with upon independence could be and were easily reinforced with military might.[45] Many African states, including Liberia and Somalia, witnessed a change of regime through a military coup. These African military regimes, such as those in existence in Liberia and Somalia on the eve of the outbreak of the wars, but also regimes based on other ruling principles, such as a dominant party or ideology, were guided and characterised by personal rule.

Personalised rule is based on and supported by a system of patron and client relationships. This patron–client system can be seen as an extension of a patriarchical order of family relations with the oldest male at its head. The patriarchical order in a state is extended beyond bonds of kinship: 'The African state is an organisation growing out of the family'.[46] Personalised rule with the aid of a patron–client network is also called patrimonial rule or patrimonialism.[47] A clientelistic network can exist through the use of several structures in society – for example, a bureaucracy, ethnic or clan ties, or local chiefs and strongmen.[48] The patron–client relationship is based on exchange.[49] The patron provides his client with favours in return for loyalty, and the client in turn becomes a patron to others, thereby establishing a hierarchical order of society. This system can be seen as a form of accountability.[50] As long as favours flow down and up the network, the system will be maintained.[51] The end of the Cold War has had a great deal of impact on Africa. Among other effects, the reduction in the amount of foreign sponsorship has contributed to a crisis in the patrimonial state. The withdrawal of financial support for one-time allies has precipitated or contributed to the downfall of several regimes, including those in Liberia and Somalia.

The way politics is perceived and experienced is not necessarily the same in Africa as in other parts of the world. The characteristics of the African political system will be further elaborated in the rest of this book. Note that politics does not necessarily mean democratic state politics. Politics can involve a dominant role for one individual, a dictatorship and patrimonialism. These are facets of political life in many African countries, but although they are sometimes unattractive to Western audiences, they do not invalidate participation in politics and political processes. Political exchanges take place in other ways, and politics is very much alive, to such an extent that, as this study will contend, people are willing to risk their lives on its behalf. This African practice of politics does not preclude war from being seen as a continuation of politics with the admixture of other means.

In the remainder of this chapter the research set-up will be presented in the form of hypotheses that in the rest of the book will be tested against empirical material from the two case studies. First, the hypotheses will be formulated and the research methods presented. Second, the reasons why the case studies were chosen will be described. The chapter will conclude with an outline of the design of the rest of the study.

Hypotheses and cases

The actors

It has been argued earlier in the chapter that entities other than the state are the social organisations scholars should focus on in their investigation into war. However, the criticism levelled against this argument has focused on similarities between the social organisations participating in war and political actors such as the state. Framed in the form of a testable hypothesis, what needs to be proved is that:

1   Actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed are political actors.

This hypothesis will hold when the actor involved in warfare can be shown to be a political actor. A clear definition of politics is crucial.[52] Two requirements of this definition stand out. First, politics will have to be defined as divorced from the state. As noted in the suggestions of continued applicability of trinitarian war concepts, political interests can be present without the existence of a state. This is, however, contrary to most definitions of politics, which for the most part are formulated with regard to the state. Second, politics will also have to be defined as distinct from economics in order to do justice to the resource explanations. This requirement excludes another large body of definitions of politics, i.e. the so-called distributive tradition. In many instances, politics has been defined as the authoritative allocation of values.[53] Among these values are power, justice but also wealth. A distinction between these values is not made in the operation or process of politics in this set of definitions.

A definition that meets the requirements both of a non-state and of a non-economic conception of politics is one formulated by Robert Dahl. In his book *Modern Political Analysis* he defined politics in the framework of a political system as 'any persistent pattern of human relationships that involves, to a significant extent, power, rule, or authority'.[54] Without a further explanation of power, rule and authority, this definition remains too general. Power is most often defined as the capability to influence the behaviour of others in accordance with one's own goals.[55] Actor A has power over actor B when A can make B do something it would not otherwise have done. This can be achieved by using either sticks or carrots: actor B can be encouraged to pursue a particular course of action because it likes the expected consequences, or fears the consequences of acting in some other way.

In this conception of power, there will be those that are powerful, such as actor A, and those that lack power or are powerless, such as actor B. This division of power should not be seen as absolute but is more

accurately described as relative. When one actor, for example, could bestow a favour on another actor, such as international recognition, or it possesses a nuclear weapon with which to coerce, its power can be great. This same favour or nuclear weapon can be meaningless in a situation where an actor has already received international recognition or itself has a nuclear arsenal. Several sources of power exist, as already noted in the example.[56] The most prominent source of power in the case of warfare is usually military force.[57]

An actor exercising power will try to cloak it in legitimacy.[58] Legitimacy is what turns power into authority. Legitimacy is crucial in a political system because, as Dahl has argued, authority 'is not only more reliable and durable than naked coercion but also enables a ruler to govern with a minimum of political resources'.[59] It is far more effective to use authority than it is to use force in the exercise of rule. When more legitimacy is assured, less energy has to be expended to justify the exercise of power.

Legitimacy focuses on the willingness of others to comply with the exercise of power of a particular actor. Legitimacy has generally been defined as a belief in legitimacy. In other words, as long as a belief existed in the legitimacy of the exercise of power, legitimacy was said to exist.[60] This does not do justice to the actual operation of the concept.[61] Power is legitimate when it overlaps with existing notions of rules and principles, such as those laid down in law or as part of agreed-upon conventions. Power is legitimate when both the powerful and the powerless are convinced that the exercise of power is rightful and just. They share the belief in legitimacy. Furthermore, legitimacy finds expression in the actions that are undertaken. Agreement on the principles of power and the belief in the justice of power need to find confirmation in the actions of both the powerful and the powerless that they are consenting to the exercise of power. This can take place, for example, in an election process. Casting a vote confirms the legitimacy of the political system.

When any of the elements of legitimacy – i.e. existing rules, beliefs and consent through action – are not adhered to, a crisis of legitimacy can occur. A sudden change in the rules and operating procedures or a lack of cooperation in the actions of the powerful or powerless can bring about a crisis. When, for example, the monarchy as a convention or legal principle for legitimacy is no longer seen as a legitimate way to exercise power, a crisis can arise. When legitimacy decreases, coercion is often an important instrument with which to assure compliance with the exercise of power.

Apart from power and authority, rule, the last element in Dahl's definition, needs to be defined. Rule is the persistent exercise of authority. When power has legitimacy – since it will be less costly in terms of power expenditure, and the actor commanding the power possesses authority – the continuation of this authority is in its interest. When the command over authority continues over a period of time, this will not only increase

its legitimacy but also signify rule. Rule can derive authority from power exercised by the people in a democratic system. An oligarchy or even one individual can also exercise power and authority. This constitutes an autocratic system of rule. This democracy–autocracy division will be called the continuum of rule and will further be elaborated in what follows.[62]

It should be noted that in practice power, legitimacy, authority and rule are very closely connected. They have been separated here only for analytical purposes, and the terms will be further used in subsequent chapters. The definition of politics that will be used can be applied to all social organisations involved in warfare. It can do justice to the claim that actors other than the state are political actors. Thus in order for the hypothesis 'actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed are political actors' to hold, the actor needs to be shown to exercise power through legitimacy and authority, power that shows persistence in a system of rule. Power must be exercised by claims on legitimacy. Persistent authority must be present.

What constitutes politics and a political system has now been outlined. The exercise of political rule needs further description. The continuum of rule has at one end democracy as a form of rule, in which power is exercised by the people. They can vote for their representatives to exercise this power on their behalf, usually for a set period of time. Elections are the main route through which they can signal their choice of representative. In a democratic system, a separation of powers exists. Executive, legislative and judiciary branches ensure the functioning of the state through checks and balances.[63] The legislative branch, usually the parliament, proposes laws, which are put into practice through the executive, the government. This process is checked by both the legislature and the judiciary.

At the other end of the continuum of rule is authoritarian rule. Power is exercised by one individual leader or dictator. As described earlier, this is also called personalised rule, a system prevalent in sub-Saharan Africa.[64] In personalised rule there is no separation of powers. Furthermore, the public and private spheres are not separated. The ruler sees the state as his personal property. The ruler concentrates and embodies all the instruments of power. Political power is personal power and the ruler, by exercising his power, tries to run the affairs of state as a personal business. In this way the personal becomes political. The continuum of rule is not necessarily linked to the state. Autocratic or democratic rule can also be present within social organisations, such as political parties, or within military factions, which will be of primary interest in this study.

In testing the hypothesis it needs to become clear whether the rule of the actor in armed conflict is similar to that of the political actors as just described or whether the social organisation has very different features that cannot be seen as political. If the latter is the case, this will undermine the hypothesis. The mere fact that a social organisation is fighting is not

sufficient to qualify it as a political actor. What needs to be proved is that the actor is in command of military force and has support from the public. How, to follow Clausewitz, does the political actor come to represent the people and command armed force? The actor, in order for the Clausewitzean argument to be valid, has also to be shown to consist of a trinity of political leadership, armed force and people.

Warfare is conducted by human beings, and human beings can be organised.[65] First, they can be organised into a state, with a head of state leading them, as, for instance, put forward by Clausewitz. Second, individuals can be organised in groups or factions with or without a coherent leadership. Third, individuals also have a separate role, as in the case of warlords, as emphasised by the non-trinitarian explanations. The interaction in war can thus take place between states, between a state and a faction, between a state and an individual, between factions, or between factions and individuals, or among individuals themselves. The last case would usually be called not war but a street brawl or fisticuffs. In the practice of war, individuals do not just operate alone to conduct a war, and states are not always present when a war is fought. The unit that will be the main focus here is the group.[66]

Groups involved in war consist of individuals working together. Few theories exist in the social sciences that manage to bring together the individual and the group.[67] One theory that claims to do exactly this, however, is rational choice theory.[68] Human beings have been described in the social sciences as being able to make rational choices between options available to them. When faced with a choice, individuals usually seek the avoidance of costs and the pursuit of utility in their actions. In other words, individuals can be expected to choose a course of action with the best expected outcome. Furthermore, not only do they try to maximise the utility of their actions, but they also try to estimate the likelihood that that outcome will be realised.[69]

Rational choice theory has been subjected to several points of criticism.[70] First, the theory cannot account for emotions that can play a role in the process of taking decisions. This presupposes a contradiction between emotions and rationality. However, emotions and beliefs can be entirely rational if the concern is the expected outcome of actions. Second, rational decisions can be limited by, among other factors, the lack of information and time pressure. This can be very obvious in the conduct of war, where complete information is often impossible and decisions are required in a short period of time. Rational choice is then affected; this is also called 'bounded rationality'.[71] Third, when individuals take decisions they take these within a social structure. Factors such as culture and ideology can lead individuals to take particular decisions that are not necessarily rational according to the above definition. Fourth, apart from psychological and sociological arguments, political science has also found

problems with rational choice decisions. In particular, the case of voting behaviour is problematic. How can voting be rational when the chances of affecting the outcome of the vote as a whole are so small? It can be argued that, as with emotions, voting can make sense when it is rational to the individual.

These points share the overall criticism that rational choice theory disregards the fact that humans possess morality.[72] When deciding on a course of action, an actor takes into consideration existing rules and principles, the possibility of a shared interest and the presence of prior arrangements and given consent. These are also the main ingredients of the concept of legitimacy, as elaborated earlier. The two concepts of rational choice and legitimate power appear to contradict each other. In this study, rational choice will be treated as subject to the exercise of power. In other words, power is the ability to influence the rational choice of others. The domain of choice for an actor is limited by the exercise of power by other actors.

These other actors can be both groups and individuals. In this respect, rational choice theory is valuable because it has been applied both to individual and to group decision-making. The aggregate of individual decisions comes together and this forms the group level. The set of individual decisions is supposed to lead to the optimisation of group actions. However, this forms another set of problems for rational choice theory.[73] The idea of the group as a unitary entity is not always present. This problem is not easily solved. The present study, in order to remedy this shortcoming, will pay special attention to both the role of individuals such as warlords, as already called for in the suggestions about the non-trinitarian explanations for wars made earlier, and the operation of groups in warfare. In particular, how these warring groups are formed, and what the role of individuals within them is, will receive treatment in the case studies and subsequent analysis.

Despite its several shortcomings, rational choice theory remains a valuable analytical tool. In this study the rational choice of an actor is subject to the exercise of power of other actors. Group actions will need further investigation and need to be thought of as the outcome of a decision process involving several individuals. What happens inside a social organisation has to be included. The group will thus form an important part of the investigations of this study. So far, politics has been defined, and the group as a mechanism for creating a following has been described. The last element of Clausewitz's trinity is the military. The group and its leadership have to be shown to command military power.

Military force can be found in the command of recruits and military hardware. Support from the public can be measured by looking at the reception offered to the actor and its exercise of military power. People in this perspective will not only be seen as actors but also be regarded as a

means in war. Clausewitz too regarded people as both actors and instruments. In this study, people will be treated in both respects: as carrying out acts of violence as actors and as instruments following orders and forming part of larger entities.

To summarise, the hypothesis that will be tested has been formulated as follows: 'Actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed are political actors.' What needs to be proved is that the warring actor is concerned with power, rule and authority as defined above. The actor can, for example, be a democratic party operating according to the principles of democracy or it can operate through a system of personalised rule with an important role for a powerful individual. Furthermore, it needs to be shown that the actor consists of a trinity of government, army and people.

The interests

We are said to have entered an age in which warfare is no longer fought for political interests.[74] According to this point of view, Clausewitz's trinity is no longer valid. Armed bands fighting for survival or for individual worth have taken centre stage. War and politics have become divorced. However, it has been argued here that fighting for a political interest was a feature of war even before the advent of the state. Political interests were guiding principles in warfare long before the state became the main organising unit. The hypothesis that requires testing in this respect is the following:

2   Actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed fight for political interests.

This hypothesis will hold when the empirical material shows that even in cases of state collapse, war is an instrument of politics. Politics, again, has been defined as concerned with a 'persistent pattern of human relationships that involves, to a significant extent, power, rule or authority'. Following Clausewitz, war should be shown to be the continuation of politics. In a democratic state, a political interest can be formed by the process of participation in a democratic process. The participants in this process are usually organised around a common political ideology or body of thought. These ideologies can, for example, be democracy or nationalism. This ideology can itself be an important legitimating factor bridging power and authority.[75]

In a non-democratic system, and specifically the patrimonial systems that are important in this study, which focuses on sub-Saharan Africa, political interests are defined differently. Power and authority are in the hands of the personal ruler. Legitimacy is derived from sources other than

ideology – for example, charisma, ethnicity or coercion. An individual is either part of the patrimonial network that supports the rule, or falls outside it. As part of the patrimonial network, he or she has power over clients, just as these clients have power over theirs. Outside the patron–client network there is little claim to power or authority, let alone rule. Opposition represents the only alternative. However, the room for opposition is limited. Since the political domain is defined in personal terms, opposition also comes to be seen in personal terms. When there are no legal channels through which to voice discontent, opposition often ends up expressing itself through military challenges and coup attempts.[76]

Political ideologies and personalised rule are not mutually exclusive. In fact, in the past, personalised rule and political ideology have often overlapped. A leader in a personalised regime can, for example, be a proponent of a socialist ideology. The source for authority remains the same, i.e. in the hands of the ruler. However, the legitimacy is derived (often in part) from espousing a particular ideology. Examples could be the role of communist-inspired parties, such as the MPLA (Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola) in Angola or Frelimo (Frente de Libertação de Moçambique) in Mozambique. However, while ideology was an important factor in the persistence of authority, important roles existed for individual leaders, José Eduardo dos Santos and Samora Machel respectively.

Ideology is often placed on a scale ranging from left- to right-wing bodies of thought.[77] However, it can be defined as

> a systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics or society, or to the conduct of a class or group, and regarded as justifying actions, especially one that is held implicitly or adopted as a whole and maintained regardless of the course of events.[78]

It can thus also be argued that even patrimonialism can be seen as an ideology, when it controls the social actions of individuals. Since this view is not current in political science thinking, this approach will not be adopted here.

In order to understand the political system and political interests in particular, an important distinction can be made between zero-sum and non-zero-sum interests. Zero-sum interests are those where one actor's losses are the other actor's gains. Non-zero-sum interests are those on which compromise is possible. Power is usually non-zero sum because there are many different sources of power. Legitimacy, however, can be zero sum when the rules and principles that are prevalent and on which the actors draw are exclusive. The principle of personalised rule allows only one person to occupy the top position in a patron–client hierarchy, which is the zenith of the political system. Here no compromise is possible. By contrast, the legal conventions of democracy allow for compromise that involves a non-zero-sum political interest. When political parties

engage in a democratic process, their aim is usually the control of the executive to best realise their political ideals. Often this control is not complete, and compromise prevails, i.e. interests are non-zero sum. In the analysis of political interests this is an important distinction that will be used.

To summarise, the hypothesis that will be tested is whether 'actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed fight for their political interests'. It needs to be proved that war is the continuation of politics. In order for the hypothesis to hold, political interests should thus be shown to constitute a link to the continuum of rule. Once this link has been established, it should be shown that warfare is concerned with the continuation of this interest. Warfare can thus focus on the continuation of democratic or autocratic power and authority. Political interests, as already noted in the previous section, can be distinguished from the state, because the continuum of rule is independent of the existence of the state.

The instruments

It has been argued that wars today are no longer a means to an end and that, when fought, they are 'low-intensity conflicts'. Strategy, or the art of achieving the aims of war, has lost importance. War is not used as an instrument. It can be used to show individual worth or prowess, or just fought for its own sake. The fighting itself takes place between irregular groups, which use indirect fighting techniques. The distinction between combatants and non-combatants in these conflicts is blurred. Everybody, including women and children, is involved in the fighting. The indirect fighting techniques relate to a guerrilla-style combat with low-technology weapons. This form of warfare is seen as dominant.

However, the criticism directed towards these ideas focused on a potential bias towards organised war as modern, Western and technologically advanced. It might very well be possible that these unfamiliar features obscure the use of military force as a political instrument and that conventional features are present. The hypothesis that this study proposes to test is the following:

3   Actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed use military force as a political instrument and fight in a conventional manner.

This hypothesis will hold when the political interests for which the actors are fighting and the military centre of gravity overlap. The fighting will show one centre of gravity towards which military action will be directed and which will overlap with the political interests of the actors. Further-

more, it has to become clear that the main characteristics of conventional war, which will be elaborated in what follows, are present. Military force has to be used not merely as an instrument, but as an instrument of political interests, and has to be employed in a conventional manner.

In order for the hypothesis to hold, a military centre of gravity should be visible on the operational level of strategy. The operational level of strategy is where the war plans of the opposing sides meet.[79] This is distinct from the tactical level, which concerns the meeting of men and material. It is, furthermore, distinct from the strategic level at which the political aims of the warring parties are played out. A distinct operational centre of gravity is at the same time an important characteristic of conventional war.[80] In conventional warfare the political and military centres of gravity overlap on the operational level. Unconventional or guerrilla warfare has a clear centre of gravity on the strategic level. However, in this kind of war the link between interests and one operational centre of gravity is less clear. A strategic centre of gravity was present in revolutionary guerrilla war as conceived by Mao Tse-tung.[81] This was the state and society, which had to be destroyed. This aim could be achieved by tactical strikes on railway bridges, power installations and the lives of politicians. In conventional warfare too, a strategic goal exists. This strategic centre of gravity again consists of breaking the will of the enemy. This strategic goal finds expression mostly on the operational level, where the enemy is directly attacked in confrontations with the armed forces of the opposing state or in an offensive against its capital.

A centre of gravity is often seen as the source that gives the opponent its strength or its critical vulnerability. Clausewitz identified the armed forces of the opponent, its state capital, its main allies, its main leader and its public opinion as among the most important centres of gravity for military action.[82] These objects have a direct link to the strength of the opponent, who has to be made to capitulate to the strategic demands of the actor employing direct force against these objects.

Conventional war does not stand out merely because its operational centre of gravity overlaps with the interests of the actor. It further differs from irregular war in that the armed force is used in the open. It is not employed in secret with surprise short, sharp blows; rather, the combatants are visible and confront each other openly. Combatants and non-combatants can be clearly distinguished. Finally, and closely linked to the fact that operations are highly visible, conventional war is distinct from guerrilla war in that the direct confrontations take place with a large number of combatants, instead of a small number of people, or even one individual, carrying out an act of violence. These are the features that have to be shown to be present in order to qualify the two wars under investigation as conventional wars.

Conventional war is divorced from the state in this description because

the centre of gravity, the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, and the number of recruits are not necessarily linked to the existence of the state. A centre of gravity on the operational level could still be the opponent's armed force, the combatants could still be distinguished by uniform or other physical distinction, and the number of armed supporters could be recruited by means other than national conscription, as was done in cases of revolutionary war involving ideological indoctrination.

The emphasis on conventional war is not to suggest that Clausewitz in his writings focused exclusively on this type of war. He did note the importance of guerrilla war, or people's war as he called it, but seemed to consider it complementary.[83] Clausewitz's focus was on the whole phenomenon of war, which included every strategy and technique that aimed at the submission of the opponent.[84] This part of the hypothesis has been included in order to question potential biases towards particular types of war.

To summarise, military force will have to be proved to be a political instrument of political actors involved in warfare in cases of state collapse. A distinct operational centre of gravity is important in this respect. This is a characteristic of conventional war. Other important characteristics are a distinction between combatants and non-combatants in war and the use of a large number of recruits operating openly.

Cases

In order to avoid selection bias, the case studies have to meet several requirements. First, they must be representative of the phenomenon at hand. The two case studies that have been selected for this study have been the war in Liberia from 1989 to 1997 and that in Somalia from 1988 to 1995. In both wars, state breakdown occurred. State breakdown had taken place previously, most notably in Chad (1979–82) and Uganda (1977–86). However, as noted, since the end of the Cold War claims have been made that the nature of war has significantly altered; this warrants the paying of special attention to the armed conflicts in Liberia and Somalia. State breakdown is likely to be repeated should there be, for example, a further decrease of French influence in Africa.[85] This indicates that the phenomenon is not likely to be linked only to a short (historical) period.

The case studies are, furthermore, representative of the phenomenon because in both Liberia and Somalia the state broke down and war, as an instrument of politics, became divorced from the state. The state, using the instrument of war to realise political aims, was no longer present. The case studies are thus most likely, of those that could have been selected, to prove the non-trinitarian arguments and disprove the hypotheses. The two cases are not only the most important examples; they are also significant

examples. The two wars were of substantial duration. Both witnessed significant armed interactions for periods of over seven years.

Second, the cases must be comparable. They must show similarities in order to present enough evidence to test the hypotheses. The elements that make the cases comparable are the following. The two cases are both examples of civil conflict. They both witnessed state breakdown. The actors were similar, non-state social organisations, as were the interests for which they fought and the instruments with which they fought, in fights played out in the environment of a collapsed state.

Third, the two cases must also differ in critical variables so as to highlight the factors that are more general and those that are specific to each particular case. The armed interactions involved differing units or groups. Ethnic entities were prevalent in Liberia, while in Somalia, which is ethnically homogeneous, clans were involved in the armed interaction. Furthermore, the outcomes of the wars were different. In Liberia, the faction initiating war came to power after elections. In Somalia, the fighting diminished but has not been completely terminated. The empirical material to be used to test the hypotheses can therefore be expected to diverge.

Fourth, the cases must also be able to bring to the fore the particularities of the actors, their interests and instruments. These requirements promote the use of a substantial narrative. Furthermore, with these cases justice can be done to the problem of the levels of the individual and the group. Both the wars in Liberia and Somalia were linked to the phenomenon of warlords. Rule by warlords places emphasis on the role of individuals, while warlords can also be expected to rely on groups of fighters to conduct war.

At this point it has to be noted that this study has inherent biases and limitations. The wars to be studied are African, and most of the literature that has been referred to so far is not. The concept of the state, for instance, can be seen as in essence European. There are often fundamental differences in perceiving armed conflict in Africa.[86] Some notable examples that will be addressed in this study are the perception of conflict itself and the alleged practice of cannibalism. Contrary to our Western perception of war as an activity that is preferably avoided, in Somalia war and violence are often seen as positive and productive forces. War provides men with chances to show their manhood, strength and honour, which are highly valued.[87] Regarding cannibalism, some evidence of this practice has been found in the case of Liberia. In Western societies, the eating of human flesh would be viewed with abhorrence, while in Liberia it is not seen through quite the same lens.[88] The reader is asked, while reading the rest of this study, to be aware of the fact that a set of fundamentally Western concepts is being used for the analysis of African conflicts, and that very different perceptions exist towards the phenomena that are being analysed.

As this study will show, politics is not necessarily the same as liberal democracy. When politics is judged by the African practice of political processes, it can be argued, as will be done in the rest of this study, that the warring factions, using existing political traditions, are political actors pursuing political aims with the aid of military force that they managed to bring together and employ. This analysis will revalidate the interpretation of war put forward by Carl von Clausewitz almost two hundred years ago.

The rest of this study is structured as follows. The two case studies on Liberia and Somalia will be presented in Chapters 2 and 3. These two chapters will be chronological narratives of the events in the two wars. The analysis of these events will follow in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, which will address three hypotheses. In Chapter 4 the part that actors play in war will be described. Chapter 5 will present the interests for which they fight, and Chapter 6 will deal with the instruments and their use. The book will conclude with Chapter 7, which discusses politics and strategy in African wars and evaluates the intervention practices by outside forces in these kinds of armed conflicts.

2

CASE STUDY I

Liberia, 1989–97

Liberia: a short overview

Liberia was established in 1847 as a settlement of freed American slaves. It is the oldest state in West Africa. The United States has exercised substantial influence, but Liberia has never been formally colonised. Large parts of the country are made up of thick jungle. Swamps with mangrove trees, low bushes and oil palm trees mark the coastal region, stretching inland for about 40 kilometres. Thereafter the country rises and forms a plateau, making up half of Liberia, broken up by mountain ranges, which contain iron ore and are mostly covered by thick rainforest. A large part of the country is inaccessible to motorised vehicles. Apart from iron ore, rubber and timber are important commodities. The country has a long rainy season lasting from July till December. The border region with Côte d'Ivoire is the agricultural heartland of Liberia, producing cassava, rice, coffee, cocoa and palm oil as main crops.

The population of around 2.5 million is divided into 16 officially recognised ethnic groups[1] living in the 13 counties into which Liberia is divided. The ethnic groups are Bassa, Dei, Gbandi, Gio, Glebo, Gola, Kissi, Kpelle, Krahn, Kuwaa, Loma, Mano, Mandingo, Mende, Vai and the descendants of freed slaves, or 'Americo-Liberians'.[2] None of them has a numerical majority in Liberia. The Mandingo are Muslims, but the majority of the rest of the population are followers of local religions or Christian.[3] Apart from having a distinctive religious affiliation, the Mandingo are also mostly traders, while the rest of the population are involved in agriculture. Mandingos live scattered over the whole of West Africa, in particular Guinea. Significant parts of other ethnic groups live also across the borders from Liberia. Mende people live also in Sierra Leone, and Krahn live also in Côte d'Ivoire. Several languages are spoken in Liberia: English, Mande, Mel or West Atlantic and Kru. Approximately 50 per cent of the population speak Mande and a high percentage of people speak several languages. Liberian identity finds expression mostly in language: 'Liberian English'.[4]

LIBERIA

International boundary
County boundary
National capital
County capital
Town, village
Road
Railroad
Airport

0 20 40 60 80 km
0 10 20 30 40 50 mi

SIERRA LEONE

GUINEA

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

ATLANTIC OCEAN

Monrovia

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Guéckédou
Irié
Nzérékoré
Danané
Toulépleu
Guiglo
Tai
Kola (Kola Town)

Sulima
Bo
Kenema
Bendaja
Kongo
Robertsport
Pendembu
Kailahun
Buedu
Vahun
Kolahun
Mendekoma
Voinjama
Zigida
Yella
Zorzor
Belle Yella
Gelahun
Wiesua
Gbange
Bopolu
Tubmanburg
Klay
Breewersville
Careysburg
Kakata
Harbel
Marshall
Bong Town
Suakoko
Zienzu
Hartford
Trade Town
Edina
Buchanan
Bélefuanai
Gbarnga
Palala
Kpejo
Yela
Zekera
Tapeta
Gboyi
Guata
Ghapo
Gonglee
Timbo
Bokoa
Kopo
River Cess
Sehnkwehn
Greenville
Nana Kru
Sasstown
Grand Cess
Barclayville
Plibo
Harper
Nemeke
Nyaake
Kodeke
Tawake
Fish Town
Tatuke
Tiehnpo
Yakakahn
Pelokehn
Juazohn
Shabli
Duabo
Babu
Towabli (Towai Town)
Poabli
Debli
Tobi
Drubo (Dubwe)
Tchien (Zwedru)
Gali
Ybuke (Kaobli)
Tabou
Saniquéllie
Kahnple
Gahnpa (Ganta)
Sagléipie
Butlo
Kpeaple
Yekepa
Nzérékoré
Guata

Sanniquellie
NIMBA
LOFA
BONG
MARGIBI
BOMI
GRAND CAPE MOUNT
GRAND BASSA
RIVER CESS
SINOE
GRAND GEDEH
RIVER GEE
GRAND KRU
MARYLAND
MONTSERRADO

Mt. Gelema
Mt. Wutivi
Lake Piso
C. Palmas
Cavalla
Sassandra

The map of Liberia has been reprinted with kind permission from the Board of the United Nations Cartographic Section. Liberia no. 3775 Rev. 5.

The local religion in Liberia is marked by a belief in the supernatural.[5] Secretive orders exist: Poro, a sect for men, and Sande, especially for women. They are mainly situated in the western and central parts of Liberia, and are concentrated in the Mel- and Mande-speaking groups. The orders perform religious functions and are part of the daily life of the communities, in the form of rites and initiations.[6] The sects also play a role in the official circles of Liberian society, where professionals feel compelled to consult Poro authorities before making important decisions.[7]

The descendants of American slaves, the Americo-Liberians, established an oligarchy in the nineteenth century, even though they make up less than 2 per cent of the population. They manipulated and exploited the indigenous groups to their own advantage. The country was ruled by the True Whig Party for most of the twentieth century; first by President Tubman from 1941 to 1971, followed by President Tolbert from 1971 to 1980. Thanks to an 'open door' policy, the Liberian economy flourished. The currency was the US dollar. Apart from trading in natural resources, Liberia also received foreign currency from the registration of ships sailing under the Liberian flag. The fruits of the economic prosperity were unevenly distributed among the population, however; ethnicity and class began to overlap, and Americo-Liberians benefited most.[8]

In regional politics, Liberia played a role as a member of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ECOWAS was an economic organisation established in 1975, consisting of 16 member states of the West African sub-region: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. Nine of the states were francophone, five were English speaking, including Liberia, and two had a Portuguese-speaking population. The original aim of ECOWAS was to develop the sub-region of West Africa. According to United Nations statistics, of the ten poorest countries of the world, seven were to be found in West Africa.[9] The interaction between the member states was concerned with economic affairs, such as the breaking down of barriers to trade and the establishment of the convertibility of currencies. The members of ECOWAS concluded a non-aggression treaty in 1978 and three years later they signed a protocol on common defence. ECOWAS was not, however, a very active organisation.[10]

Liberia maintained good relations with the states in the region. In West Africa, Nigeria was often seen as the regional hegemon. Nigeria's gross national product and population were as large as those of all the 15 other ECOWAS members put together. Côte d'Ivoire aimed to counter-balance the dominating influence of Nigeria by attempts to expand the role of the French-speaking states. France assisted it in this endeavour. An example of the difficult relations between Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire was the fact that at the time of the Biafran war of separation from Nigeria in the late

1960s, Côte d'Ivoire had chosen the side of Biafra against the Nigerian government. This had not been appreciated and had not been forgotten.

During the Cold War, Liberia became the largest receiver of US aid in sub-Saharan Africa.[11] In return, it housed the most extensive radio broadcasting installation in Africa for radio broadcasts of the station Voice of America. The Americans also used the main airport in Liberia for military purposes.[12] All diplomatic post to and from diplomatic missions in Africa went through Liberia. Furthermore, a powerful Omega transmitter was stationed in Liberia; this installation was responsible for guiding all US shipping in the Atlantic Ocean.

In 1980, Master Sergeant Samuel Doe, a member of the Krahn ethnic group, helped organise a *coup d'état* to bring to an end the rule of the Americo-Liberian oligarchy. President Tolbert and his son were killed, among many other officials. Tolbert's son was married to a relation of the president of Côte d'Ivoire, Félix Houphouët-Boigny.[13] The Ivorian president therefore took a dislike to Doe. Apart from the fact that there were several French-speaking leaders who strongly disliked Doe, there were no major disputes in which Liberia was involved. Doe's regime established friendly contacts with Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Guinea.

Doe gradually based his rule on his own ethnic group. The Krahn made up approximately 5 per cent of the population and had been regarded as particularly backward.[14] Doe made sure that they were favoured under his increasingly authoritarian regime.[15] Krahn soldiers started to dominate the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL). He acquired support from the Mandingo traders who helped finance his regime. Owing to the increasingly narrow base of his rule, opposition grew. After fraudulent elections in 1985, General Quiwonkpa, Doe's Chief of Staff, initiated a coup attempt that failed. The result was repression in Quiwonkpa's home region of Nimba County. Nimba, the most densely populated county in Liberia, bordered Côte d'Ivoire and was mainly inhabited by Gio and Mano people.[16] A substantial number were killed in retaliation for the coup. Many fled to neighbouring countries.

Among the growing number of exiles was Charles Taylor, an Americo-Liberian. He had served as Under-Secretary for Trade in the Doe government. He had fallen out of grace with Doe, who accused him of corruption. In 1983, Taylor fled to the United States, where he was arrested to be extradited to Liberia.[17] Taylor escaped prison and left the United States. He reappeared in Ghana and led a fleeting existence among dissident groups around West Africa. Building up a network of contacts, he began to plan the overthrow of the Liberian regime. With backing from Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso, and military training from Libya, Taylor managed to organise an armed Liberian dissident organisation.[18] The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) also recruited nationals of other West African states. In return for their service, Taylor promised them support for struggles in their home countries.

This is the background against which the war started in 1989. The aim of this chapter is to present chronologically the most important events and interaction of the armed conflict, paving the way for the analysis in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. After a description of the main protagonists, the war will be divided into three phases, for each of which the interactions will be described. The chapter will conclude with some preliminary observations on the conflict.

The protagonists

The National Patriotic Front of Liberia and Charles Taylor

The men forming the National Patriotic Front (NPFL) had gathered in neighbouring states, and Charles Taylor managed to bring these dissidents of diverse stock together in an invasion force. The NPFL had several US-trained soldiers in its ranks. Among them, Elmer Johnson, who led the operations in the field, had served as a US Marines paramedic in the 1982 Grenada invasion, and Prince Johnson, a Gio, who later was to leave the NPFL, had also trained with the US Marines and had served in the Liberian military. Prince Johnson became the training officer of the NPFL forces. Taylor, who was not a military man, did not train with his troops. He came to lead the initially loosely organised NPFL in an authoritarian manner.[19] The NPFL consisted initially of a small group of men. After the outbreak of the war, they recruited fighters from all Liberian ethnic groups.

The desire to overthrow the unpopular regime of President Doe was the main force binding together the men organised in the NPFL. However, even before this was achieved, splits started to occur in the organisation. Early in 1990, Prince Johnson left to form the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), which will be further discussed later in the chapter. Furthermore, in 1994 the NPFL spokesperson Tom Woewiyu, among others, left to form the NPFL-Central Revolutionary Council. Most of the problems were caused by Taylor's presidential ambitions.

The NPFL rebels received training in war-fighting techniques in Libya and Burkina Faso.[20] Financially, the NPFL was supported by Liberian exiles in the United States, who were said to have donated more than US\$1 million.[21] The initial rebel force, invading Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire on Christmas Eve 1989, called themselves the Black Scorpions. This force grew to a large armed group advancing on the Liberian capital, Monrovia. Initially, Charles Taylor was not with his men in the field. He only joined his troops when they had made significant advances towards the capital. The NPFL forces were initially well trained and disciplined.[22] The NPFL recruited not only mercenaries, but also children and women to fight in its ranks. Conflicts within rebel groups occurred frequently, and combatants

were killed.[23] For example, Taylor executed several soldiers who were alleged to have plotted a coup against him in November 1991.

The NPFL fighters, as were all other fighters in the Liberian war, were influenced by local beliefs and superstition. Witch doctors were hired to make fighters resistant to bullets and knives, and the leadership of the groups participated in these rituals. Cruelty and cannibalism were not uncommon among the fighters.[24] Furthermore, the victims' bodies were mutilated; often the genitalia were cut off, then were eaten or displayed.

The Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia and Prince Yormi Johnson

Prince Johnson left Taylor's organisation after disagreements over accusations that Taylor had shot his own NPFL fighters and over Taylor's presidential ambitions, taking the best-trained NPFL men with him to form the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL).[25] However, Prince Johnson too had a penchant for violence against his own men. Unlike Taylor, Johnson could be found among his men on the battlefield. His forces also recruited child soldiers and women to fight. Johnson set his hopes on intervention by the ECOWAS states to bring an end to the war, and largely cooperated with the ECOWAS forces after they arrived in Liberia in August 1990. After the first of a series of ceasefires, the INPFL gradually decreased in importance and Johnson went into exile in Nigeria.

The United Liberation Movement

While ECOWAS was present on Liberian territory and was facing armed opposition from the NPFL, President Doe was abducted and killed by INPFL men in September 1990. Doe's supporters, most prominently the elite soldiers of the former presidential guard, and former members of the special and secret service, founded the United Liberation Movement (ULIMO) in Sierra Leone in May 1991. The ULIMO forces numbered several thousand men.

ULIMO had as its stated goal the liberation of Liberian territory from Taylor's hold.[26] It was supported in this effort by Sierra Leone and Guinea. Krahn and Mandingo expatriates, the two ethnic groups with dominant positions during Doe's reign, supported ULIMO financially. Splits also occurred within ULIMO. Most of the Mandingo members rallied behind their leader, Alhaji Kromah, when Krahn members led by Roosevelt Johnson took over ULIMO headquarters in May 1994. Within ULIMO, murders also occurred between the two rival parts of the movement.[27]

Other factions that played a part in the action and reaction process were the Lofa Defense Force (LDF) and the Liberian Peace Council

(LPC). They were both established in 1993, mainly to continue the war by proxy. The emphasis in this study will lie on the actions and reactions between Taylor, Prince Johnson, Roosevelt Johnson and Alhaji Kromah and their factions, because these groups were responsible for the main interaction of the war.[28]

For the purposes of this study, the war in Liberia will be divided into three phases. The first phase started with the rebel invasion on 24 December 1989 and lasted until 29 November 1990, when Taylor signed a ceasefire in Bamako, Mali. The second phase started on 15 October 1992 with a new attack on Monrovia by Taylor and his men, and ended on 31 July 1993 with a ceasefire in Cotonou, Benin. The war did not end at this point but was fought out with a different constellation of forces. The post-July 1993 period formed phase 3, which ended with elections in 1997.

Phase 1, 24 December 1989–29 November 1990

The NPFL invaded Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire. The first settlement that was attacked, on Christmas Eve 1989, was the village of Butuo in Nimba County. The raid was mounted by a small group of men. The attackers managed to confiscate some weapons and withdrew to the jungle. The weapons used by the invading men were described as primitive: pistols, machetes, knives and sticks.[29] This type of raid set the standard for the first few weeks of the rebel incursion. In the border towns the rebels targeted both civilian and army officials. After the raids they returned to the forest, which provided cover for them to plan their next attack.[30]

As already noted, Nimba County had been a focus of opposition to the government, having produced one popular leader in Thomas Quiwonkpa. When the NPFL fighters acquired support for their cause from Côte d'Ivoire, the Liberian border region of Nimba County was an easy choice as a starting point for an invasion. The support the rebel invaders hoped to find among the population, which had suffered after the failed Quiwonkpa coup, made this part of Liberia attractive for an uprising against Doe.

President Doe, who was taken by surprise when the rebels invaded, sent his army to Nimba County to quell the rebellion. At first the invasion of Taylor and his troops was not considered a serious political threat. Two US army advisers assisted the government soldiers, but they were quickly withdrawn when it became clear that the Liberian army was committing atrocities in Nimba. The AFL exacted collective punishments on the population out of frustration at not being able to get at the highly mobile rebels. The soldiers moved from village to village, shooting at the inhabitants indiscriminately, looting the properties and burning huts and houses, carrying out scorched earth policies. This uncontrolled behaviour of the Liberian army helped the NPFL get the support it needed to succeed.

From the border with Côte d'Ivoire the rebel troops marched towards

the coast, cutting the country in half. They avoided Grand Gedeh County, a Krahn-dominated area and Doe's power base. The rebels advanced on the road to the coast, and the government ordered the inhabitants of the areas bordering the road to evacuate because it wanted to prevent recruitment for the NPFL. In April 1990, reports appeared that the level of rebel armaments had increased. The rebels showed themselves at this point to be well armed and disciplined.[31] The basic weapons with which the rebels invaded had been replaced by more modern and advanced weaponry. This happened, most likely, through weapon supplies from Libya, although Taylor claimed that the weapons were captured from government arsenals.[32]

The rebel advance formed a chain around the capital. Part of the rebel movement formally occupied Buchanan on the coast and moved from there to Monrovia. The rebels prepared to attack the capital from three sides: from the north, east and west. In the south the capital bordered the Atlantic Ocean.

At the beginning of May 1990, growing divisions within the NPFL became visible.[33] The common aim of overthrowing the president started to lose its binding power for the very different elements within the NPFL. The INPFL started racing the NPFL to the capital. The rebels led by Prince Johnson were moving at night parallel to the NPFL towards Monrovia.

In early July 1990 the NPFL advance halted, just outside Monrovia. Taylor had become increasingly concerned about competition, not only from the INPFL but also from within his own movement. Taylor's fear resulted in the execution of several senior members of the NPFL.[34] There were reports that the death of Elmer Johnson, the NPFL senior strategist who was killed during the advance to Monrovia near Buchanan, was not an accident.[35] Furthermore, the political exiles and West African mercenaries whom Taylor had taken in and who had served, along with others, as his personal bodyguard, became anxious to start using the NPFL as a springboard for armed struggles in their home countries.

The halting of the advance just short of Monrovia could also be explained by diplomatic activity at the beginning of July. US diplomats tried to persuade President Doe to leave the country. Togo, among other countries, had already made it clear that Doe would be welcome.[36] However, the role of the United States in the war was not as prominent as might have been expected in the light of its historical links with Liberia. After all, the founders of the Liberian state were freed American slaves. The United States had provided military aid to the country but this had ended in 1988, most likely contributing to the collapse of the regime.[37] The previous US association with Doe complicated the American role and attitude towards the war. Initially the United States supported Doe, but after the abuses by the AFL the Americans distanced themselves. Despite some

alleged support, assisting Taylor was not an option, because of his links with Libya.[38] The US decision not to intervene in the conflict came as a surprise to Doe. It very likely contributed to his lack of success in crushing the invasion.[39]

In early July a small number of government soldiers were still present in the capital. Monrovia did not have any formal defences and the rebels blocked all the land routes out of the city. The halting of the NPFL's advance had given Prince Johnson the chance to push ahead. A battle in the streets of Monrovia started. At this time, Johnson and his men were confronting both the AFL and the NPFL. When the rebels were attacking the capital, the AFL soldiers complained about a shortage of weapons and ammunition.[40] Johnson's men tried to give the NPFL rebels a stab in the back, forcing them to withdraw men from the front to protect their forces in the rear.[41]

On 1 August 1990 the government troops mounted a counter-attack and managed to reopen the road to Sierra Leone and re-establish control over the international airport. The success of the government counter-offensive was short-lived. The rebels pushed the government army further and further towards the sea. The rebel faction that benefited most was Johnson's INPFL. The NPFL controlled only the eastern outskirts of Monrovia, while Prince Johnson established control over the north and the west of the city. The control of two-thirds of the country by the NPFL became overshadowed by the superior military skill displayed by Prince Johnson and his men in the capital. All eyes were focused on the capture of the presidential mansion. Doe, who still resided there, was in control of less than a square mile of Liberia.

ECOWAS decided to send a peace force to Liberia, the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). The decision to intervene in Liberia was not taken unanimously, and nor had the highest-level committee of ECOWAS approved Operation Liberty when the troops landed in Monrovia.[42] A Mediation Committee comprising Ghana, Nigeria, Gambia, Guinea and Sierra Leone decided on the ECOMOG operation, with Burkina Faso complaining that it had not been consulted on the matter. On 24 August, only two weeks after the decision was taken to intervene, ECOMOG was ready to land its intervention forces in Monrovia from the sea. Even before the decision was taken, Nigerian troops were already making their way by sea to Liberia.[43] The ECOMOG soldiers came from English-speaking states, with the exception of Guinea, which was suffering most from the waves of refugees. Within ECOWAS there was a disagreement between the French- and English-speaking states. Within the French-speaking group, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire continued to support Taylor, whereas Guinea and Senegal were pro-ECOMOG.[44] Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire mainly distrusted the intentions of Nigeria.

The ECOMOG operation consisted initially of 3,500 soldiers from Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone,[45] with Nigeria providing the majority of the troops and material. The intervention was officially mounted to monitor a ceasefire between the warring parties, to restore law and order, and to organise democratic elections. However, when the troops arrived in Liberia, on 24 August 1990, there was no ceasefire in place that could be monitored. Behind the intervention lay reasons concerning, in particular for Nigeria, the halting of an increase of French influence in the region. Furthermore, President Ibrahim Babangida of Nigeria, who was a close friend of Samuel Doe, and the Nigerian government felt that the Liberian rebel invasion posed a threat to regional order and stability. Taylor's invasion challenged the West African regimes involved in ECOWAS, which were dictatorial and in most cases military; a supposedly popular rebellion led by a civilian could undermine the established order in the region. Lastly, the West African states also wanted to show that they could solve their own problems.

The solution to Liberia's crisis, according to ECOMOG, was to prevent Taylor from taking power and to disarm his troops. Taylor viewed disarmament as a threat to his claims to leadership. The ECOMOG interference was a threat to his almost unstoppable advance and military success. To counter this threat, Taylor decided to attack and strive to expel the ECOMOG forces from Liberia. Doe was in favour of the intervention, hoping that it would be able to restore his authority and strengthen his position. The INPFL welcomed the force mainly as a way to prevent Taylor from becoming president.

ECOMOG was straight away met with enemy fire. Taylor, opposing the ECOMOG forces, had occupied suburbs around the port area. His forces engaged the ECOMOG soldiers and sent out captured coastguard vessels to confront the ECOMOG force at sea. Despite this opposition, ECOMOG managed, at the beginning of September, to take full control of central Monrovia in a nine-kilometre radius from the port.[46]

On 10 September, Doe visited the ECOMOG headquarters in the port area.[47] Prince Johnson's men showed up at the same time and took him captive. At the INPFL headquarters he was tortured to death, with his treatment being captured on video. Doe's troops continued to put up resistance, facing as they did an uncertain future as members of Doe's Krahn tribe after his death. These soldiers put the capital to flames and attacked United Nations buildings and other foreign missions in Monrovia.

The decreased significance of Doe as a force on the battle map brought the NPFL and INPFL in direct confrontation over the control of the presidential mansion. The capital and its prize symbol, the presidential mansion, remained the focus of attention: 'While of little strategic value, the mansion has become the key prize, a symbol the rival factions believe

will ratify their claims to the presidency'.[48] ECOMOG tried to shift attention away from the mansion by instituting an interim government, the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU), headed by Amos Sawyer, a Liberian intellectual and respected opposition politician. The power and influence of the interim government, however, remained limited.

As soon as the ECOWAS force began landing, it had been compelled to use force because of the NPFL attacks. The armed interaction between ECOMOG and the NPFL continued, with the NPFL shelling the ECOMOG headquarters, and Ghanaian warplanes bombing the NPFL's artillery positions. At the beginning of October, ECOMOG launched a major offensive on the centre of Monrovia to try to establish a buffer zone between the rebels and the remnants of the government troops. ECOMOG set up roadblocks and installed heavy artillery on the rooftops of tall buildings. The ECOMOG forces managed to push Taylor and his men back to the outskirts of the city.

Although Taylor controlled the greater part of the Liberian territory outside the capital, financial pressure was brought to bear on him to sign a ceasefire. In November ECOWAS managed to persuade Taylor's backers, Libya and Burkina Faso, to withdraw support.[49] A ceasefire was agreed on 29 November 1990 in Bamako, Mali.[50]

After the ceasefire, in the part of Liberia occupied by Taylor, also called 'Taylorland', an alternative capital was established at Gbarnga, the third largest city of Liberia. A rudimentary administrative system was set up and trade links and communications between Monrovia and Taylorland were started up. European and US businesspeople operated in Taylorland, trading in iron ore, rubber and wood. Diamonds and gold, which came to Liberia mainly from neighbouring countries, were also traded. It was estimated that this trade brought $8 to 9 million a month into the country, money that was spent on strengthening Taylor's position and the purchase of weapons.[51]

The refugees from the Liberian war, in particular the supporters of Doe, the Krahn and Mandingo, fled to Sierra Leone. The regime in the Sierra Leonean capital, Freetown, supported the formation of a movement to fight against Taylor, the United Liberation Movement, which was officially established on 21 May 1991. ULIMO wanted to remove Taylor and his rebels from Liberia. ULIMO was also supported by Guinea, which had a considerable Mandingo population. Both states had suffered from the large numbers of Liberian refugees crossing the borders. Taylor supported the establishment of a rebel movement in Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), which consisted of Sierra Leonean fighters who had served in the NPFL. The RUF started operations from March 1991.[52] The government army of Sierra Leone subsequently attacked rebel positions within Liberia in 1991 because of rebel incursions into the diamond-rich border area. ULIMO used one of the Sierra Leonean offensives to attack

and penetrate Taylorland. Operating from bases inside Sierra Leone, it used the Sierra Leonean counter-measures as a springboard for its own operations.[53] ULIMO tried to move towards Monrovia. At different points during the war, ULIMO conquered up to a third of NPFL territory. At the beginning of 1992 a new offensive brought the ULIMO fighters to within 45 kilometres of the capital.[54] During the course of 1992, ULIMO increased the military pressure on Taylor.

Phase 2, 15 October 1992–31 July 1993

After the build-up of military pressure by ULIMO over the preceding months, the NPFL launched a large-scale attack, Operation Octopus, on the centre of Monrovia. This attack, on 15 October 1992, was intended to be the decisive battle in the struggle to conquer Monrovia.[55] The attack came as a complete surprise to ECOMOG.[56] It was a conventional confrontation. The fighters carrying out the attack were described as highly trained, very mobile and possessing a good understanding of the terrain: 'Charles Taylor's fighting tactics had proved durable and complex rather than immature and easily overcome'.[57] This was rather surprising, because observers had failed to realise that Taylor had such well-trained troops available. Soldiers from Burkina Faso were said to be fighting on the side of the NPFL in this offensive.[58]

Taylor sent his men to attack the city towards dusk and was able to use more reinforcements than expected. The NPFL forces shelled the capital. Four main targets were identified: the small Monrovia airport, the ECOMOG headquarters, the port and the Ducor Palace Hotel, where the interim government was housed.[59]

The initial reaction of ECOMOG to the new attack was to dig in and to hold on to the already occupied territory. The former government's troops, the AFL, who had been reconstituted as the armed forces of the interim government, were deployed by ECOMOG throughout the city. ULIMO occupied some terrain in the capital with the aid of ECOMOG as well. Both ULIMO and the AFL operations against Taylor were thus facilitated by ECOMOG, which played the local parties against each other in order to defeat Taylor.[60]

After the NPFL attack, ECOMOG not only used other factions but also itself went on the offensive by attacking Buchanan from the air and sea. At the beginning of November 1992, ECOMOG tried to bomb the NPFL to the negotiating table by five days of unrelenting bombing raids. Taylor's forces were driven out of the capital and Gbarnga was attacked. With the help of US intelligence, Nigerian jets flew from Sierra Leone to drop cluster bombs on NPFL positions.[61] Bombardments and shelling were undertaken from Nigerian ships just off the Liberian coast. ECOWAS was determined to push back Taylor for good. However, the ECOMOG oper-

ation was hampered by some operational problems, such as communication and coordination difficulties between contingents.[62]

In January 1993, ECOWAS started a concerted offensive against the NPFL with the help of ULIMO and the AFL. ECOMOG targets included aid convoys and a hospital outside Gbarnga. Mainly because of the Ivorian support for Taylor, ECOMOG planes also bombed the territory of Côte d'Ivoire in the border region in early 1993. At the same time, ECOWAS instituted economic sanctions against the NPFL areas, which had been allowed to flourish since the start of the war and which had brought the wealth Taylor had used for the attack the previous October. It took a while before the sanctions had any effect.

In the end, ECOMOG managed to gain substantial ground against the NPFL. In early March, Taylor's forces were still maintaining a presence in around 40 per cent of the country.[63] The 'decisive battle' for Monrovia had resulted in the largest military losses for the NPFL since the beginning of the armed conflict. Attacks on Taylorland occurred along the axis from Monrovia to Gbarnga towards the border with Côte d'Ivoire. ULIMO managed to drive the NPFL out of most of the western part of Liberia.

Under severe military pressure, Taylor agreed to a ceasefire in Cotonou, Benin, on 31 July 1993. ECOWAS had again applied pressure on Taylor's regional backers to persuade them to end their support. The United Nations, which by this time had turned its attention to the Liberian war, decided to send a monitoring mission to Liberia, the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), to monitor the ceasefire.[64] Soldiers from Tanzania and Uganda were sent to strengthen the ECOMOG troops. From March 1994 the ECOMOG forces started deploying throughout Liberia.

After the Cotonou agreement a new interim government was established, the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG). This was to function until the parties could agree on the future of the Liberian state. Despite these initiatives, and as opposed to the period after the Bamako ceasefire, a relative measure of peace did not return to the country.

Phase 3, post-July 1993

After the ceasefire, other groups that had not been included in the negotiations became active. These new groups, arguably proxy factions, continued the struggle after the Cotonou agreement.[65] The Liberian Peace Council, part of the anti-Taylor forces, attacked the south-eastern flank of the NPFL territory, and the Lofa Defense Force, allegedly organised with support from Taylor,[66] crossed the northern border with Guinea to attack ULIMO territory. Both organisations became active between September and December 1993. A whole mosaic of patches of territory under control of different groups was created. The LPC made substantive gains in the

coastal region, denying the NPFL access to the sea. Taylor's position would eventually be reduced to a small piece of territory in Nimba County between the borders with Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, and a presence in the capital.

New fissure points started to become clear within the movements involved in the war in Liberia. In March 1994 a split occurred within ULIMO. A group of Mandingo members rallied behind their leader, Alhaji Kromah, when important Krahn members, led by Roosevelt Johnson, took over the ULIMO headquarters in May 1994. From 1995 onwards, the fighting in Liberia focused more and more on the two rival factions of ULIMO. At the beginning of October, fighting between the ULIMO factions intensified in the western part of Liberia. From the beginning of 1996, armed confrontations were reported in which the Roosevelt Johnson ULIMO faction often played an important role.

Frictions occurred among the ranks of the NPFL, too. The NPFL headquarters in Gbarnga were overrun in July 1994 by an alliance of AFL, LPC and ULIMO forces with the support of ECOMOG. Tom Woewiyu, a senior member of the NPFL, claimed to have taken over from Taylor. In September, NPFL forces reconquered Gbarnga, and fighting between different NPFL factions started. ECOMOG started to lose control over the groups it had supported earlier against the NPFL. The situation became confusing, with rebels changing sides according to their interest of the day.[67]

In 1995, Taylor had a change of heart about ECOMOG and stated on Nigerian television that he recognised that Nigeria had contributed to a genuine search for peace in Liberia. It is very likely that this statement had been inspired by his huge military losses at that time.[68] Furthermore, it was clear that if he ever wanted to be president he had to have the support of Nigeria. The fact that Sani Abacha, who had fewer ties with Liberia, had replaced Doe's friend President Babangida made this rapprochement possible. In August 1995 an accord was signed in Abuja, Nigeria. Taylor became a member of the collective presidency, the Council of State. He was closer than ever before to the centre of power.

The Abuja accord broke down shortly afterwards, as all previous accords and ceasefires had done. One last round of serious fighting broke out in Monrovia in April 1996, involving Roosevelt Johnson, who, among other things, was wanted for the murder of some of his own men. His faction attacked ECOMOG troops in this round of fighting, which turned out to be one of the last outbursts of violence. A new version of the Abuja accord was agreed in 1996, and in July 1997 general elections were held. The rebel leader who had occupied most of the territory back in 1990, Charles Taylor, was elected president.

Observations on the Liberian war

Several observations can be made. First, concerning the role of actors, individual leadership stands out as a factor in shaping the factions and their aims during the fighting. The armed conflict started at the top, in the minds of the faction leaders, and trickled downwards.[69] Charles Taylor had become excluded from Doe's entourage, having to flee after corruption allegations, and his personal grudge against Doe was an important driving force for his organising of the NPFL and its subsequent policies. At the point when Doe was removed from power, Taylor and his ambitions proved important for the continuation of the war. Taylor's ambition to become president of Liberia, and the opposition from the INPFL, the AFL and ECOWAS after Doe's death, contributed to keeping the fighting going. Furthermore, Taylor's ambitions were important for the attack on Monrovia in 1992. Taylor had established his capital of Taylorland at Gbarnga, but this alternative capital did not manage to take away the focus on Monrovia. The *de facto* presidency of Taylor was in danger from incursions by ULIMO, and the way out would be the capture of the presidential mansion in Monrovia. The legitimacy that occupation of Monrovia could confer made an attack on the capital a necessity.

The individuals following the NPFL contributed to the war by making it a fighting force. During the advance from the border with Côte d'Ivoire, the NPFL recruited along its route. What helped the recruitment for the NPFL to a large extent were the atrocities committed by the AFL against the local population. The AFL soldiers, unable to confront the NPFL fighters, who initially used the forests to hide, took out their frustration on the villagers. These people in their turn looked for safety. Joining the NPFL would give them a gun and a certain measure of protection. In this way, the NPFL benefited from the mistakes of the government army.

Second, concerning the interests of the factions, the following can be observed. First, political issues – in particular, who should rule the country – were important bones of contention among the protagonists in the war. The political domain was defined in negative terms of 'no more Doe and his clique'. Taylor had the ambition of replacing Doe and becoming president of Liberia. The other parties in the field were trying to thwart this aim. Second, issues of ethnic difference also affected the armed interaction process. Taylor and his fellow dissidents consciously chose Nimba County, a hotbed of opposition to Doe, for the attack on the regime. Ethnic animosity to Doe and his men, who had based their rule on ethnic principles, was used to rally support. Economic interests also influenced the armed interactions during the war. The wealth of Liberia was an aim of the fighting during the war. Fighting occurred where easy money could be made. In towns, the shopping districts were looted almost systematically. In the countryside, opencast mining, rubber tapping and logging of

forests were undertaken, using forced labour. The border region with Sierra Leone, which contained the diamond mines, witnessed heavy fighting. Taylor made millions per month exploiting Liberia's wealth.

Third, the instruments with which to fight played a significant role in the continuation of war. After the factions received popular support, they started to operate in the open: to advance on main roads and to confront each other along identifiable front lines. The faction fighters operated under command of the faction leaders in order to chase out the president and capture the presidential mansion. The capital was of primary focus in the direct military confrontations between the factions.

All three elements of war were very closely linked. The leadership took the initiative to start a war, based on both a very personal motivation and ambition and a larger desire for a change in leadership, which was supported by a wider circle of dissidents. To realise their goal, the leader and his followers attacked an area where political dissidence was strong. Before the invasion, they received military support from outside powers; after the initial attack, the weapons came from the raiding of government arsenals. They occupied areas such as the ports, which housed resources and which were used to earn foreign currency. The political ambitions of the leadership, the acquired military power and economic interests in natural resources worked together to give the war a distinct impetus. These observations will be further elaborated in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

3

CASE STUDY II
Somalia, 1988–95

Somalia: a short overview

The Republic of Somalia was established in 1960 as an amalgamation of two separately administered colonies, British Somaliland in the north and Italian Somaliland in the south. Somalis could also be found in Djibouti or French Somaliland, in northern Kenya and the Ogaden district of Ethiopia. In the north, Somalia is mountainous, with ranges above 2,000 metres; in the south, the level drops to 500 metres above sea level. The country has a dry climate and sparse natural vegetation. Most of the land is used for cattle herding, with less than 2 per cent suitable for the growing of crops. This agricultural land is situated between the Shabeelle and Jubba rivers in the south. The annual rainfall is below 50 centimetres; however, the annual rainy season, from April to June, can make large parts of the country inaccessible. Somalia has 2,600 kilometres of paved roads, most linking the coastal cities Mogadishu (Muqdisho), the capital, Merca (Marka), Kismayo (Kismaayo) and Bardera (Baardheere) in the interior.[1] The Somali coastline is the longest on the African continent; with the exception of parts of the north, it is made up of sand dunes.

The country has around 8 million inhabitants, according to calculations by the United Nations.[2] It is one of the poorest countries in the world. The main source of income is livestock export, mostly to the Gulf States. Before the outbreak of the war, this trade was responsible for the largest part of the country's foreign exports, and provided foreign currency earnings and offered work to over half of the country's labour force. The country is said to have oil and gas deposits in which some US firms had already shown an interest; however, extraction of these deposits had not taken place by the early 1990s.[3]

Despite the fact that Somalis share a common ethnic identity, a common language and a common religion, a common Somali consciousness was missing.[4] First, regarding their ethnic identity, Somalis are ethnically homogeneous. Prior to the colonial period, a pastoral political system was in place, with family and family ties as the most important elements. The

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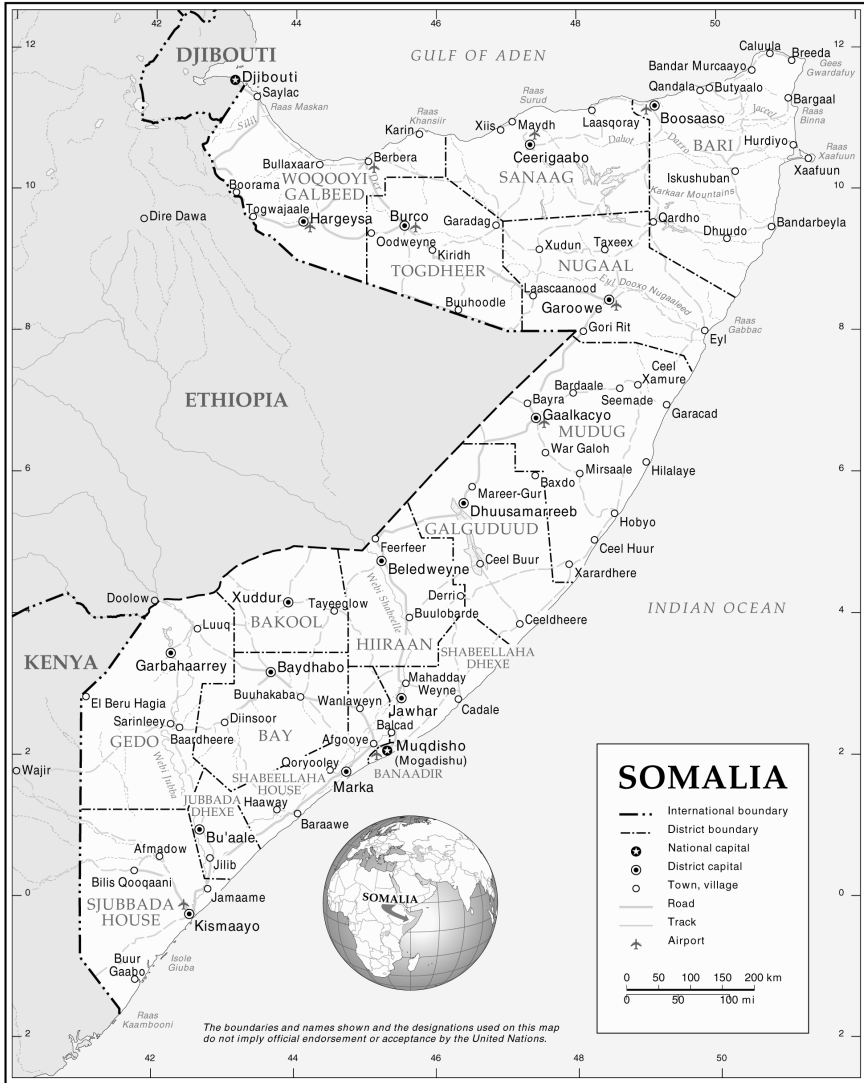
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family formed part of a greater unit, a sub-clan, and this sub-clan belonged to a clan. There were six main clans in Somalia. The Hawiye (26.4 per cent), mostly located in central Somalia, were nomads; sub-clans included, for example, Habr Gedir, Abgal and Murusade. The Isaq (23.1 per cent), also nomads, lived in northern Somalia. The Dir (7.7 per cent), located in

north-west and southern Somalia, had for example the sub-clans Issa and Gadabursi. The Darod clan (21.4 per cent) was made up of, among others, the Ogadeni, Herti, Marehan, Majerteen, Dolbahante and Warsangeli sub-clans, and lived in north-east and southern Somalia. The two remaining clans, the Rahanweyn and Digil (21.4 per cent), were both located in southern Somalia and, unlike the other clans, were agriculturists.[5]

The structure of society was not based on any hierarchical order. The reliance on the family, the struggle for survival in the harsh Somali climate and the competition over grazing grounds were closely linked to a dislike of foreigners bordering on xenophobia.[6] Most Somalis were related to more than one clan. The clan lineage passed on through the male line, but an individual could be linked to another clan through a mother or a wife. Marriages were used to cement the relationships between the different clans.

Second, Somalis shared a common language, Somali. Somali culture was still mainly oral: radio broadcasts were the most influential means of disseminating information. Only since 1972 has the Somali language had a written form.

Third, Somalis shared a common religion, Islam, which the large majority of the population followed.

The potentially fragmentary nature of the clan system did not lead to important clan divisions in Somali society. However, this changed with a *coup d'état* in 1969 that brought General Siad Barre to power. He manipulated the relations between the clans in favour of his own Darod clansmen. To a certain extent, clan identity started to overlap with social and economic stratification. Initially he adhered to scientific socialism, but his regime developed into a dictatorship. Divisions grew: 'Since the face of Barre's rule came to be associated with his clan, opposition to his power was also organised along clan lines'.[7]

Barre's ruling circle consisted of a small group of clan favourites summarised by the abbreviation MOD, which stood for Marehan (Barre's clan), Ogadeni (the clan of Barre's mother) and Dolbahante (the clan of his son-in-law Ahmed Suleyman Abdullah, head of the security service). These three clans occupied the important positions in the state bureaucracy, army and business. Other clans were antagonised by confiscations of grazing grounds for livestock and special trading privileges. The Hawiye herdsmen of central Somalia, among others, were affected by these practices.

Barre's ideal was to unite all the areas in the Horn of Africa where Somalis lived. These irredentist policies strained relations with neighbouring states and led to confrontations with Ethiopia and Kenya. The Soviet Union, which tried to gain a foothold in the Horn of Africa, offered military aid. However, at one point the Soviet Union was supporting both Ethiopia and Somalia. After the overthrow of the Ethiopian emperor,

Haile Selassie, in 1974 by a communist revolution, Barre decided it was time to realise the unity of all Somalis. The Soviets, however, weighed in on the Ethiopian side and Barre was forced to admit defeat. From 1978 the place of most important donor state was taken over by the United States. The United States' interests in Somalia included a runway and a naval facility at Berbera, which was used for the monitoring of shipping in the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean. Apart from the Soviet Union and later the United States, the country maintained good relations with its former colonial powers, the United Kingdom and Italy. The Somali Republic was a member of the Arab League, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations.

After the war against Ethiopia in the 1970s, large sections of the Somali population remained armed; the Somali army was among the largest in Africa. Barre punished all the officials he held responsible for the defeat. Old scores were settled and clan grievances fought out. Barre favoured an ever-closer circle of clan and family members, and the opposition to his rule increased. At the beginning of the 1980s a failed coup by Abdillahi Yusuf, an Isaq from the north, unleashed terror on the Isaq clan. The Isaq were a relatively wealthy clan and had played an important role in Somali politics after independence. The attacks on Barre's regime continued, and Barre decided to make formal peace with Ethiopia, the main supporter of the Somali opposition movements, hoping to cut off the groups from their supply and support base. This move, however, had the opposite effect. The Somali movements were forced to leave Ethiopia, and this encouraged their plans to attack Somalia.

The Isaq had been organised in the Somali National Movement (SNM). This opposition faction, which accommodated members of other clans as well, notably the Hawiye, attacked Somalia from Ethiopian territory at the end of May 1988. The SNM fighters organised to fight a guerrilla war against the Somali armed forces in northern Somalia. When they failed to find success in their quest, they started to support the establishment of other factions to achieve the removal of the authoritarian Barre regime.

The war in Somalia occurred against this background. The aim of this chapter is to present a chronological narrative of the main events and interactions of the war to pave the way for a close analysis starting in the next chapter. In this chapter, first the protagonists in the armed conflict will be described, and second, the conflict will be divided up into three phases for which the interactions will be presented. This chapter will conclude with some preliminary observations on the conflict.

The protagonists

Many factions were present on the battlefield in Somalia. The four most important faction leaders were Mohammed Farah Aidid,[8] Ali Mahdi

Mohammed, Mohammed Saeed Hersi 'Morgan' and Ahmed Omar Jess,[9] who contested most of Somalia. During the course of the struggle the rivalry between Aidid and Mahdi became dominant. Both were members of the Hawiye clan, and the war gained something of an intra-clan character. However, the factions were not exclusively based around clan allegiances and were not clearly unified. Support for a faction was not automatic.[10]

Only the most influential factions and faction leaders on the battlefield will receive individual treatment here.

Mohammed Farah Aidid, leader of a faction of the United Somali Congress

Mohammed Farah Aidid was a military man. He had made a career in the Somali army and had received military training in Italy and the Soviet Union. Siad Barre, who was also a military officer in the colonial and post-colonial armies, had always considered Aidid his rival. They both had the ambition of becoming the head of the armed forces after independence, but Barre, because of his seniority, got the job. Upon Barre's *coup d'état* in 1969, Aidid was arrested, probably because of the threat Barre thought he posed. Aidid spent several years in jail, but was released to serve in the Somali army during the war against Ethiopia. Thereafter, Barre sent him as military attaché on diplomatic postings overseas, probably to get his rival away from Somalia. Aidid thus had a personal grudge towards Barre because Barre's suspicions denied him access to the inner circles of power. This undoubtedly strengthened Aidid's ambition to oust Barre from power.

After the war had started, Aidid became the leader of the military wing of the United Somali Congress (USC). The USC was an organisation of exiled Somalis, mostly of the Hawiye clan, united in their opposition to Barre. Founded in January 1989, the USC received weapons and support from the Isaq Somali National Movement, which was fighting in the north of the country.[11] During Barre's rule, Somali schoolchildren, students and civil servants had to complete compulsory military service. All factions used this military experience to their advantage.

Aidid started recruiting fighters in the countryside, mainly cattle herders who knew how to handle guns, because of their traditional right to bear arms. These bush boys, who had no formal education (all they knew was how to herd livestock), were given a gun to fight with.[12] Aidid's forces were initially well trained: 'On the battlefield, Aidid's loyals had superiority in armaments and better military training'; furthermore, 'they were virtually insuperable when on the offensive'.[13] Their weaponry consisted of small arms and jeeps transformed into so-called technicals: all-terrain cars with the roofs sawn off and with anti-tank cannons mounted on top. The

young men who were manning the technicals were described as 'semi-hysterical youths', some of them wearing striking clothes.[14] Aidid and his men moved from central Somalia to the capital, Mogadishu. During the war the Aidid faction operated mostly in central and southern Somalia.

Although Aidid did not reveal his presidential ambitions at the beginning of the armed conflict, he did describe his ideas about the future of the Somali state.[15] He wanted to see a democratic Somalia with none of the clans dominating the political landscape. His vision was to introduce some kind of democracy in which people would have a very direct say on political affairs.[16] In June 1991 Aidid was elected chairman of the USC. This was perceived as a threat by Ali Mahdi, who, as will be described, was the USC-appointed interim president. The personal rivalry between the two men became very important during the course of the war.[17]

Aidid's main financial organiser was Osman Ato, whose money partly came from the local drugs market. Ato was part of the sub-clan that during the Barre regime had held positions of economic power. Ato continued to perform this function but for a different leadership until February 1995, when he established his own faction. An accepted part of Somali culture was the use of a local narcotic stimulant called khat.[18] Khat is grown mostly in Kenya and Ethiopia, where it is also a legal substance. It is addictive: 'If you want to make a Somali angry... take away his khat'.[19] Ato made his money in this trade, among others. Another source of income for the rebels was the remittances from exiled Somalis, mainly in the Gulf States. These assisted in the facilitation of the trade in stolen goods. Looted goods and, in particular, food aid that arrived in the country after the devastation of the war had caused famine were important sources of income for both the faction fighters on all sides and the factions themselves.

Ali Mahdi Mohammed, leader of a faction of the United Somali Congress

Ali Mahdi was a wealthy businessman in Mogadishu, where among his interests was the luxurious Maka al Mukarama hotel, which he owned. Ali Mahdi was not a military man; he had been involved in Somali politics after independence. His wife worked in the office of President Barre until Barre's regime collapsed. The USC had offices in Ethiopia, from which Aidid operated, and in Italy, where the organisation was founded, but Ali Mahdi was the USC man in Somalia itself.

Therefore, when the USC forces chased out President Siad Barre, Ali Mahdi was proclaimed interim president. However, this antagonised the USC militias. First, they had done most of the fighting in central Somalia, yet Ali Mahdi asked them to lay down their weapons without promises of jobs in the future Somali army. Since it was they who had succeeded in

driving out Barre and had fought his clan members, they expected integration into a new Somali army. Ali Mahdi did not meet their expectations. Second, the role that had been played by their military leader, General Aidid, was not recognised. Ali Mahdi thus forfeited the important support of large sections of the USC movement. These differences led to a split in the USC.

Ali Mahdi's armed supporters never controlled a large portion of Somali territory but, crucially, they did exert influence in the capital, Mogadishu. This prevented Aidid from capturing the whole capital and establishing his rule. In the part of Mogadishu that was controlled by Ali Madhi, the importance of Islam increased, with the introduction of Islamic law in August 1994. It seems likely that Ali Mahdi hoped that this would provide a binding force transcending clan interests. The local drugs market also provided him with funds to maintain his faction. Furthermore, he managed to obtain weapons from Libya and enjoyed political support from Italy.

Mohammed Said Hersi 'Morgan', military commander of the Somali National Front

One of President Siad Barre's daughters was married to Mohammed Said Hersi, also called Colonel Morgan. He had received his military training in the United States as part of a US military aid package to Somalia at the beginning of the 1980s.[20] He commanded the Somali armed forces in northern Somalia when the SNM fighters invaded from Ethiopia in 1988. After Barre was forced to flee his presidential mansion, Morgan became a member of the Somali National Front (SNF), representing the forces of the old order. He and his men, mainly from the Marehan and Majerteen sub-clans, part of the Darod clan, established a base in the south of Somalia, the heartland of Barre's support, to attack the other factions from there. Throughout the war, the actions of Morgan's faction were concentrated in southern Somalia.

Ahmed Omar Jess, military leader of the Somali Patriotic Movement

The traditional recruiting base for the Somali army had been the Ogadeni sub-clan, part of the Darod clan. The creation of the Ogadeni faction, the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), meant a split in the unity of the Darod clan, which had dominated the Somali political landscape since Barre came to power. When Barre dismissed the popular Ogadeni Minister of Defence in January 1989 and arrested him in the summer of the same year, the Ogadeni withdrew their support for the Barre regime.[21] The Ogadeni were particularly displeased about the agreement with Ethiopia, which

compromised their struggle to liberate the Ogaden region in Ethiopia. Colonel Jess became the military leader of the SPM. He received support from Kenya. The SPM operated mainly in the southern part of Somalia.

The war in Somalia can be divided into three phases. The first started with the SNM invasion on 27 May 1988 and ended with the removal of Barre from office on 27 January 1991. The second phase started with confrontations between the various parties that had previously cooperated to fight Barre, who continued to pose a threat. This phase ended with a ceasefire on 3 March 1992. The third phase started with the United Task Force (UNITAF) operation on 9 December 1992, ending with the departure of the UN intervention forces from Somalia on 28 March 1995.

Phase 1, 27 May 1988–27 January 1991

The SNM fighters invaded Somalia in a five-pronged attack from Ethiopia. They attacked the northern part of Somalia, mostly populated by members of the Isaq clan. Burao (Burco) was attacked on 27 May 1988 and the most important facilities, e.g. the airport and the military barracks, were taken over. A number of officials were shot. The SNM force consisted of approximately 3,000 men with arms and equipment and around 15,000 local militiamen supporting them.[22] The SNM fighters were very well trained and highly motivated,[23] and their offensive was well planned.[24] They hoped to find support in the north for their aims of removing Barre from power because the Isaq had suffered repeatedly under Barre's iron fist.

The government, which had been fighting the SNM guerrillas since the early 1980s, had its strongest forces with mechanised units and aircraft stationed in the north, in particular the north-west. The government army, led by Colonel Morgan, was ordered to crush the invasion. Initially, 'the military [did] not use its full force, apparently trying to work out a plan by which they could defeat the SNM'.[25] The SNM was difficult to confront directly and the army resorted to attacking the local population.[26] Five former South African pilots were recruited to fly Somali air force planes to bomb the north.[27] Those in northern Somalia not belonging to the Isaq clan were offered evacuation. Alternatively, they were given arms to protect themselves and fight the SNM.

The movement started to suffer from a lack of weapons, in particular air defence, heavy armament and ammunition.[28] Incapable of taking the north, the SNM was forced onto the defensive, and the rebels had to settle for the disruption of the government control over the area.[29] Since they could not capture the regional capital, Hargeisa, there were indications that the SNM wanted to move south, i.e. to Mogadishu.[30]

The SNM started to support the establishment of other groups to fight

Barre. Some Hawiye members of the SNM formed the USC in Rome in January 1989. The focus of the fighting moved to southern and central Somalia. In March 1989, Ogadeni government troops started a mutiny in Kismayo, the main coastal trading town in the south. Furthermore, Colonel Omar Jess, an Ogadeni army commander, deserted from the army in Hargeisa, taking his men with him, and joined forces with the SNM. He established himself in the autumn of 1989 in the Bakool region and became part of the SPM. The SPM captured some territory on the border with Kenya. Army battalions made up of Barre's Marehan clan were sent to the south to fight the Ogadenis.

In the meantime, the USC had started operating in central Somalia. Aidid and his men started attacking army garrisons. They received a great deal of support, because of the already existing antagonism of the herdsmen against the regime, which had affected their livelihoods by curbing their control over the grazing grounds. From July 1990 the USC extended its area of operations to the south. The USC clearly moved towards the capital, encircling it from the north, west and south. Aidid described his strategy to defeat Barre as aiming to 'annihilate Barre's forces in the central region', and at the same time to 'cut off [their] supply line from Mogadishu to the north of Somalia'.[31] From August 1990 the SNM, SPM and USC united their military efforts to defeat Barre. In this effort they received assistance from Ethiopia.[32] However, this cooperation was highly pragmatic and could not disguise the differences that existed, in particular between the USC and the SPM, and, within the USC, between the Ethiopia and Mogadishu branches.

Aidid confirmed the hatred against the government, and the clans that had collaborated with the Barre regime, by stating publicly that he aimed to oust them completely from Somalia.[33] Aidid's forces were also involved in atrocities against the Darod clan.[34] By 1990, support for Barre and his government was non-existent apart from a very small circle of Barre's family members.

In Mogadishu, confrontations occurred between USC supporters and government forces in November 1990, but the armed conflict erupted seriously when, on 30 December 1990, a group of men raided an arms market. The raid resulted in a large street battle. On 31 December the whole of the police force in Mogadishu defected to the USC, taking their arms with them. USC fighters attacked the presidential palace, the army headquarters, the police headquarters, and the three main military barracks, which stored the government's tanks and heavy weaponry. The rebels managed to establish control over the northern part of Mogadishu, and laid siege to the presidential mansion. Power, water supplies and communications were cut and large-scale looting took place. In particular, the districts under the control of the government were systematically emptied of valuables. The SPM and Aidid's USC fighters also made their way to the capital. Barre

still resided in 'Villa Somalia', as the presidential mansion was also known. Finally, on 27 January 1991, besieged from all sides, Barre fled Mogadishu and withdrew with a number of his fighters to the south.

Phase 2, 28 January 1991–3 March 1992[35]

Upon Barre's fall, Ali Mahdi was proclaimed interim president by the USC Somalia faction, but Aidid of the USC Ethiopia group refused to recognise this appointment. The SPM, also in disagreement over the appointment of the interim president and disliking both Aidid and Ali Mahdi, wanted to capture Mogadishu. Clashes occurred between the USC factions and the SPM.[36] The former anti-Barre alliance started to fall apart. In the south of the country, Barre was assembling a force, led by Morgan, the former commander of the northern front, to fight the rebels in Mogadishu. Kismayo was captured, while Jess, formerly in control of Kismayo, was fighting around the capital against his former alliance partners. Jess quickly returned to Kismayo to stake his claim. Jess and Morgan suspended their confrontations to deal with the more pressing threat of the USC occupation of the capital. This understanding between Morgan and Jess lasted until the end of the year. This resurgence of forces fighting for the interests of the old advantaged clan supported by Barre, and the struggles between other factions, delayed a direct confrontation between Aidid and Ali Mahdi.[37]

While Aidid and Ali Mahdi opposed each other in Mogadishu, in the rest of the country the USC factions formed a common front in order to defeat the pro-Barre forces. In May 1991 the northern part of Somalia, former British Somaliland, which had been relatively peaceful since the removal of Barre, declared its independence. The Somaliland Republic, under the presidency of the SNM chairman, Abdirahman Ali Tuur, was not recognised internationally, but a measure of order returned to the north.

From around September 1991 the war started to focus more on the Aidid–Ali Mahdi rivalry. In November 1991, heavy fighting broke out between the forces of Aidid and Ali Mahdi. The confrontations became very personalised, with their militias attacking the faction leaders' private homes. These clashes between the Habr Gedir sub-clan of Aidid and Ali Mahdi's Abgal sub-clan, both of the Hawiye clan, seemed to turn the war into an intra-clan conflict. However, the confrontation between Ali Mahdi and Aidid could not be explained purely as a clash between just two sub-clans; some Murusade fighters were involved as well.[38]

Mediation efforts were now concentrated on central and southern Somalia. In Mogadishu, neutral Somali sub-clans tried to separate the factions, and by mid-January 1992 they had occupied the airport and the port, but their mediation attempts were not very successful.[39] The neighbouring

states Ethiopia, Kenya and Djibouti, which had to cope with the waves of refugees, also tried to mediate in the war.[40] Kenya authorised its troops to pursue into Somali territory Somali soldiers who had crossed the border. The Organization of African Unity took up the case of Somalia, and subsequently the Arab League became involved. However, both organisations lacked the experience and expertise to deal with the war. In January 1992 the United Nations imposed a weapons embargo on Somalia.

The armed confrontations raged for five months from November 1991 to March 1992, by which time three-quarters of Mogadishu was in a shambles. Ali Mahdi was in control of the northern part of the town, which was known as an Abgal stronghold. The city became split in two, with Aidid controlling the southern and more important part with the airport, port and radio station.[41] On 14 February 1992, Aidid prepared for a final attack on Mogadishu. He was determined that this offensive would put an end to the fighting and he would emerge victorious. The attack, in which Aidid's fighters suffered heavy casualties, focused on northern Mogadishu.

The United Nations tried to bring the factions to the negotiation table to agree on a ceasefire. Only Aidid and Mahdi were invited to these negotiations. Mahdi welcomed the UN effort, and the international organisation was unable to dispel the impression that it sided with Mahdi against Aidid.[42] Aidid, who from 1992 became branded the main obstacle to the ending of the war, agreed to a ceasefire mainly because he occupied the most important parts of Mogadishu and he could use some breathing space after heavy losses in the fighting there.[43] On 3 March 1992 the factions in Mogadishu signed a ceasefire, ending this period of fighting.

Barre and his forces based in Kenya, calculating that the groups must have been weakened by confronting each other, had decided to attack again at the end of February 1992. Aidid, together with the SPM and other factions, assembled forces to attack Barre from the rear. Barre's forces, which were just outside Mogadishu at the end of April, realised that their route for retreat was cut off. They ran away, leaving all their heavy weaponry behind. Aidid continued to pursue Colonel Morgan for his support for Barre and was helped in this effort by Colonel Jess. Subsequently, Aidid conquered substantial territory in the south and managed to establish control over the whole border region with Kenya. Barre went into exile in Nigeria.

As part of the March ceasefire, UN monitors were sent to Somalia. The United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) arrived on 5 July 1992. Initially the ceasefire held relatively well. Although disorder persisted in Somalia, a new group calling itself Ittihad Al-Islamiya (Islam United Front) tried, in June 1992, to gain control over parts of the country. The attempt by this Muslim fundamentalist group, mounted with support from Iran and Sudan, failed. However, it continued to pose a threat.

Despite the ceasefire, Aidid and his men managed to capture around

two-thirds of Somalia between March and September 1992.[44] Aidid not only controlled the countryside but managed to gain control over two-thirds of Mogadishu as well.[45] At the beginning of October, the forces loyal to Barre again attempted to extend their control of Somali territory. They attacked in the south and threatened to move on Kismayo and Baidoa. Aidid started from then on to lose ground.

The destruction of the country as a result of the war and the severe drought that occurred at the same time had left food aid as the only liquid asset. Fighting over food supplies became intense during the course of 1992. It became imperative to withhold food from opponents and get as much of it oneself as possible as a form of currency. In particular, food intended for Ali Mahdi's part of Mogadishu was prevented from crossing the ceasefire line. In August 1992 a huge emergency food aid airlift was organised to relieve the starving population. The aid agencies started to employ gunmen to protect the humanitarian aid. The gunmen 'get their living by protecting aid workers, their vehicles and relief food from other gunmen who get their living from stealing the food and hijacking vehicles. The gangs and the guards could be interchangeable'.[46]

Success in alleviating the hunger remained elusive. The US president, George Bush Sr, after he had been defeated in the latest elections, announced that the United States was willing to 'provide military assistance in support of emergency humanitarian relief to ... Somalia'.[47] Despite the fact that the Americans had not played a neutral role in the region, the initiative was welcomed: 'US intervention is likely to be considered a liberating force'.[48] Although the aid community had been calling for military force to help with the distribution, it became rather hesitant about the intervention. Aid workers feared that their security would be compromised.[49]

Aidid continued to change his mind about allowing troops in to deliver humanitarian aid. By the end of 1992, four factions had agreed to invite UN troops and Aidid became isolated. Finally Aidid decided to welcome the UN forces; he stated: 'We believe the American move will solve our political, economic and social problems. . . . The United Nations has failed to save the unity of Somalia, the reconciliation process and the recovery programme'.[50] Aidid himself, however, was an important contributor to all these problems in the first place.

At the point when talks started about the deployment of UN enforcement troops in Somalia to distribute aid with force, a scramble for territory occurred. Fighting erupted again in Mogadishu. Key installations, such as the airport, became the focus for attacks. Control over these installations could be lucrative: money could be made by taxing troops and other foreign personnel entering the country. The Mogadishu gunmen leaving the city before the arrival of the Americans in December 1992 made their way south. Just before the intervention, Aidid had started

losing ground and his forces became over-extended, aiming to maintain a presence in the majority of southern and central Somalia, and Mogadishu.

Phase 3, 9 December 1992–28 March 1995

The United Task Force (UNITAF) troops landed on the beaches of Mogadishu on 9 December 1992. In a short period of time they managed to establish control over the airport and the port of Mogadishu. The UNITAF operation had a three-pronged approach.[51] First, a stable situation had to be created in Mogadishu. It was envisaged that this had to take place through voluntary disarmament: weapons would be stored in return for material rewards and retraining for integration in society. Second, the aid organisations would be assisted in the delivery of aid. Third, law and order would be re-established and an internal political authority would be created.

With the intervention forces deployed on Somali territory, fighting broke out between rival factions in the capital on 1 January 1993. A week later, the first large-scale confrontation between UNITAF and Aidid occurred. Somalis undertook several attacks against US positions, especially at night. In the countryside, the factions seemed to be regrouping.[52] From January onwards there were also confrontations with Morgan's faction in Kismayo. Morgan attempted to gain control over Kismayo from Jess and engaged in fighting with the Belgian and US soldiers deployed there. The UNITAF forces managed to prevent men from entering Kismayo, and weapons were banned from the town. Women tried to hide weapons under their long dresses and wage war instead.[53] In May the situation became more complicated, with the combined forces of Aidid and Jess trying to oust Morgan from the area.

In March 1993 a conference of national reconciliation had been organised to bring the warring parties together. They signed an agreement in Addis Ababa to stop the fighting and to disarm. Despite these efforts, the fighting did not stop. On 4 May 1993 the UNITAF operation officially handed over to UNOSOM II.[54] The mandate for UNOSOM consisted of several elements: the monitoring of a ceasefire, which in practice did not exist, carrying out a weapons cantonment plan and securing the safe delivery of humanitarian aid.

Like the UNITAF deployment, the UNOSOM II operation focused on the central and southern parts of the country. The security situation deteriorated further. On 5 June, 24 Pakistani troops on an inspection mission were ambushed and killed. They were trying to investigate a claim that weapons were stored on the premises of Radio Mogadishu, Aidid's radio station. Aidid was held responsible for the deaths of the Pakistani soldiers, and the United Nations called for his arrest. Confrontations increased between Aidid and UNOSOM II. Aidid used women and children as

shields to operate against the soldiers. The United Nations reinforced its troops and restocked its supplies of armaments. On 12 June a large-scale operation started against Aidid's positions. The intervention forces actively searched for Aidid. Secret agents, special cameras, house searches and surprise attacks failed to find him. His support among the population grew, and the dislike of the foreign interference increased: 'the UN [is] ... already more unpopular than any warlord'.[55] The Americans had calculated that the power base of the faction leaders would disappear if they lost the monopoly over food provision and weapons.[56] Both were tackled, but antagonising the population over the hunt for Aidid complicated the situation, and Aidid's popularity increased among the Somali population.

On 3 October 1993, US Rangers tried to capture Aidid's so-called cabinet in the Olympic Hotel and became engaged in a firefight that lasted for over 15 hours.[57] The sector commander of Aidid's faction in the area ordered the cutting off of all the possible escape routes for the Americans from the hotel. Then they attacked the hotel. Grenades were launched against US helicopters, and two of them were shot down. UNOSOM troops formed a 70-vehicle convoy and tried to approach the hotel to relieve the trapped soldiers. One Malaysian and 18 American soldiers were killed and over 75 were wounded. After this humiliating experience, on 7 October 1993 President Clinton announced that the US troops would be withdrawn on 31 March 1994. In the meantime, reinforcements would be introduced to guarantee security.

After the confrontation at the Olympic Hotel, Aidid declared a unilateral ceasefire. This managed to hold relatively well and showed the restraint that Aidid was able to demand from his men.[58] The ceasefire, however, did not extend to confrontations between other militias, and at the end of October the Aidid and Ali Mahdi militias clashed again. When the departure of the Western, and in particular US, intervention forces became imminent at the end of 1993, two broad alliances were confronting each other. Ali Mahdi led one faction, the Somali Salvation Alliance (SSA), which included Morgan's faction and some Darod and Dir factions. Aidid's faction, the Somali National Alliance (SNA), counted on Jess and some Dir and Digil factions. The factional allegiance changed frequently, depending on the interests of the day. Ali Mahdi managed to extend his control in central Somalia and northern Mogadishu. Territory seemed to increase in importance for Mahdi, in the expectation, perhaps, of a settlement.[59] Ali Mahdi and Aidid prepared to grab the most advantageous positions before the departure of UNOSOM. In particular, the port, the airport and the roads leading to these installations were highly contested among the factions.

After March 1994, UNOSOM was taken over by other UN troops from, among other countries, Malaysia, Pakistan and Zimbabwe. The reduced number of troops concentrated on the protection of important installa-

tions. The war among the militias intensified again. In the autumn, Aidid, who was losing ground, tried to re-establish a base in the interior and shift the focus away from the capital. At the same time, UNOSOM troops withdrew from the countryside because of the decrease in security, leaving most areas outside Mogadishu to the faction fighters. In several places the UN soldiers had to fight their way out of their positions to be evacuated. Insecurity increased throughout Somalia, except for the north. At the end of February 1995, Osman Ato left Aidid's faction to form his own movement, which started to confront Aidid over the control of the airport. Ahead of schedule, on 28 March 1995, the UNOSOM intervention troops left Somalia, and the country was given over to the warring factions again.

After the departure of the intervention troops, the importance of Islam and the role of clan elders increased. These developments can be seen as attempts to create an alternative to the rule of the factions.[60] First, Islamic law had been introduced most noticeably in north Mogadishu in August 1994. It spread throughout the country; Islamic courts were set up and stoning and amputations were delivered as punishments. The influence of the Ittihad Al-Islamiya faction increased.[61] Second, local and grass-roots institutions were set up and the influence of clan elders slowly increased.[62]

Observations on the Somali war

Several observations can be made regarding the Somali war. First, concerning the actors in the conflict, the individual leaders came to the fore most clearly upon the collapse of the Barre regime, and especially when Aidid refused to recognise Ali Mahdi's presidency. Behind the scenes, personalities and personal ambitions had, however, played an important role since the beginning of the war. Aidid had a personal grudge against Barre, who had been his rival in the army. Aidid was denied access to state power, which he claimed on the basis of his career in the army. The original aims of his faction had been set by the SNM invasion and the USC organisation, i.e. to remove Barre from power. This overlapped with Aidid's ideas. The continuation of the war after Barre's fall was to a significant extent of Aidid's and Ali Mahdi's making. Their rivalry gave a distinct impetus to the war in mid- and late 1991. Another important moment when Aidid managed to give a new quality to the fighting was the hunt for his person organised by the United Nations. Aidid's men were probably responsible for the deaths of the Pakistani peacekeepers in 1992. Even though Aidid was seen as an obstacle to a peace agreement, the hunt by the outside forces caused the Somalis to draw together. The focus of the fighting changed to open hostility towards the intervention troops.

The people following the leaders contributed to the war as well. The factions recruited in the countryside. The atrocities committed by the government forces drove the local inhabitants into the arms of the factions. The

factions gained support as a result of the reactions of the hated army. The region where Aidid started his operations had suffered under repression by the Barre regime, and Aidid found it easy to recruit among herdsmen, appealing to their clan identity to fight.

Second, concerning the interests of the factions, the following can be observed. First, the armed conflict started out over the rule of Siad Barre. The factions were initially united in their opposition to Barre; however, the question of who should rule the country after his overthrow created rifts between former allies and divisions within factions. These differences contributed importantly to the continuation of the war. Second, clan rivalry played a role in the war. Somalia was ethnically homogeneous and the main divisions were among clans. Clan identity was used as a rallying force to create a following for the factions. The factions invaded and operated in areas where their clansmen lived and where they were sure to find support for their aims. Economic interests played a large part in the war in Somalia. This can be observed in the role played by humanitarian aid and in the local trade in drugs. The food situation deteriorated during the course of the war. By October 1991 a report by the UN food programme estimated that over half the population were at risk from famine. This famine was mostly caused by the manipulation of the food deliveries by the warring factions. Food aid became an economic asset that could be sold for profit. Economic interests significantly affected the fighting in relation to the local khat drugs market as well.

Third, concerning the factions' operations and armaments, the various forces operated mostly in the open. Front lines were identifiable, such as the advances on the capital and the 'green line' dividing Mogadishu after the ceasefire. The factions used all kinds of weapons, including self-made ones, in order to realise their goal of removing the president and, subsequently, warding off other challengers.

The three elements were closely interconnected. The armed opposition against Barre was of a personal nature because of previous interaction between the protagonists. The opposition came to be supported by the wider population. The factions acquired weaponry and established themselves on the battlefield. For their maintenance they relied partly on trade in foreign relief aid and drugs. The profits were used to strengthen the faction, i.e. to buy new weaponry and to keep the fighters loyal. The political ambitions of the faction leader, his military power and his economic strength worked together to give the war a distinct impetus. These observations will be further elaborated in the following chapters.

4

POLITICAL ACTORS

Introduction

In this chapter it will be demonstrated that the main actors involved in the warfare in Liberia and Somalia were indeed political actors.[1] Furthermore, these political actors controlled armed force and had a certain number of followers. By applying the concepts of power, legitimacy, authority and rule, it will be demonstrated that the concept of trinitarian war is still valid and useful in order to understand the essence and continuation of the war. First, the political nature of the actor will be described by applying the concepts of power, legitimacy, authority and rule. Power has been made operational by describing it as the ability to influence the rational choice of others. Authority is the possession of legitimate power. Rule is the persistent control of this authority; it may take the form of the exercise of democratic rule by the people or autocratic rule with a large role for an individual leader. Second, the trinity of political leadership, army and people will be discussed. The actor will be shown to possess a military force and a group of supporters, i.e. consist of the Clausewitzean trinity.

A political system

Power

Power, in the two case studies, was exercised by the armed groups organised by and around, among others, Charles Taylor and Mohammed Aidid in Liberia and Somalia respectively. For the purposes of this study, these two individuals and their followers will be the main focus for analysis. Before it can be proved that these groups exercised power (and authority and rule) after the collapse of the state, it needs to become clear whether they possessed power before the state broke down and where their power was derived from.

When Charles Taylor and Mohammed Farah Aidid and their men started operating in their respective countries they initially had little

power to wield. The power they did possess was military force. Taylor had received some support from Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire, but his invasion force was described as small, with armed men numbering around two hundred. Aidid's rebel force had been offered assistance by the SNM, but in view of its size, it could hardly be termed a rebel army.

Important in understanding the use of military power by both Taylor and Aidid is their stated aim of deposing the presidents.[2] As described in the case studies, at the start of the two wars both Liberia and Somalia were under dictatorial rule, with the most important role for Samuel Doe and Siad Barre respectively. As was described in Chapter 1, patrimonial rule is characterised by a prominent role for individual leadership and the use of patron–client networks. The rule of both Doe and Barre can be described as patrimonial, as will be further elaborated below.

Such systems of patrimonial rule have several weaknesses.[3] Most important in this respect is the fact that a personal ruler is often not able to reach everybody in a patron–client network and cannot bind all power seekers to himself.[4] Since there are few routes to power and influence other than through the ruler, people outside this system might find that resorting to arms is the only alternative.[5]

Both Taylor and Aidid were outside this personalised network of the two presidents. Both had had personal interaction with the leaders they aimed to depose. There was personal animosity between Doe and Taylor and between Barre and Aidid. Both Taylor and Aidid had become excluded from access to the inner circle of the presidents. Taylor had been under criminal investigation and had gone into exile. Aidid had been sent on diplomatic postings away from Somalia. Many of the initial followers of the rebel factions had had similar experiences and had some sort of personal axe to grind with the presidents.

The aspect of highly personalised relationships in patrimonial rule increases the chance for armed conflict to be seen in personal terms by the contenders.[6] Channels of peaceful opposition to influence the regime were cut off. Military power became the most appealing alternative. The exercise of military power was, furthermore, made possible by the effects of the end of the Cold War. This had made the existing exercise of power by the ruler less effective.[7]

A reduction in foreign assistance provided by the United States decreased the power of both regimes. This development contributed to the weakening of the existing patron–client networks. Furthermore, the instruments of repression that had maintained the regime were in decline. For the factions, the lack of access to means of affecting the regime other than the military and an ineffective exercise of power on the part of the personalised state made the use of military power both attractive and feasible.

As already noted, when the armed factions decided on their operations they commanded little power.[8] They needed to increase their military

power and attract more fighters and weaponry. Even though military power alone does not make a political actor, it is the most important starting point in these two wars. By increasing their coercive power, the factions could affect the courses of action open to the regime.

Several factors were tapped into to recruit new fighters.[9] First, the rebel leaders used existing dissidence to work for their cause. Both nationals of the two states and mercenaries were recruited to fight in the two wars. Liberian and Somalia nationals, dissidents to the repressive regimes, had gathered in neighbouring states. The dissidents drew on a larger group of exiles scattered beyond the regions, Liberians in the United States and Somalis mostly in the Gulf States. While the dissidents had plans to return to their country, the exiles resided in other states to earn a living. Often the dissidents had a personal axe to grind with the regime in their home country. Exiles provided money and material for the armed challenge.[10] Apart from the money sent to families, in the case of Somalia, representatives of the rebel movements also taxed these exiles.[11]

A mercenary is generally understood to be a soldier who takes part in the hostilities of war motivated by personal financial gain and who is not a citizen of the territory in which the war is fought.[12] Mercenaries in the case of Liberia were recruited from among the wider groups of dissidents on the African continent. The training the Liberian rebels received in Libya brought men from different parts of Africa together. Taylor recruited them to fight in his force. Originally, the NPFL was a movement espousing pan-African ideas, as membership was open to all Africans willing to join the fight.[13] At least eight other West African nationalities were fighting in the NPFL. Fighters came from Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. Apart from those of the first two nationalities, who were mostly likely sent by their government, they were recruited with the promise of support for uprisings in their home countries.[14] In Somalia, mercenary activity was displayed by the use of South African pilots who flew the Somali aircraft. They bombed the civilian population in the north at the beginning of the war. Furthermore, Libyan soldiers were said to be fighting in Somali army ranks.[15]

A second factor that helped the rebel groups to recruit was their choice to start operations in regions that harboured a potential for opposition. Both Taylor and Aidid chose a border region where they counted on finding support. The NPFL deliberately chose Nimba County. The history of the people in the area, who had suffered after producing an unsuccessful opposition leader, made this region a fertile ground for support. Aidid started operations in an area where his clan members were to be found, who had also suffered under the Barre regime, which had targeted them before. Central Somalia had witnessed fierce competition between the Marehan clan of President Barre and Aidid's Hawiye clan, whose grazing grounds Barre coveted. Barre's regime had confiscated herds, fenced off

grazing grounds and dug exclusive watering holes, thereby antagonising the Hawiye.

Apart from choosing a region where they hoped to find support, the rebels chose a season for their attack when the local population would be more inclined to follow them and the war could most easily be fought. The NPFL invaded at the end of December, right after the end of the rainy season, when the countryside was more accessible.[16] In particular, the SNM in Somalia concerned itself with the availability of fighters: it invaded in the rainy season, when the camel herders could leave the herds in the care of youngsters and plenty of food was available.[17] Perhaps it was hoped that the inaccessibility of the countryside during the rainy season would hamper the government troops more than the herders, who were at home in the region and very mobile with their light armament.[18]

The recruitment of the rebels after the start of the invasion had two distinct features. Not only did the factions recruit mainly in the countryside and try to use the population for the struggle by cloaking their aims in countryside terms, but they also recruited not only men but also adolescents, children and, in the case of Liberia, women.

Regarding the first feature, the invasions started in the countryside and the faction leaders wanted to use the potential of the countryside.[19] Both in Somalia and Liberia the factions were made up of a core of disaffected professionals, as noted earlier, who used the countryside's potential for rebellion but had no clear affinity with it. The men they recruited often had an ambiguous attitude towards the city. They were critical of city life and all it represented, but at the same time wanted to taste the fruits of the city and its concomitant way of life.

In the two states before the start of the wars, there was a clear separation between the countryside and the city. These two spheres interacted little. Disaffection existed in the countryside over the role of the ruling elite in Monrovia and Mogadishu, who did not visit or invest in the countryside other than in lucrative business the profits of which would disappear to the city. The rebels made use of this disaffection. A related factor was the overlap between ethnic and economic grievances on the part of the countryside population.[20] Some ethnic and clan groups had become prominent in successful trade and business undertakings. The resentment against their wealth in the generally poorer countryside was great.

In Liberia, the trade in the interior of the country was in the hands of Mandingo clansmen. The Mandingo, who were Muslims, supported the Doe regime. The hatred of the local population towards the relatively well-to-do Mandingo was used by Taylor and his men to create support for his invasion.[21] The use of this situation had a dual purpose:

> For the NPFL . . . the exploitation of the anti-trader animus served
> the twin purposes of terrorizing and driving out the local repre-

sentatives of the Guinean migrant trading diaspora [Mandingo] and building popular support for the rebel movement through cancellation of onerous debts owed to local traders.[22]

In the south of Somalia there was a recurring confrontation between the factions of Morgan and Jess. This confrontation overlapped with the recruitment of their militias, which represented the Herti traders from Kismayo in Morgan's faction and the Ogadeni herders from the countryside in Jess's movement.[23] The respective leaders had taken up the competition between the indigenous cattle herders of the south and the emigrant town traders. The clan identity and the economic resentments overlapped and were used as instruments by the faction leaders to create a following.

The other feature of the rebel recruitment was the use of women, children and adolescents in the factions. The invading rebels forced a choice on the inhabitants of the areas they were active in: either to join the rebel forces or to be seen as an enemy. When the wars started, the social structure of society inevitably became affected. The wars sent families fleeing and in the process children became separated from their parents, parents were killed and families broke down. Often the faction provided an attractive alternative for war orphans. It offered a relative measure of security and often provided sustenance.

In Liberia in particular, recruitment of fighters was not limited to the male population; women and children fought along with them. Women could flee or accommodate the rebel forces by either fighting in their ranks or submitting to the wishes of the rebels, i.e. serving as maids or 'wives'.[24] Women did serve actively as fighters on the battlefield. Special units of the NPFL, for example, were made up exclusively of females. The INPFL stood out for its use of female combatants.[25]

Children were also recruited.[26] Children were often preferred as fighters because they could be manipulated and they would be more obedient to orders. They were usually selected to carry out the most dangerous tasks, such as marching at the front so they would be the first victims of landmines. In the case of Liberia, the NPFL actively recruited child soldiers.[27] They were organised and served Taylor as a personal guard. The child soldiers were said to be responsible for some of the worst atrocities during the war.[28] Their loyalty was maintained by supplying them with drugs or alcohol.[29] In Somalia, women and children also performed combat functions but they were not as clearly incorporated into the organisations of the rebels as in Liberia.[30] The Somali clan traditions prevented women and children from being harmed in any conflict between clans.[31] There are indications, however, that women also operated weapons and fought with the faction fighters.[32]

Teenagers also played an important part in the factions. The backbone

of the factions came to be made up of these youngsters. A large part of the populations in both Liberia and Somalia were adolescents under the age of 18. The faction leaders tapped into the disaffection that existed among teenagers because of a lack of educational and job opportunities.[33] The youngsters were dissatisfied with society, were barely literate and provided a fertile recruiting ground for rebel movements. They were said to harbour the most important, and indeed the only, revolutionary potential on the African continent.[34] The warring factions used this potential to their advantage.

These recruitment practices increased the military power of the rebel factions. Apart from fighters, military material was required to strengthen the factions. There were several ways in which the rebels acquired weaponry. The rebels raided government arsenals, they received supplies from abroad and they constructed new weaponry themselves. First, the raiding of government stockpiles: in an important measure the factions were able to capture weaponry housed in police stations, army encampments and government warehouses. These weapons were distributed among the rebels in the factions. The armaments used in the two wars were mostly small arms, which were relatively easy to operate and maintain.[35]

In Liberia, before the attack on Christmas Eve 1989 the rebels were believed to have infiltrated Liberian territory to try to procure weapons.[36] These attempts were not very successful, and this indicates that at the beginning of the invasion the NPFL probably did not possess enough weaponry. This is confirmed by the description of the rebel weaponry at the beginning of the invasion: pistols, shotguns, machetes, knives, hammers, axes, sticks, and bows and arrows.[37] The NPFL managed to capture arms and ammunition from government strongholds. However, these were not the main source of weaponry. Foreign transfers, as will be argued below, were more important.

Somalia's Cold War sponsors, the Soviet Union and the United States, had provided this state with large numbers of weapons. It had also received weapons from Libya, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Italy, Romania, East Germany, Iraq, Iran, South Africa and China.[38] This situation left the Somalis to fight out their disputes with some of the most advanced weapon systems in Africa.[39] The war, according to one observer, was a 'museum of the effects of the Cold War'.[40] The night President Siad Barre fled office, all the government armament stockpiles were opened to the Somali population. The faction leaders even managed to get hold of tanks.

The second way to acquire weaponry was through supplies from abroad. Both rebel factions received substantial support from outside sources. Mostly it was neighbouring states that were involved in this transfer of weaponry. The NPFL in Liberia received weaponry from Libya. A marked change can be observed in the weaponry that the NPFL employed. In March 1990 they fought with hunting rifles and bows and

arrows, and in May they attacked with advanced weaponry. This change is most likely to have been due to weapon supplies from Libya, which seemed to have been conditional on results, and on commitment to the overthrow of Doe. The NPFL weapons received from Libya were mostly old machine-guns. After the collapse of the regime, advanced weaponry was also bought on the commercial market with the profits of the economic exploitation of Taylorland. In the war in Somalia, the Ethiopian army proved a major source of weaponry for the Somali factions.[41] Ethiopian officers sold weapons that had 'fallen off the back of a lorry' to Somalis.[42] This trade was especially important after the fall of the Mengistu regime in Ethiopia in May 1991.

The third way to get new weapons was through local production. Local craftsmanship and expertise were used to construct new weapons from old or disused parts of other pieces of weaponry. The Somali fighters, especially, excelled in designing new weaponry. Jeeps were transformed into 'Mad Max' vehicles or 'technicals' by having their roofs sawn off to make room for heavy weapons, often large machine-guns. One group of rebels used the cannon and rocket pod from a fighter plane, which was placed on a truck, and anti-aircraft guns were fired horizontally.[43] The technicals shared the characteristic with small arms that they allowed the fighters to be highly mobile.

By becoming a large military force, using all these factors to their advantage, the factions increased their command of coercive power. The military force of the factions put pressure on the regimes in Monrovia and Mogadishu. The presidents could either give in to military force and the demands of the factions to leave office, or run the risk of being killed as soon as a faction reached the presidential palace. A continuation of the regime on the old footing was no longer possible. The choice of the regime was substantially affected by the military operations of the factions. The military pressure increased to such an extent that Doe and Barre were referred to as the mayors of Monrovia and Mogadishu respectively to describe their decreased positions. They could no longer claim to exercise rule over the whole state as they had done before the start of the war.

Military power is but one of the means that can be used by one actor to affect the choice of another actor.[44] In the case of warfare, military force is one of the most important. However, as already noted, the exercise of coercive power alone does not make a political actor. The exercise of military power on its own is very costly. Manpower and weaponry require constant replenishment and control. To reduce the cost of exercising military power, the establishment of authority is necessary. Reliance on authority is far less costly, because when the basis for the exercise of power is not questioned, the operational costs will decrease. In order to exercise power more effectively, authority is essential. In Chapter 1, authority was defined as the use of power with claims on legitimacy.

Legitimacy

The concept of legitimacy has been made operational by distinguishing between existing principles and conventions on which legitimacy can be based, beliefs that are held about legitimacy, and actions confirming the existence of legitimacy. They form the basis on which obedience can be demanded from the less powerful and the powerless. How did the factions, using mostly coercive power, achieve legitimacy?

Conventions

The factions in Liberia and Somalia referred to several conventions on which legitimacy was based. Claims were made to represent specific ethnic and clan groups, and the factions referred to principles of authority that already existed in the two states.

A convention to which the factions turned to establish legitimacy was the idea of ethnicity and clan. In both Liberia and Somalia, the regimes of Doe and Barre had operated by referring to and using ethnic and clan labels respectively. This had been a practice at least since the military coups in both states. These categories proved useful in exercising state power and had attained the status of a convention. Once established rule controls the most important sources of power, it can create for itself the legitimation it needs to claim authority. Clan and ethnic identity were important in this respect. Both Taylor and Aidid used references to ethnic and clan identity respectively in regard to their factions.[45]

In the case of Liberia, President Doe used ethnicity and ethnic categories when he gained power in 1980 to justify the favours bestowed upon his own ethnic group at the cost of the previously ruling Americo-Liberians. The Doe regime was mainly based on supporters from his own Krahn ethnic group. However, soon after the takeover of power, the Doe regime ensured the cooperation of the Mandingo traders and prominent Americo-Liberian families to establish his rule. In Somalia, Barre also used clan identity to his own advantage. His own clan, the Marehan, occupied the most important positions in society, together with the Ogadeni and Dolbahante, all part of the Darod clan family. The MOD rule was almost exclusive, and these clans benefited disproportionately from the regime.

In the same vein, Taylor and his men referred to ethnic categories to increase the legitimacy of their armed challenge. Taylor argued that Doe and his ethnic group had abused the state long enough; now it was the turn of other groups to benefit. In Somalia a similar argument was made. Barre's rule was based on a small clan basis, which had had its day; now it was the turn for others. Both Taylor and Aidid consciously put to use these existing identities to gain legitimacy.

The area for the invasions has already been touched upon, but in this respect too the choice is striking. The invading forces in Liberia chose an area for their invasion that had a history of opposition to the government and had suffered under its retaliatory measures. During the invasion, ethnic identity was called upon and used.[46] The choice of that particular area for invasion may signal that the NPFL men thought that if they invaded in another area they were not sure of getting enough support for their cause and would be more likely to fail. In the event, support was slow in coming, and the call on ethnic identity to support the invasion worked only to a limited extent.[47] Similarly, in Somalia the factions started their operations in areas where their clans lived. This applied to the USC but also to the other factions. By choosing an area where the related clan families lived, who were antagonistic towards the regime, the chances of success for the invasions would be greater. The claims made to represent particular clan interests were comparable to the operation of the Somali state, which had been guided by specific clan interests. Existing resentments based on identity were put to use to create an ethnic- and clan-based opposition.

However, the use of the identities posed several problems. First, calling on this local opposition potential on the basis of ethnic or clan identity had its limits. In the case of Liberia, only a few of Taylor's men belonged to the ethnic groups dominant in the region, the Gio and Mano. Taylor himself belonged to the elite of the pre-Doe days, which had dominated Liberian politics since the foundation of the Liberian state. The NPFL men partially shared the identities but in the end claimed the whole state domain controlled by Doe on this same limited basis – that is, neither represented all inhabitants of the state. This did prove to be divisive. Furthermore, the use of ethnic and clan identity had another limitation. They became less and less important during the course of the two wars.[48] When we look at the membership of a faction, we see that this was not exclusively based on ethnicity and clan. Most factions included members of different ethnic and clan groups.[49] It frequently happened that fighters switched sides if other factions had more to offer.[50] The appeal to identity to create legitimacy thus had some striking limitations. This, however, did not stop the faction leaders from using it.[51]

In the case of Somalia, the flexible nature of clan identity can also be seen in the many clan alliances. These were temporary but cut across clan divisions. Furthermore, the fighting often focused on the internal Hawiye clan conflict between Aidid and Ali Mahdi; if the clan was the primary source for identity, this cannot be clearly explained. The clans were used as a recruiting base: 'those fighting each other for power [used] the name of tribes for their personal advantage'.[52] Despite problems of a decreasing appeal and a mismatch between ethnic and clan claims and the state domain, the faction leaders continued to use conventions about ethnic and clan identity to claim legitimacy.

Apart from using ethnic and clan identity, the factions used a second principle on which legitimate authority had been based. Authority in Liberia and Somalia, before the wars, consisted of a patrimonial system. Patrimonialism relies on a large role for an individual leader, who establishes authority with the aid of a patron–client network. The personalised leadership has authority because it controls the network. This is seen as a legitimate source of authority. Both Samuel Doe and Siad Barre were patrimonial leaders, using patron–client networks to exercise authority.[53]

Patrimonialism had not always existed in the two states. Until the nineteenth century the structures of Liberian and Somali societies had some similarities.[54] Liberia was a consensus-based society.[55] Men and women were organised in groups according to their age. Every village would have women and men organised in age groups consulting and taking decisions communally. Chiefdoms were introduced as an administrative measure to extend control from Monrovia to the hinterland at the beginning of the twentieth century. Individual power came to prominence in Liberia with the rule of President Tubman from the 1940s and was confirmed in the rule of Samuel Doe.[56]

Somalia did not have a strong tradition of chieftains or individual leadership either.[57] The basic organising unit was the household, which was concerned with livestock and grazing grounds. A patriarchal system was in place, with elders taking decisions in a consultative process. Women were excluded. The rule of elders was exercised through conventions and the threat of social sanctions. The social structure was relatively loose, but 'Xeer', a social contract based on agreed practices between the clans, governed the whole of Somalia. Barre's coup, after a period of post-independence weak multi-party democracy, gave rise to a strong personalised regime.

Both Liberia and Somalia witnessed a cult of personality of their leader under the autocratic rule of Doe and Barre. In Liberia, even during the Tubman and Tolbert regimes, a cult of the president existed.[58] Doe's personality cult found expression, among other ways, in his birthday celebrations. The history of the two states immediately preceding the two wars was thus strongly marked by personalised rule.

The leadership of both Charles Taylor and Mohammed Farah Aidid also came to be based on these principles. The role of the individual leader was important in both factions. Taylor came to prominence because of his organising skills and his extensive network of contacts built up during his time in exile. Aidid possessed important military expertise. These skills helped them to occupy top positions within the factions. The nature of the organisations became increasingly authoritarian, with the individual role of the leader gaining prominence. A personality cult was created around Taylor. The NPFL child soldiers, especially, worshipped their leader.[59] In

Somalia, Aidid's military success brought him to prominence, giving him high regard in Somali society.

The factions also used patron–client ties to extend power and attain legitimacy. They tried to use the old patron–client network to further their own position. This continued during the course of the war, as the elite realised that the state could no longer fulfil its basic task of guaranteeing security. The alternative provided by the factions, who controlled large parts of the country, became attractive.

In the case of Liberia, after the start of the armed challenge the NPFL came to rely to a large extent on the old power elite of the pre-Doe days, the Americo-Liberians, which had accommodated the Doe regime as well.[60] In Somalia the USC also came to rely on the old power elite. A look at the background of the elite that led the armed factions shows that they had strong ties with the top of the patron–client network in Somalia. These links were used to build a new network incorporating parts of the power elite of the Barre days.[61]

Thus not only were the patrimonial structures copied, but attempts were made to actually take them over from the previous regime, with the various factions competing to attract them. The fact that these networks were not captured intact significantly contributed to the continuation of the wars. Patrimonial conventions were relatively abstract, and so the factions tried to make their claim on legitimacy through patrimonialism tangible. There were several ways in which they did this. The factions placed strong emphasis on reaching and occupying the state capital, because this was the seat of legitimate patrimonial authority.[62] Furthermore, the factions claimed patrimonial legitimacy through control over currency.[63] Previously, the regime had exercised legitimate authority partly because it controlled the local currencies, the Liberian dollar and the Somali shilling respectively. A national currency can have great binding power, and can be seen as a confirmation of legitimacy. The existence of alternative currencies or black markets is a sign of a lack of legitimacy.[64]

In both Liberia and Somalia there were examples of faction leaders trying to introduce new currencies to strengthen their position and to undermine their opponent. For example, after the regime collapsed in 1991, a delivery of new Somali shillings arrived from London in Mogadishu in November 1991. Ali Mahdi used this money to reinforce his claim of legitimacy, because it was money that had been ordered by the previous regime.[65] The fact that he could distribute it would strengthen, he probably thought, his claim to represent the government of Somalia. However, the population did not place any trust in the new banknotes, and Aidid benefited because in his part of Somalia the old banknotes, which had been circulated by the previous regime, continued to be legal tender. Similarly, the introduction of a new currency in Liberia by the interim government turned out to be a failure.[66] Taylor's continued support and

acceptance of the Liberian dollar can be seen as a reinforcement of his legitimate claims to authority. Taylor strictly prohibited the use of the new currency, the Liberty, circulated by the interim government.[67] Apart from ethnic and clan conventions and patrimonialism, referring to beliefs that people hold about legitimacy could further strengthen the legitimacy of the factions.

Beliefs

Several beliefs that were held about legitimacy can be identified in the two cases. The social background of the leadership and the use of military skill and religion and symbolism were important in this respect. First, the social background of the leaders of the factions contributed to claims on legitimacy and authority.[68] The deposed presidents and the rebel leaders came from the same social circles.[69] Both Taylor and Aidid had served in the upper echelons of the state apparatus and had benefited from the rule of the leader they wanted to depose. Both Taylor and Aidid found enhancement of their legitimacy from their past role and by activating their connections among the elite.[70] This social background made them more likely candidates than other contenders from other strata of society. They could be seen as legitimately representing the resentments against the regime.

Before Doe came to power, Taylor was involved in opposition politics, mostly from the United States, where he was a student. When Doe came to power in 1980, Taylor was offered a job in the new administration, even though he was part of the Americo-Liberian elite whom Doe had previously opposed. Here too it can be seen that the new leadership accommodated the old elite in order to rule. Taylor served the Doe regime for five years before falling from grace. Aidid, like Barre, was a military man. After independence he was involved in the setting up of the integrated Somali army, which Barre was eventually to lead. Barre incarcerated his rival after his accession to power in 1969 until calling on him to serve his country in the war against Ethiopia in the 1970s. Not only their connections but also their previous roles helped the faction leaders gain legitimacy.

Second, the use of military power itself created legitimacy.[71] When violence is a way to show power, the use of the military instrument can be a way of claiming legitimacy. In Somali society before the start of the war, violence was highly valued: 'Within this society the more violent a person is, the more he is seen to be brave and commands respect'.[72] Traditionally, a Somali man who did not confront his enemies was considered not a man. Aidid derived a large measure of authority from his use of violence and his military exploits in chasing out the Barre regime.[73]

Third, belief in legitimacy was also enhanced through references made to local traditions and religion.[74] When a faction or faction leader is seen

to be in possession of a special gift or attribute, this can enhance the belief in his authority. In both Liberia and Somalia the war leaders took up local beliefs.[75]

In Liberia the Poro and Sande sects had for centuries guided village life.[76] Taylor undoubtedly wanted these beliefs to work for him and his faction.[77] The mobilisation of the sect members was not as successful as the application of the sect's methods to create a new loyalty, i.e. the swearing of oaths and the use of initiation rites. Taylor deliberately used 'obsessive fear' among his men and made them swear an oath to him: 'If I go against you I will die in war'.[78] During the initiation ceremony the fighters had to drink sheep's blood mixed with gin and black powder. Both senior officers and fighters had to take the oath. Initiation rites often involved the killing of local people. By making the fighters kill someone who was familiar to them, they made sure a return to their community was cut off.[79] Killing as a symbolic gesture found resonance in local culture in Liberia:

> For most of them it was not the lust to kill, it was the symbolic gesture, the belief that the slaughter was an act of devotion to power, and power was the force which bound society together – by bringing the death of the enemy.[80]

Furthermore, fighters were forcibly tattooed so that they could be identified, and again these marks prevented them from returning to their villages. Charles Taylor joined his men in their beliefs. He had 'juju charms hanging from his neck and shoulders'.[81] Witch doctors performed rituals that supposedly made the fighters resistant to bullets, machetes and axes.[82]

There also existed a cult of the warrior in Liberia that extended legitimacy to the fighters belonging to the factions.[83] In prehistoric societies, elaborately decorated weapons and, even more so, dress and attire served to distinguish warriors.[84] A belief in spirits was an important feature of the Poro and Sande sects. The Poro authorities, when they were in contact with the spirit world, would use white clay to paint their faces. The sect's officials traditionally impersonated the spirits through the use of masks and disguises.[85] The fighters in Liberia hoped that using masks and disguises would transfer spiritual power to them. The disguises obscured the distinction between male and female. In Liberia, a traditional warrior from the forests would be gender neutral: 'Warriors are free to play with gender identity, to draw power from the deliberate conflation of categories, to demonstrate that qualities of courage, strength, and supernatural prowess are not limited by biological endowment'.[86] This is illustrated by the descriptions of the rebels in Liberia, who often went into battle elaborately dressed: 'Some are kitted out for battle in women's wigs and dresses. One wore a flowery lavatory seat cover on his head. One fighter sauntered down the road in Pan Am airline socks'.[87] Similarly, in Somalia

the young men who were manning the technicals were described as 'wearing women's wigs and dark glasses'.[88] However, dressing up was not as prevalent in Somalia as it was in Liberia.

In Somalia, local beliefs initially did not play an important role, but religion started to become more prominent with the advent on the battle scene of Islamic fighters in 1992. A large majority of the Somali population were Muslim. The Muslim fundamentalist group Ittihad al-Islamiya used the power vacuum to conquer parts of south-western Somalia and wanted to establish an Islamic state.[89] Their attempt failed. Aidid saw the attraction of the binding power of Islam, and in his future vision of Somalia he wanted to introduce Islam as the state religion.[90] In the course of 1994, Islamic law, the Shari'a, was introduced in Ali Mahdi's part of Mogadishu. Not only did beliefs and conventions aid in creating legitimacy, but actions that confirmed the existence of legitimacy could be witnessed too.

Actions

The actor exercising power, i.e. the powerful, can find legitimacy in the actions of those it exercises power over, i.e. the powerless. Here legitimacy finds confirmation in the actions of people. One example has already been mentioned, namely, the oaths people had to swear when joining the NPFL rebel faction in Liberia. This public action confirmed the legitimacy of the faction and its leader. Actions to confirm legitimacy could also be found in the popular reaction to the factions. Furthermore, the fact that ceasefires, once concluded, held well shows that the fighters were compliant with their leaders' orders. The role of foreign actors in the two conflicts was also important in the confirmation of legitimacy. Finally, contact with the media was a further way in which the factions tried to confer legitimacy on themselves.

First, it was particularly the actions of the regular armies and their declining discipline that conferred legitimacy on the factions in the two wars. The army was meant to ensure the security of the state and the population. When the invasions started, however, the army turned against the population. The inability to react with the proper means and strategies to combat the rebel incursions damaged people's view of the regime, thereby decreasing the regime's legitimacy and increasing the legitimacy of the faction.

After the Liberian rebels had invaded the border region with Côte d'Ivoire, the popular support they hoped for was not forthcoming.[91] However, the reaction of the regular army to the rebel attack created the support that the invasion forces needed. This became so important that the armed interactions were described as stemming from 'outrage at army repression' and not from the initiative of the faction.[92] The AFL was using scorched earth tactics and collective punishments against the population

out of frustration at not being able to target the rebels directly: 'The Liberian government appears to be carrying out a form of scorched earth policy there [in Nimba County] resettling some of the remaining villagers – the majority have fled – and burning houses in an effort to root out the rebel forces'.[93] Refugees recounted stories of the excesses of the army, resorting to 'shooting at anything that moves, looting and burning villages en route'.[94] The uncontrolled behaviour of the Liberian army helped the NPFL's cause. It seems likely that had the army not behaved in the manner it did, the invasion might not have gathered the support it needed. Similarly, in Somalia the support for the rebels became considerable as soon as the Somali army started operating against the rebel forces.[95] The Somali air force, in particular, was bombing the population in the north indiscriminately.

> The surveillance planes would identify the long caravan-like rows of people. Then the planes would come and drop their bombs. . . . They would even bomb the trees to deprive us of shelter. If there was a piece of clothing on a tree, that immediately became a target.[96]

The reaction of the regular army to the invasion was an important element in the success of the factions in the two wars.[97] As has already been mentioned, apart from the methods that the armies used to strike at the rebels, the decline in army discipline caused the population to lose faith in the government forces, thereby increasing the legitimacy of the rebel factions.

The regular armies could no longer take care of the security of the population. The actions of the factions against the army and the state increased their legitimacy because they were seen to be doing something for the population. The background and organisation of the armies in Liberia and Somalia were very different in the two countries. While the Liberian army had limited operational experience, the Somali army had participated in substantial battlefield actions. The two armies had in common that both were organised on a narrow basis of ethnic and clan identity.

By the time of the invasion, Doe's Krahn supporters played important roles in the army. The Liberian soldiers had received little training in jungle warfare, even though a large part of the country was made up of forest. In Somalia, one clan group, Barre's Ogadeni supporters, also dominated the army at the time of the invasion. However, the Somali army had received more training, in particular because it had been involved in armed conflict with Ethiopia since Barre's coup.

Mutinies, desertions, forced recruitment – these practices occurred in the government armies during the advance of the rebel movements. In

Liberia, before the NPFL assault on the capital in 1990, large numbers of soldiers of the government army had deserted, taking their weapons with them. The army recruited convicts by opening the prisons and forcibly arming the inmates in order to strengthen the depleted forces. Street youths were also rounded up and armed. A government army officer commented to a diplomat that 'once he had issued his men with ammunition, he could not trust them to obey orders'.[98] Barre also forcibly recruited new men for the Somali National Army: 'These men were abducted by armed soldiers and loaded onto military transports and taken to special crash training barracks'.[99] In particular, young men from the streets of Mogadishu and the south were conscripted to fill the depleted ranks in the army. They were 'taken to ... Mogadishu, given crash training, had their heads shaved and then sent out. They had no idea where they were, not the slightest sense of direction about the region'.[100] These practices did not lead to an increase in the legitimacy of the government.

While these actions on the part of the regular armies did not help the legitimacy of the regime, the number of people who joined the ranks of the rebel forces can be seen as confirming the legitimacy of the factions. When the factions reached the capital to depose the president they had a large number of supporters under arms.[101]

Second, legitimacy can also be confirmed in the actions of these fighters when the ceasefires that had been concluded by their faction leaders held. This signifies compliance by the fighters over whom the faction leader claims control. Strikingly, important ceasefires that were concluded between the main warring parties did largely hold. The faction leaders could elicit compliance from their fighters, which is a strong confirmation of legitimacy. One example of an important ceasefire was the Bamako agreement in November 1990, after which a relative measure of peace returned to Liberia. This peace was successful to such an extent that Taylor could consolidate his power during his reign over Taylorland. In the case of Somalia, the March 1992 ceasefire in Mogadishu between the main protagonists confronting each other there held relatively well. This is confirmed by a significant drop in the number of armed confrontations and the fact that Aidid felt confident enough to leave the city and yet could still claim his hold on power.

Third, important in claiming legitimacy were the actions of the foreign actors involved in the wars in Liberia and Somalia. Legitimacy was conferred because the factions, in particular their leaders, functioned as negotiating partners. Ceasefire negotiations were important in this respect. Both Taylor and Aidid entered the negotiating room because negotiations meant that the actors were recognised as legitimate. Initially they negotiated to see their positions officially recognised.[102]

In the case of Liberia, in October 1990 Taylor controlled most of the country and therefore could in practice only lose from ECOMOG.[103]

Together with financial pressure and encouragement from his regional backers, Taylor became inclined to conclude a ceasefire, which took effect in November 1990. A benefit of these negotiations was that the position of his forces was recognised and he was a partner in negotiations. Even though ECOWAS had intervened to stop his advance, the organisation could not ignore him. In the course of the war Taylor lost substantial territory. Negotiations became attractive to formalise what remained of his position. In all, 'He was determined not to lose at the conference table what he had won on the battlefield'.[104] His position at the negotiating table shows an almost inverse relationship with his position on the battlefield. In the end, when the Liberian territory was divided between a great number of warring factions, and the NPFL was no longer the most powerful faction, his position was formalised in the 1995 Abuja accord when he became part of the collective presidency, the Council of State.[105]

Similarly, in Somalia negotiations were attractive for Aidid when he controlled the largest part of Mogadishu. After those negotiations, he had his hands free to extend his power in the rest of Somalia. His position was formalised and a ceasefire followed in March 1992. In the course of that year Aidid became the only faction leader outside the consensus reached by the other factions to welcome the outside intervention force. He was seen as the main obstacle to peace, which was in effect a confirmation of his stature. Non-compliance could thus also be an important way to gain recognition. When Aidid became the target of attacks and was hunted down by the UN troops, his popularity increased.

Not only international negotiations but also peace initiatives by prominent international activists were seen as conferring legitimacy on faction leaders. These occasions provided opportunities to increase the stature of the faction leader, through photo calls and attention by the international media. These all worked to confer additional legitimacy. In Liberia, for example, a visit to Taylor by the former US president Jimmy Carter in a peace initiative was explained as international recognition of the NPFL.[106] In Somalia, Robert Oakley, the US special envoy to Somalia, was criticised for negotiating with the faction leaders, partly because these talks could confer a sense of recognition of these leaders.[107] Aidid strove for international recognition and in 1995 managed to get confirmation by Libya of his claims to the presidency.[108] These international peace missions were seen as mechanisms through which legitimacy could be conferred.

Contacts with the international media were also important in gaining international legitimacy. In particular, Charles Taylor excelled in this field. He had a satellite telephone with which he called the international media to present his side of the story: 'Taylor was to become a regular performer on the BBC especially. Revealing a fine talent for public relations, Taylor used the media to build a national and international profile which gave

him a vital advantage'.[109] The media profile and the fact that he was sought for his commentary were a confirmation of his role.

The most important event serving to confirm legitimacy, also in an international perspective, was Taylor's victory in the elections in 1997, which gave him the legitimacy he had been striving for since the invasion in 1989. The international recognition of the election result was crucial in the establishment of his presidency.

It was not only references to existing conventions, such as ethnic and clan categories and patrimonialism that strengthened the legitimacy of the factions involved in the two wars. References to social background, military standing, religion and symbolism, and actions confirming the factions' existence, such as popular support, compliance of fighters and international negotiations, contributed to their legitimacy. This legitimacy facilitated the exercise of power. While power was the capacity to affect the behaviour of others, authority signified the right to do so. The factions and particularly their leadership possessed authority, based on these claims on legitimacy.

Authority

Authority may be defined as the legitimate use of power. A seat at the negotiating table, popular acclamation and the support of the fighters – these achievements were important for the establishment of authority. With the possession of legitimacy, coercive power became supplemented by authority. This authority was achieved by the time the state collapsed. The actors were thus in control of political power. The collapse of the state did not form a break in this respect. The actors continued to exercise power and to claim and extend legitimacy, and thus continued to possess authority. This has already been demonstrated by the discussion of the continued attempts to take over the old patron–client networks, the control over currencies, the introduction of Islamic law and the engagement in negotiations. These occurred after the collapse of the state and did not diminish in importance or intensity.

Rather, these competitions became fiercer. During the course of the wars, challenges to authority occurred, both from within the factions and from outside. Within the factions, important splits occurred. These splits were marked by disagreements over the ambitions of the faction leaders and the control over the client networks. Internal challenges concerned the top position of the patron–client hierarchy. The presidential ambitions of both Aidid and Taylor were seen as a great threat. In the case of Liberia, these challenges became apparent early on, when Prince Johnson left the NPFL in early 1990. In the case of Somalia, Ali Mahdi's assumption of the role of interim president frustrated Aidid's ambitions. His

leadership did receive some confirmation with his appointment as USC chairman in 1991. The lack of recognition for his exploits and his role in deposing the president, which he expected would grant him the top seat, was a disappointment for him.

External challenges also complicated the authority of the faction leaders. The intervention forces, in the case of Liberia, objected to the powerful position of Taylor, who was seen as an obstacle to peace in the region. His success was one of the most important reasons for the ECOWAS intervention.[110] In the case of Somalia, the factions, which had hitherto cooperated to remove the regime in Mogadishu, challenged each other's authority. This issue will be dealt with further in the next chapter, in the discussion of the interests the factions fought for in the two wars.

Rule

The last element of the definition of a political system, as described in the introductory chapter, was rule. Rule is defined as the persistent exercise of authority. The system of rule before the advent of the armed factions consisted of patrimonialism. The state functioned at one extreme of the continuum of rule, i.e. emphasis on the ultimate authority of one individual. For the factions, it was attractive to use this existing system of patrimonial rule, not only in order to promote legitimacy but also to establish stable rule through the accommodation of the elite and the patron–client network. This stable rule was attractive because, like the working of authority, the establishment of rule would mean less expenditure on costly coercive power.[111] With the assurance of peace and security and authoritative power, military force would become less of a necessity in order to rule.

As already noted with regard to ethnic and clan identities, once rule is established, it can create its own sources for legitimation, because it commands both coercive and authoritative power.[112] Alternatives could be eliminated. The rule that is present can give shape to its own need, and subsequently rule perpetuates itself.

However, the establishment of stable patrimonial rule proved problematic for the armed factions. First, as already noted, the ambitions of the individual leaders were challenged. Not one but many faction leaders had ambitions towards the top position in the patrimonial system of rule. Challenges came from within the factions, and rivalries existed between the factions.

Second, the claims that were made to this position of authority were all based on the same sources of legitimacy. Claims were made to represent clan and ethnic interests. These claims to legitimacy by referring to ethnicity and clan became less successful during the course of the two wars. While these claims were initially productive, other clan and ethnic groups,

which hitherto had not been represented, started operations under the same banner. This limited the binding force of these identities. A process of fragmentation started in which, as noted, membership of a faction became more important than identity.

Third, the complete takeover of the old client network proved difficult. After the collapse of the regime, the factions did not manage to capture the existing patrimonial system intact and control it for lengthy periods, which could have been the most substantial legitimating factor in their claim to rule. For the population, including the top tiers of the patrimonial hierarchy, there was no alternative actor that could guarantee their security.[113] The state had collapsed. This made faction rule attractive. However, other factions started to compete for the same favours of the client network. As already noted, it was common for actors to switch allegiances if other factions could present more stability or favours. This pragmatism made control very difficult.

During the course of the two wars, all the factions drew on the same sources of legitimacy. The rebel leaders were expected, after the removal of the presidents, to try to retain the structures of society, which would be beneficial for the establishment of a replacement system of patrimonial rule. The population had to be guaranteed a measure of peace and security to promote the faction leader's rule. Once this was established, taxation, among other things, could be put in place and production could resume. The transition to a new and stable patrimonial system of rule occurred most notably in Liberia during the period of Taylorland and in northern Somalia after the declaration of independence of Somaliland.[114] In the case of central and southern Somalia and in the later stages of war in Liberia, the presence of many different factions made it difficult for the rebel leaders to maintain a stable and peaceful system of rule.

These developments do not discredit the claim that the factions in the Liberian and Somali wars were political actors. Not only did they continue to exercise power because they controlled coercive force, they also controlled authoritative power, partly by providing their patron–client network with opportunities and a measure of security. Legitimacy came to be derived from the continued existence of the factions and their operation. The focus for legitimacy and authority shifted more towards the personality and role of the faction leader, e.g. personality cults. As will be argued in more detail in the next chapter, it was the desire to extend these claims to legitimacy and authority that drove the two wars. This chapter, so far, has demonstrated that the actor in a war in which the state has collapsed is indeed a political actor.

A political actor and trinitarian war

According to the definition of politics used in this study, an actor should be seen as political when its actions involve to a significant extent power, authority and rule. As this chapter has shown, the factions involved in the Liberian and Somali wars were concerned with these elements; indeed, they strove to acquire them.

They started out by exercising power mainly by military means. Among the ways they increased their legitimacy were appeals to ethnicity and clan identity, established modes of rule, religion and military skill. These appeals found confirmation in the public support the factions managed to acquire. In both cases the factions were able to recruit large numbers of people and depose the regime. After the collapse of the regime, the political system of the factions did not collapse with it. Rather, the system started to gather its own momentum and created its own legitimacy by its very existence. Claims on legitimacy were reinforced and authority was strengthened.

From the arguments presented here, it can be concluded that the trinity of armed force, political leadership and people fighting on its behalf was present in both the Liberian and the Somali wars. Armed force was acquired and strengthened, as described in this chapter, by tapping into local circumstances that proved beneficial to the factions. Local and regional dissidence, recruitment location and timing, as well as weaknesses among the population, were used to augment the military power of the faction.

Political leadership was present in the shape of a patrimonial system of rule, with a large role for the faction leader and the attempt to take over existing patron–client networks of the collapsed state. This system was reinforced by claims to represent the ethnic and clan interests that had been disregarded by the previous regime. The belief that this political system was legitimate was strengthened by control over currency, possession of military skill, and references to religious and symbolic power.

The people supported the actions of the political leadership, initially by rallying in mass numbers to the rebel side when the regular army committed atrocities against them. After the demise of the regime, there were few alternatives to the factions that could offer protection and provide the basic needs of the people. Factions remained attractive and sustained a measure of support because they were a source of relative security. The fact that the support changed from a positive choice of acclamation for the faction's aims to a negative choice resulting from the lack of alternatives does not undermine the essential continuity of the support that was given to the factions. On an individual level, the membership of a faction could mean recognition of individual worth. It constituted an occupation for the many youngsters who had few other routes to social mobility and training.

The social organisations that were fighting in the Liberian and Somali wars were political actors to the extent that they strove to acquire and extend coercive and authoritative power to establish a system of rule that was very similar to the rule they had ended. The social organisation was characterised by a political leadership that controlled and employed armed force and had the support of a substantial number of people.

Concluding remarks

The empirical material presented in this chapter has shown that the actors involved in the armed conflicts in Liberia and Somalia were indeed political actors. The rebel factions in both Liberia and Somalia were political actors before the collapse of the regime, and continued to be political actors after the presidents had been chased out. Initially the factions exercised limited and mainly military power. By laying claim to legitimacy and establishing authority, the rule of the factions became persistent. This rule of the factions was little different from the type of rule they replaced: personalised authoritarian leadership relying on patron–client relations. Whether the political actors did in effect fight for political interests or fought for other interests, such as ethnic, clan and resource considerations, will be the subject of the next chapter.

5

POLITICAL INTERESTS

Introduction

In the previous chapter the actors were shown to have been political actors. The concepts of power, authority and rule were applied to the social organisation or faction itself. In this chapter, the concept of politics will be treated with regard to the relations of the factions towards each other.[1] For the hypothesis, as formulated in Chapter 1, to hold, it needs to become clear that the actors strive for interests of a political nature. Politics again has been defined as concerned with power, authority and rule. Evidence will be presented in this chapter that supports the claim that political interests drove the interaction in the two wars. In particular, the state was the focus of factional confrontations. Political interests defined the essence of the two wars. Actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed do fight for political interests. First, arguments will be put forward why political interests are dominant. Second, the alternative arguments of resource conflict and ethnic war will be questioned in this chapter.

Political interests

The defining feature of war, according to the non-trinitarian perspective, was that interests other than the political were dominant, such as control over resources or ethnicity. However, there is strong empirical evidence that points in the direction of a dominance of political interests. Not only were the factions claiming to fight to remove the regime in power, as already touched on in the previous chapter, but they moved to the capitals to do so. After the breakdown of the state, the factions continued their struggle because of competing claims over the future of the state.

First, the invasions were claimed by the military factions to be political initiatives. As described earlier, opposition had not been possible in Liberia and Somalia. Exiles, who were excluded from direct access to the client network of the regime after falling out with the respective

presidents, gathered in neighbouring states. The invasions did not fundamentally question the basis of power, which was authoritarian rule. They questioned the hands in which the rule rested. Here a distinct political interest is present.

In Liberia the factions fought under the banner of 'no more Doe and his clique'. Doe had had his time; now it was the turn of others. Similarly, in Somalia it was thought that Barre had abused the state long enough. It was the turn of others to control the state: 'The attitude towards the state itself is one of plunder. . . . It's a great treasure chest in which you can grab at everything. That's the way the Marehan [Barre] have run the country since 1978. The danger is that the Hawiye [Aidid and Ali Mahdi] may decide it's now their turn, and alienate other clans in the process'.[2] This was exactly what happened. How the country should be ruled was less important than who should rule it. The military factions of Taylor and Aidid were after political power, as it existed under Doe and Barre.

Political legitimacy for the quest to control the state was not claimed on the basis of a political ideology. Coherent political programmes or ideologies did not mark this political process. The political programmes of the factions were flimsy, to say the least.[3] The factions' appeal came from their opposition to the regime in power, which had lost credit by relying on a small group of the population, among other reasons.

Taylor managed to get support for his plan to overthrow Doe. Despite the fact that 'Taylor's force espoused no ideology beyond "democracy" and opposition to Doe', Taylor managed to draw 'significant support from Liberians united in their opposition to the Krahn (and Mandingo) rule of Samuel Doe'.[4] Apart from pan-Africanism, as noted in Chapter 4, the training in Libya did not leave any ideological traces in the NPFL. Taylor himself commented on his ideas:

> Africa must design what is best for Africa. None of the systems . . . is perfect. Even in the US, which claims to have a capitalist society, there are also socialist ideas and programmes. I think a combination of all these systems will work for Africa. I guess I have to find one [ideology]. Maybe one day we, all Africans, can come up with a term, Africanology?[5]

Taylor's support grew, as noted in the previous chapter, after the weakness the Doe regime showed in fighting the rebels. That Taylor was more interested in securing his own power than, for example, bringing democracy to Liberia was clear even before the invasion: 'The moment Charles Taylor entered Nimba the battle was for the [presidential] mansion'.[6] However, this was overlooked, since all who participated in the invasion stood to gain by its success.

In Somalia, Aidid had developed some ideas about democracy in Somalia. His aim was to achieve a form of autonomous democracy:

> [W]e have to realize that the model of healthy and functional democracy that we are planning to adopt in Somalia is such that every one will have perfect autonomy and satisfaction of serving the nation whole-heartedly, and no one will be able to exploit the people by becoming President, Prime Minister or a big boss.[7]

His ideas were based on a book by an American futurologist: 'We entirely agree with the concept of *"semi-direct Democracy"* which has been clearly and convincingly highlighted by the world's most leading futurologist Professor Alvin Toffler in his most enlightening book "THE THIRD WAVE"'.[8] Toffler divided the world in three waves of revolutions and corresponding types of societies. The first wave was the agricultural revolution, which can take place in pastoral hunter-gatherer societies. The second wave was the industrial revolution and the third wave is the high-speed technology revolution leading to a post-industrial society. Semi-direct democracy is suggested for societies moving beyond the industrial age.[9] Aidid's idea was to introduce a concept for post-industrial societies into Somalia, which had more in common with a pastoral setting. However, Aidid maintained that 'Alvin Toffler's concept of "semi-direct Democracy" . . . is highly suited for countries like Somalia'.[10] However, at the same time, the introduction of democracy in fact was not necessary because it already existed:

> [T]he Somali people, in the course of their 8,000 years of history, have been the foremost democratic people of the world. For thousands of years, the pastoral nomads of Somalia have been discussing and deciding their personal and tribal disputes most democratically under big trees in the open.[11]

But even after the introduction of semi-direct democracy in the future Somali state, citizens, according to Aidid, would have the right to ignore unjust decisions: 'citizens would be obliged to accept democratic decisions in a variety of circumstances unless it could be proved that their rights were violated by such decisions'.[12] It is unlikely that these ideas found much resonance among the population.

Opposition to the ruling elite provided the driving force during the first phases of the wars. In both Liberia and Somalia the political domain was not defined through political ideologies. The factions in both cases had as their stated aim the overthrow of regimes of the presidents. As already described in the previous chapter, the political domain of the Liberian and Somali states was defined in zero-sum terms. The patrimonial system did

not offer other avenues for power, except through the client network of the patrimonial ruler or through a military challenge. The political system itself was not questioned, only who controlled it.

Second, apart from the origins and initial development of the war, political interests can also be gathered from the fact that the factions upon entering the country moved to the capital. Throughout the war, the capitals were the focus of attention. Whoever was in control of the capital was seen to be in control of government. In the case of Africa, '[t]he capital city in any African country, has its cohesive powers on its people. You destroy the capital with its national assets and binding spirit, and you destroy the whole country'.[13] The Organization of African Unity has effectively acknowledged this state of affairs: '[I]f an African government is in control of the capital city, then it has the legitimate right to the full protection offered by the modern understanding of sovereignty.'[14] In both cases the factions of Taylor and Aidid moved towards the seat of power from the start.[15]

In Somalia, Aidid's faction moved towards the capital, encircling it from the north, west and south.[16] Aidid was focused on the capital: 'I knew that Mogadishu would be the scene of the final bloody confrontation between the USC and Barre's forces'.[17] The control over the capital was the main prize:

> [P]recisely because Mogadishu was the administrative, financial, mercantile, and diplomatic centre of the country, controlling Mogadishu still remained key to preventing anyone else from successfully controlling or being able to weld the rest of the country into any sort of overweight or threat.[18]

After the demise of the regime, the capital continued to be the focus of attention. The old capital remained the legitimate seat of power, and whoever controlled it would be seen to be in charge of the country. Fighting over Monrovia and Mogadishu was very fierce, as will be further elaborated in the next chapter. Attempts to establish an alternative or draw attention away from the capital proved unsuccessful. Taylor's alternative capital at Gbarnga did not manage to take away the focus from Monrovia. During 1992 the *de facto* presidency of Taylor was in danger from incursions from ULIMO, and the way out was the capture of the presidential mansion in Monrovia. In Somalia, Aidid had his hands free after the March 1992 ceasefire in Mogadishu and used this freedom to extend his control over other parts of Somalia. However, his circumstances changed with the renewed attacks from other factions and the deployment of the strengthened UN intervention forces towards the end of the year. His interest in occupying part of the capital was threatened by forces that he thought were siding against him.

Third, political interests also played a large role in keeping the wars going after the demise of the regimes of Doe and Barre. At first, opposition against the regimes had brought diverse elements together in the factions, which were amalgamations of all kinds of political dissidence. Fissure points therefore existed in the factions, but unity had to be maintained to achieve the common goal. The disagreements among the invaders were overlooked before the invasion. Once the invasion started to gather momentum, the differences came to the fore and an almost inevitable process of fragmentation started. Political issues – in particular, who should rule – were important bones of contention among the protagonists in the wars.

Taylor had the ambition to become president of Liberia. When it became clear that he was going to become the most likely contender, the INPFL, the ECOWAS states and later ULIMO objected. The INPFL was founded partly as a reaction to Taylor's presidential ambition. The individual political disagreements and the striving for hegemony led to the continuation of the war after Doe's death.[19] Similarly, in Somalia the USC and the other warring factions alone did not manage to depose the regime. They formalised their cooperation to help secure a victory against Barre. This cooperation was initially successful in the common aim of removing Barre. However, once Barre was removed, disagreements between the factions and within the factions came to the fore. The seeds for these disagreements had been sown long before. These disagreements did not so much focus on the basis of power but more on who should rule the country. Ali Mahdi's appointment as interim president frustrated Aidid's plans. Aidid could not accept Ali Mahdi's presidency and neither could the other faction leaders. This power wrangling invited other factions and clans to rally support for their claims to power. This, in an important measure, led to the continuation of war.

Immediately before and after the overthrow of the regime, the chances of proliferation of the parties fighting the wars were strong. After the collapse of the state, the option to replace one authoritarian leader with the leader of the fighters became problematic because of the number of contending claims.[20] Neither in Liberia nor in Somalia were there consultative processes by which the parties could find a solution. Existing factions such as the NPFL and the USC experienced splits.[21] New factions were founded, such as ULIMO. Later on in the wars, proxy factions were established, such as the Liberian Peace Council and the Lofa Defense Force. New coalitions were born, such as the SNA. With the breakdown of the state and the availability of means to fight, 'The entry costs are low and the learning curve is short'.[22] It was clearly necessary to have a force on the battlefield if political influence was to be secured. The opportunity to enter the battlefield was present with easy access to weaponry.

Political interests thus provided a very important driving force in the

wars.[23] A lack of access to political circles, which would mean influence and power, drove the fighting in the first phases of the war. The factions moved to the capital, which was seen as the seat of power, and whoever controlled the capital would control the state. The right to rule lay in the occupation of the presidential mansion. The disagreements over who should rule, more than how the country should be ruled, provided an important impetus in keeping the wars going after the presidents were removed from power.

While it has been shown to be the case that factions pursue political interests, it needs to be explained why they do so. In the description of the role of political interests in challenging the presidents, occupying the capital and the process of trying to get the upper hand over other factions, there runs a common theme of the state. Control over the state is attractive for the rebel factions in several respects. The state can provide both the most effective and the most legitimate rule.

First, it is more effective to exercise authority by means of the state than any other source of power. The state forms the ultimate source of power, i.e. the focus of authority, organised command over the largest armed force and largest source of economic power, which can be acquired through the state machinery of levying taxes. The quickest way to achieve stable rule is to incorporate the channels of the state.[24] The factions have been shown to be interested in authority because it is a more effective way to exercise power. Furthermore, they used the same principles of rule as the collapsed regime. In this way they aimed to establish stable rule.[25]

Second, the state is an important source of legitimacy for the factions. The state is a more reliable and durable source of power than pure coercion. In possession of state legitimacy, the actor can rule without a maximum expenditure of coercive power. When in possession of the most important position in the patron–client hierarchy, legitimacy will be hard to question according to the existing conventions in the two states. As Dahl has noted, '[C]ontrol over government is such an obvious and familiar way to furthering one's goals or values that it is hard to imagine a political system in which no one sought power'.[26] Political interests find their ultimate fulfilment in the control over the state.

By initiating an invasion, moving to the capital where state power is concentrated and by competing for the most influential job in the country, the actor aims to establish stable rule. This process holds the key to the replacement of the old political system by a new one based on the same principles. Unfortunately, exactly this process invites other individuals interested in the same thing to enter the competition. The spread of this competition makes the goal of achieving control over the state difficult to attain. As was illustrated in the previous chapter, political power was based on patrimonialism. The control of state power was exclusive; the faction controlling it would do this to the exclusion of all other factions. It

was not only the desire to gain but also the hegemony the faction could achieve by controlling state power that drove the two wars in this study. Before the collapse of the regime, zero-sum features marked the political domain. After the collapse of the state this continued to be the case. The inability to redefine the political domain into non-zero sum terms is striking. The result is a continuation of the war and a protracted struggle.

An explanation for the continuation of the wars in Liberia and Somalia can most importantly be found in the declining prize dilemma.[27] The declining prize dilemma stipulates that groups, when initiating or fighting a war, can act on the desire to win when they see a chance to maximise their position. Especially in situations where a decline in resources and an increase in capabilities occur, almost any group can challenge any other. One reason for a decline in resources could be the decrease in foreign aid for states in the developing world that occurred after the end of the Cold War, which signified a decline in the power of the state. Control over the declining state forms the main 'prize' for the groups involved in war. An increase in capabilities could be the availability of weaponry with which to challenge the state. When these two conditions come together, groups can see a chance to maximise their position and capture the prize of being in control of the state. However, this can result in a dilemma, because the threshold for joining the fighting is low; that is, a weak or collapsed regime and available weapons mean that others can challenge as well. The more challengers there are, the smaller the chance of capturing the prize. In short, fighting could maximise utility for a faction when it stands a chance of gaining or improving on its position before the number of players in the power game increases.

Even though the dilemma originally claims to provide an explanation for the outbreak of violence, it is applicable in the two cases for the continuation of the fighting. With the demise of the state and the availability of arms, opportunities were created for all groups in society to make their presence felt by military means. The desire to control the state formed a prominent reason for the fighting and contributed significantly to the continuation of the wars.

Political rule

While political interests have been found to possess important explanatory value for accounting for the development of war, the applicability of other explanations of interests in war has not been specifically questioned. In particular, resource and ethnic explanations deserve attention in this respect.[28]

Resource interests

Gaining access to the wealth of Liberia – its rubber, timber and other natural resources – was undeniably an aim of the fighting during the war.[29] Similarly, in Somalia the food aid and the agricultural land in the south were the focus of fighting.[30] However, there are several reasons to believe that these wars were not exclusively driven by economic interests and were not clear-cut resource conflicts.

First, the operation of patrimonialism makes it questionable whether resource interests are the only, or even the dominant, interest for which the factions fight. The lack of a separation between the personal and the public means that the personalised ruler, in control of the state and its financial resources, is inevitably very wealthy. In general it is presumed that in Africa: 'Rich men are powerful' and 'Powerful men are rich'.[31] This wealth, however, is not only for private enjoyment. As was also visible in the patrimonial rule of Doe and Barre, these financial resources are used to oil the patron–client network. Control over the mining and logging operations in Liberia and the export of livestock in Somalia was granted only to those supporting the regime.

The end of the Cold War had the effect of weakening the state structures from a financial perspective. The states' finances were affected by reductions in military and development aid. With the decrease in state finances, the favours and financial gain flowing down and up the system had decreased markedly, which contributed to the origins of the wars. Both Taylor and Aidid were well off before they started their invasions. Their wealth, also part of their social background, contributed to their legitimacy. With an increase in their power and their position they were also expected to increase their wealth. This wealth was necessary not only to increase their personal standing but also to oil their patron–client networks, just as Doe and Barre had done.

This client system is easiest to operate in a stable environment. Control over the state provides such an environment, with strong claims on legitimacy and sources of state power to exercise authority effectively. Taxation can occur, which will fill state coffers much more easily than coercion could. Resources such as timber and food aid that were fought over are a means by which to strengthen the patrimonial system and the client network. They contributed to the aim of controlling the state. Once the faction leader is in control of the state, the system will have the strongest claim on legitimacy and therefore fewer problems in extracting these resources. The war economy thus formed part in a larger patron–client network system.

At the head of this network was the faction leader, who obviously wanted to make a profit, but, more importantly, wanted his force to succeed in its aims. In Liberia, Taylor, while in control of Taylorland,

made millions per month exploiting Liberia's wealth.[32] The wealth was a means to an end: it was a way to keep the NPFL going. The foreign currency that was earned was used to buy equipment and train the NPFL fighters. The result was visible in October 1992 with Operation Octopus, the renewed attack on Monrovia in which the fighters appeared well equipped and well disciplined. The exploitation of Liberia involved a high degree of organisation and was highly dependent on personal relationships.[33] The exploitation could not take place without a market to sell the products. Côte d'Ivoire, for instance, functioned as a middleman, establishing contacts with French companies. French government officials were also said to be involved.[34]

Similarly, the aid in Somalia formed part of a patron–client network on which the power of the faction leaders relied. The more wealth they were able to distribute, the greater their power. The humanitarian aid ended up with the government army and rebels groups instead of the population from early 1989 onwards.[35] Plunder took on institutionalised forms. The more pressing the food shortage, the more attacks were carried out on aid workers and aid storage sites. With the price of food on the black market being high, more wanted to profit. The aid agencies were manipulated to bring in more food: 'In an effort to gain more food, Gen. Aidid's "officials" had told Care and UNICEF that there were not 6,000 but 25,000 displaced people in Bardera; . . . they inflated the figure to 56,000'.[36] In another version, the United Nations was informed that the population had fled 'This was a lie intended to discourage the UN from sending food aid. The UN believed him for a few days'.[37] The food aid economy based on stolen aid could be sustained only because of a market for the theft.[38] The factions relied on links with the Gulf States to acquire hard currency. Furthermore, in Somalia the local drugs market was a big source of income. Estimates ranged from 1 to 5 million dollars worth of the khat drugs trade every month.[39] Ali Mahdi received his income from several planes transporting khat into the country from Kenya. The khat imports enabled Osman Ato, the USC financial organiser, to earn tens of thousands of US dollars a day.[40]

Resources were thus an instrument used to reinforce the power and legitimacy of the factions. Individual fighters, who were part of the patrimonial system, benefited. They received favours and other advantages that kept them loyal to the leader of the faction. In many cases the opportunities for looting were seen as a means of payment.[41] The practice and operation of patrimonial rule is one reason to doubt the validity of resource explanations for war.

A second reason to refrain from seeing these wars as driven by purely economic factors is the fact that a distinction between the pursuit of wealth and the fighting over military advantage over opponents is very difficult to make. The fighters in Liberia and Somalia did not have an

advanced logistical support system that helped them remain well equipped and well fed so as to continue the war. The fighters needed to maintain themselves and relied on and lived off the land in the areas in which they operated. While on the one hand the fighters were confronting each other, on the other they used their weapons to obtain resources, which could be sold or used to stay in the field. Therefore, these two struggles over military and political advantage over an opponent in a given area overlapped with the capture of resources. A distinction between the two is very difficult to make.

In Liberia, some of the heaviest fighting took place in the border region with Sierra Leone. This region in the interior of Liberia, which is made up of thick jungle, provided the most lucrative resources from opencast mining and the logging of timber. Some of Taylor's mercenaries came from Sierra Leone, and Taylor supported their operations in the RUF. Furthermore, the old supporters of the Doe regime had fled there and organised as ULIMO. Taylor supported an invasion of his men and ULIMO used one of the Sierra Leonean army's counter-attacks as a cover for its own invasion of Liberian territory. It is difficult to distinguish between fighting over control of an area between the NPFL and ULIMO and fighting over iron and diamond mines.

In Somalia, only during particular periods of the war was the fighting concentrated in the south of Somalia, where Barre fled and where agriculture had provided a certain prosperity. It can be asked whether the war would still have moved south if Barre had not fled there. However difficult this question is to answer, it seems certain that Barre would have been pursued wherever he went. While the fighters were pursuing Barre they needed to sustain themselves. The fighting in the south prevented the farmers from working the land, which contributed to the famine. The famine brought relief aid, which in turn was highly coveted by the fighters. No clear dividing line between fighting over resources and military advantage existed.

Third, apart from the economic resources forming part of the patrimonial system and economic struggles overlapping with military rivalry, a view of the wars as driven by economic interests has to be questioned in one more respect. The recruitment practices of the rebel factions, as already described, used the economic resentments and weaknesses that already existed among the population. These weaknesses overlapped with ethnic and clan grievances. Some ethnic and clan groups had traditionally been in charge of trade or specific professions associated with wealth. The resentments that existed towards these groups were given a focus in the rebel factions. They were used to increase the power of the factions, as was described in Chapter 4. It is thus very difficult to distinguish between fighting over resources and ethnically based confrontations. In Liberia, for instance, Taylor used the dominance of the Mandingo in trade for political

advantage. In Somalia, for example, the struggle between the factions of Morgan and Jess overlapped with the struggle between the Herti traders from Kismayo and the Ogadeni herders from the countryside.

After the collapse of the state, it has been argued, economic competition intensified.[42] As has already been argued, resources had the effect of strengthening the rebel factions. When control over the state became difficult to achieve, the factions needed to keep the fighters in the field, increase their military standing and maintain a client network. In short, it was in their interest to ensure legitimacy and authority. This was important in order to continue to be able to claim political power. The means to realise this was control over resources. It can thus be seen that the competition over resources became more intense in both Liberia and Somalia. However, as already argued, in both cases it was a means to an end rather than an end in itself. The end was the establishment of control over the state, which would mean more stable and lasting control over economic resources due to the possession of state authority and control over strong coercive powers.

To summarise, the wars in Liberia and Somalia were driven by the conflict over resources to the extent that the economic advantages of the war economy were used not only for personal gain but, more importantly, to keep the war machines going. War was not exclusively about economics. The money that was made in the war economy was used to oil the client network, and the fighting over political and economic advantage overlapped. Economic opportunities were used, and the faction leaders invested the profits, for example, in new weaponry. With increased strength on the battlefield, the factions could capture more aid and extend their influence as a force to be reckoned with. Rather as in the case of ethnic or clan identity, the faction leaders, to entice fighters to join their factions, pounced upon economic weaknesses among the population. The faction leaders would lead their men to lucrative areas. Notably, the wars did not fundamentally question the type of economic system, just as they did not question the type of political rule. In both cases the war involved a struggle over whose hands the economic power would rest in. The system of patrimonial rule worked effectively for all involved, to such an extent that there were no widespread calls for it to change.[43]

Ethnic and clan interests

The labels 'ethnic war' and 'clan war' have been popular to describe the wars in Liberia and Somalia. The wars have been qualified as barbaric, with primordial forces being unleashed. This description promoted the view that ethnic identity was an innate force; it had been buried for the duration of the Cold War and re-emerged with force after its end. Several schools of thought exist within the academic literature on ethnicity. First,

the primordialists argue that ethnic identity is a permanent element; members of a particular group are linked through a common bond, which determines the identity of an individual.[44] This bond and identity create the coherence of the group. Ethnic identity can exist here without manifesting itself clearly, but it can be revived at any moment.

Second, the instrumentalists see ethnic identity as a tool and not a permanent element.[45] Ethnic identity can be used and manipulated for political purposes. Constituencies can be created and people can be mobilised. The problem here is that individuals in practice are not completely free to choose their ethnic identity as they choose a political party. Third, constructivists present a middle ground.[46] They see ethnicity as changeable but only to a limited extent. Ethnicity is a construct of interactions in society, of existing social networks.

There are several reasons to believe that ethnicity and clan did not drive the wars to the extent that the primordialists argue they did. In the previous chapter, it has already been suggested that the factions used the ethnic and clan identities to create a following and claim legitimacy. The use of ethnic and clan categories was a practice that was common under the rule of Doe and Barre. The factions continued with this principle. The choice of an area for invasion where ethnic and clan resentment and support were found also showed the instrumental nature of these identities.

Caution is, furthermore, appropriate because in the anthropological literature, Liberian ethnic identity and Somali clan identity are described as flexible.[47] Both ethnic and clan identity have been found to be changeable.

Ethnic identity in Liberia had a history of fluidity before the outbreak of the war:

> [I]t was not unusual for an individual to uproot himself from his own community and seek opportunities in another community headed by a chief of a different ethnic group, attaching himself to the household of a man of a different ethnic background and taking on that ethnic identity if necessary.[48]

Clan identity in Somalia has also been found to be flexible: 'If we were to examine a single Somali life, we would find that class, region, and clan play shifting, confusing, obfuscating roles; they can't be separated out; and they clearly reflect incredible flux'.[49] Even within one clan identity, a different emphasis could be placed depending on the situation: 'Thus sometimes he [a Somali] acts in the capacity of a member of his clan-family, sometimes as a member of a constituent clan, and sometimes as a member of the large number of lineage into which his clan is divided internally'.[50] Clan difference was thus often based on learned behaviour. These differences

could 'be conveniently altered, remembered or forgotten as circumstances require . . . critical to understanding Somali tribalism [are] these insubstantial-seeming differences . . . [they] can be manipulated to serve as openings or as closures, depending upon mutual (and often only temporary) needs'.[51] If an individual belonged to one clan or ethnic group in one situation and to another in a different set of circumstances, an innate identity was not present. This disqualifies the primordialist argument.[52] The constructivists' view is partly based on the same premise: that ethnic and clan identity were a given but were moulded in social networks. This has also been thought to apply in the two cases.

In Liberia, apart from the fact that an individual could change identity, social networks with a pre-formed identity on which the factions could rely for automatic support were not present. It is hard to find examples during the war of an organised network that the leaders could call on. There were few structures in Liberian society that could be activated to support the invading forces. As noted before, the Poro and Sande sects did not serve this purpose, even though Taylor made attempts in that direction. In Somalia, if the constructivist argument is followed, the structure of society and the clan had created the armed conflict:

> [I]t is the precipitous decline of the constraining rôle which the household economy played in the social affairs of the community, as well as the rise of an influential minority [Barre and his clan] whose command of the state machinery 'liberated' them from the rules of the xeer [the clan and kinship conventions] and the values of Islam, which led to the Somali calamity.[53]

This could have been compounded by the mythical nature of the clan system, which was based not on factual history but on a cultural construct of nomadic life in Somalia, one that could find little foundation in real blood relationships.[54]

However, as noted earlier, clan identity was flexible and learned, and this contradicts the first part of the constructivist argument. If one belongs to one clan in one situation and to another in a different situation, how can clan fit into a social network? If clan membership rested on a network, it could be called upon. In practice it could be seen on several occasions that a mass rising of a clan occurred, in particular in the example of the raid on the Olympic Hotel in Mogadishu by the US forces. The local commander of Aidid's forces alerted his clanspeople, including women and children, who performed roles in combat. Thus the question remains why this rising of the clan network occurred only on certain occasions and was not a continual feature of the war. The constructivist interpretation is thus not tenable in the cases of Liberia and Somalia. This leaves the instrumentalist argument as the most potent explanation.

Like the resource arguments, it has been argued that ethnic and clan identity came to play a more important role during the course of the two wars.[55] In general, warfare does have the effect of strengthening ethnic identity.[56] It has been argued that in Liberia, ethnicity started playing a more important role towards the end of the war.[57] In particular, the split within ULIMO occurred along ethnic lines. However, membership of a faction, as was made clear in the previous chapter, was not exclusively based on ethnicity or clan, and most factions included members of different ethnic and clan groups; ULIMO was no exception. For the political negotiations, the membership of a faction was more important than ethnic background.[58] As also noted, fighters switched sides frequently when other factions had more to offer. Had ethnic and clan ties been the defining factor of the wars, this could not have occurred.

To summarise, the wars in this study continued because of ethnic and clan differences to the extent that the factions moulded them into this form. Ethnic and clan identity were highly flexible and fluid, and the invaders, though they consciously chose an area where an appeal to identity might find fertile ground, were often mistaken. The invading forces called on identity to create a constituency in their fight to remove the regime in power. The fact that in both cases a mass uprising of the ethnic and clan groups failed to appear significantly undermines the primordialist and constructivist arguments. The appeal to a certain identity created, as noted, the problem of narrow applicability, while the focus of the fighters was much wider, namely, the state and the disagreements with the regime. Other groups were organised along the same lines, which made the goal of establishing a new presidency for the invading forces unattainable.

Resources and ethnic and clan categories were of an instrumental nature for the factions in order to establish their political control. The political domain was dominant. It was defined in zero-sum terms. The control over political power was exclusive, and this remained the case throughout the wars, which explains why the contest over this domain was fierce. It also explains why the wars continued. The number of actors proliferated. They operated on the basis of the same principles of patrimonial rule, put claims on existing identities and used resources to strengthen their faction. Compromise was not possible. Giving up a place on the battlefield meant giving up a chance, albeit an increasingly remote one, of political dominance.

Existing interpretations of the wars in Liberia and Somalia have placed emphasis on the breakdown of the patrimonial state.[59] It has been argued that an important qualitative difference exists concerning patrimonial rule.[60] The rule of the factions stands out from that of the previous ruler because the factions relied on foreign trade, while the governments had relied on foreign aid in order to make patrimonial rule work.[61] This inter-

pretation, however, overlooks the essential continuity that existed. The type of rule remained the same; only the means by which funds were acquired to support the rule differed. Foreign trade replaced foreign aid. The role or function of the foreign factor remained the same; i.e. the maintenance of the patron–client system. The structure of the rule itself did not change. Foreign firms did not take over the running of the state by functioning as a kind of bureaucracy, as some have argued.[62] A patron–client network was present and functioned in the same way as it had done before the state collapsed. The wars, although clearly linked to state breakdown, were transition phases between two periods of rule along the same mould. With respect to the fundamentals on which political authority was based, there was more continuity than change.

After the collapse of the state and during the course of the war, political interests continued to dominate the wars. Nothing changed in the internal political make-up of the actors. There was no break between the politically motivated opposition against the regime and a change towards other interests, such as economic, when the goal of capturing the presidential seat remained elusive. The competition to control the state did become fiercer. The attractiveness of ethnic and clan categories diminished because of a decrease in recruiting potential. The struggle to control more resources intensified because it meant a strengthening of the actor, its standing and patrimonial network, which could contribute to the ultimate aim of control over the state.

As was described in the introductory chapter, the two case studies of Liberia and Somalia were selected partly because they differed in critical variables. One of those differing variables was that one war had ended and the other continued. This variable is very illuminating for the political explanation offered here, and cannot be clearly explained by ethnic, clan or economic factors. Why did the war in Liberia end with a peace process and elections, and why did the war in Somalia continue? The answer, in the light of the arguments presented in this chapter, must lie in the meeting of the political interests of the actors.[63]

Among the main stumbling blocks hindering Charles Taylor from becoming president in 1990 was the objection by ECOWAS. When in 1995 a rapprochement took place between Taylor and the new Nigerian president, Abacha – Nigeria was the main supplier of troops and material for the ECOMOG operation – the war could be terminated. ECOWAS's opposition to granting the main actor a say in the future government of the state was lifted. The main political interest of the faction leader was met in the election result. Taylor gained the highest degree of legitimacy by becoming the elected president of the country.[64]

In the case of Somalia, in northern Somalia the independence of the Republic of Somaliland was declared in 1991. In Somaliland, peace and security were established because the main faction operating in this part of

the country, the SNM, was dominant. The chairman of the SNM, Abdirah-man Ali Tuur, was appointed the first president, and was able to dominate the political domain. There were no other contenders for power that were strong enough, and stable rule could be created.[65] In the rest of Somalia, no such rapprochement between Aidid and Ali Mahdi, or any other war participant for that matter, took place and no one faction could establish dominance, therefore the war continued. The chance to establish stable rule with dominance over the state domain explains why one war was terminated. A lack of dominance and continued challenges by other factions caused the other war to continue.

Concluding remarks

Political interests are the main reason why actors become involved in armed conflict. There were political interests for which the factions chose the path of war; they moved to the capital, which was the centre of political power, and after the breakdown of the state they continued to fight over who was to control the top position of political power.[66] A dominance of the political domain existed, which was linked to other interests, such as economic and ethnic issues. Ethnic rivalry and economic interests affected the armed interaction as instruments or means to fight the war. Political power, or control over the state, would stand at the top of a pyramid of power. If an actor were in control of state power, it would have advantage over its rivals, namely, a greater measure of legitimacy and more effective control. This political power would enable other sources of power to be brought under control more easily. More people would seek to be incorporated in the state patrimonial system, which at the same time would mean a need for increased control over resources. Economic resources could be brought under control through authority instead of force. Once economic interests were secured, political and military power could be strengthened. Thereby the actor could be established and ensure a stable system of rule.

The case studies have demonstrated that the announcement of the demise of the state is rather premature. State power was what the factions in the wars in Liberia and Somalia were interested in. This conclusion has some general implications. It raises the question whether political change, the state and war are closely linked. The two armed conflicts in this study indicate that this is the case. Conflict could very well be part of a larger process of state- and nation-building and disintegration. Feudal states and chiefdoms, for instance, have never been permanent structures but have always functioned as transitory forms of rule.[67] The wars in the two states can be seen as phases in a process of development. The factions were patron–client networks similar to those that had operated in the collapsed states. Like ethnic and clan identity and economic grievances, patron–client networks can have a binding power:

> In the absence of a genuine national feeling or common ideo-
> logical identity ... clientelism provides the only means short of
> brute force for binding together the disparate power centres
> within the state, and creating at least the appearance of legitimacy
> and effectiveness.[68]

The patron–client networks had formed the foundations for the operation
of the state, which collapsed. The same principles were taken up again by
the warring factions to attain stable rule.

The link between war and state development is not necessarily a step
away from modernity.[69] However, the ideas of progress and modernisation
dominant in the Western world seem to exclude this link. The developing
world might very well have to go through this process without interference
in order to establish viable states.[70] In the end, 'European modernization
was constructed on the ruins of its *anciens régimes*. Is it not at the very
least possible that Africa too will do the same?'.[71] Is it not likely that on
the ruins of the old system a new one will be built, even recycling parts of
the old system? In Western Europe the state was mostly established
before the nation.[72] The state defended the population against external
threats. Internally, the state created a monopoly on violence. Once the
state was secure in its borders and a monopoly on violence had been
achieved, the likelihood of conflict diminished. The external threat
increased the internal cohesion in European states. This is often missing in
developing states. On the contrary, external support can provide the state
with opportunities to strengthen the internal security situation.[73] The fact
that this external support ended was a major contributing factor to the
tragedies that unfolded in both Liberia and Somalia.

Taking the European model of state- and nation-building as an example
is an exercise often engaged in.[74] The most important elements of state
development are said to be of universal significance and make comparison
possible and even recommendable. Others argue that this is wrong; it
hampers the development experience of these states.[75] To use the Euro-
pean model is to lessen the understanding of the developing states. There
are at least five factors that make the development process outside Europe
distinctly different.[76] The developing countries' colonial experience, their
role in the world economy, the territorial boundaries, the influence of
global communications and the influence of Great Powers provide them
with a different backdrop. To this can be added the different ideas con-
cerning state-building that are present in Africa, which are a combination
of indigenous, Islamic and Western ideas.[77] This leads to the conclusion
that Africa is going through a development process *sui generis*.

In this development process, the two wars, as demonstrated in the case
studies, did not prove a fundamental break with the past. These wars were
not new in the political arena. The factions did not fundamentally question

the existing kind of rule; the basis of personal rule remained the same. War signified the end of the domination of the client network by one actor and the start of a new domination based on the same principles. Similarly, in the economic arena the system of patron–client relations that was in place was not questioned. It had become less lucrative with the end of the Cold War and was simply replaced by a new one based on the same principles. What changed as a result of the wars was the hands in which the power rested. In this respect, the wars in Liberia and Somalia were violent power transitions, which were the only way to change the regimes, since no opposition was possible.[78]

6

POLITICAL INSTRUMENTS AND CONVENTIONAL WAR

Introduction

Actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed use military force as a political instrument and fight in a conventional manner.[1] This is the last of the hypotheses this study aims to test. The use of the military instrument for political purposes in a conventional manner will further prove the continuing validity of Clausewitzean thinking. Many students of the wars in Liberia and Somalia have questioned the rationale of the use of the military instrument; was it used for a purpose at all? When the military instrument was employed to achieve an aim, the observers stressed its irregular and guerrilla nature. Regarding this last element, it can be asked whether the concept of guerrilla war is appropriate for describing the wars in Liberia and Somalia. The previous two chapters have already brought forward, among other findings, the role of personalised rule and the lack of ideological motivation. In one of the most important formulations of guerrilla war, that by Mao Tse-tung, the elements of individual leadership and political interests did not play the same role as described so far. Individual leadership was subjected to the collective of ideologically motivated fighters, which also formed the guiding principle of war.[2] Political interests in Mao's guerrilla war were concerned with the destruction of the existing political and economic order of society. The two wars in this study did not show any questioning of the make-up of the state or society. Rather, emphasis in the wars was placed on the hands in which the rule rested.

In both Liberia and Somalia during the first stages of the war, the fighters used some indirect fighting methods. Most notably, the SNM in northern Somalia fought a guerrilla-style struggle, and the NPFL during the first few weeks of the invasion used hit-and-run strikes. However, the tactics changed during the course of the two wars. The forces that were marching on Monrovia and Mogadishu could hardly be called guerrilla forces. They no longer operated in secret, stealthily and delivering short, sharp blows. They were clearly visible and often used main roads for their

advance. This has prompted some to argue that the rebels in Liberia and Somalia used the third phase of Mao's revolutionary guerrilla strategy to fight the war.[3] In the third phase of revolutionary war, following hit-and-run operations in the first phase to establish base areas and their extension in the second phase, the revolutionary forces concentrate on the final conventional defeat of the regular armed forces.

This argument will be taken one step further. The wars in Liberia and Somalia were zero-sum conflicts and showed a distinct centre of gravity, and the confrontations over this centre can all be seen as conventional. In this chapter it will be demonstrated that in the two case studies military force was an instrument of politics and that this instrument was used according to the main principles of conventional war. First, it will be demonstrated that the armed factions had a clear centre of gravity in their military interaction, and this centre overlapped with their political interests. This centre of gravity was the capital, and it was impossible to capture this object using guerrilla warfare methods. Second, it will be shown that the two wars were indeed conventional wars. Not only was there a clear operational centre of gravity, but also the actors were identifiable in the theatre of operations and they had command over a large number of openly operating recruits.

Centre of gravity

In the two wars the most important interaction took place on the ground. In neither war were there many operations in the air, with the exception of the actions of the Somali air force at the beginning of the war. Operations at sea were undertaken both in Liberia and in Somalia.[4] However, these actions were minor compared to the confrontations on land. In these confrontations the main centre of gravity was the capital. As has already been explained in the previous chapter, the factions upon entering the country moved towards the capital to depose the president. A large armed force carried out these advances on the capital. Thus the capital was the centre of gravity at the start of the wars, and this continued to be the case during their course.

In the first phase of the Liberian war, complete control over the capital could not be established. The NPFL surrounded the capital and the routes out of town were closed off. Bombardments with heavy weapons took place, and, in a sweeping movement from the west, north and east, fighters tried to approach the presidential mansion bordering the sea in the south.[5] The ECOWAS intervention complicated this manoeuvre, as did the operations of the INPFL forces. The capital was never completely captured by the NPFL, and a ceasefire was concluded.

Similarly in the case of Somalia the fight over the capital broke out on two fronts. USC forces under the command of Aidid moved from the

Ethiopian border region towards the capital and along the way they confronted the Somali national army.[6] At the same time, fighting broke out in Mogadishu, and a large part of the police force crossed the lines to the USC. With the eruption of fighting in Mogadishu the advance of the factions towards the town was precipitated. Major confrontations occurred in which tanks were used and heavy shelling occurred.

After the collapse of the two regimes, the focus continued to be on the capital. Several large-scale armed confrontations occurred in and around Monrovia and Mogadishu. In these confrontations, heavy weapons were used, and the faction fighters were forced to operate in the open in order to capture and hold parts of the two towns.

In Liberia, during the relatively peaceful interlude in 1991 the focus on the capital, controlled by ECOMOG, was suspended for a short while. This changed with the establishment of ULIMO, which began operations in mid-1991. The ULIMO gains on NPFL positions became substantial in western Liberia in the course of 1992. The fighting between these two factions in the rich border area with Sierra Leone can be seen as attempts to deny each other control over territory and populations. This struggle overlapped, as described in the previous chapter, with the quest to capture the resources needed to keep the fighters in the field. The alternative Taylorland capital at Gbarnga did not manage to become a substitute capital for national focus.

Monrovia became the centre of attention again when the NPFL forces launched a major attack on 15 October 1992.[7] Heavy weapons, including tanks, were used, and main roads were taken for the advance. The main targets of the NPFL attacks were the ECOMOG positions, i.e. the ECOMOG headquarters, the Ducor Palace hotel, where the ECOWAS-instituted interim government was housed, and the airport and seaport, where ECOMOG logistics were based. The capital and – equally important – its main occupier were the centre of gravity here. In order for any insurrection to be successful, this centre had to be brought under control, and the most advanced weaponry that Taylor had managed to acquire was employed to achieve this.

A concerted counter-attack from ECOMOG, the reconstituted AFL and the ULIMO repelled the NPFL, and control over the capital remained elusive. The counter-strikes hit the NPFL's heartland, leading to substantial reductions in the area controlled by Taylor and his men. As already noted, these territorial losses did not prevent Taylor from playing a major role in the negotiations, while ECOMOG remained in control over the capital.

As part of a peace agreement brokered by Nigeria, Taylor was allowed to move to Monrovia in 1995. He managed to gain a part of the centre of gravity without expending military power. In Monrovia the fighting erupted again in April 1996 because of disagreements with the ULIMO-J

faction leader, Roosevelt Johnson. This was the last serious outburst of fighting and again focused on the capital. The peace process gathered speed, and in July 1997 Taylor was hailed in Monrovia as the winner of the elections.

As in Liberia, in Somalia full control over the capital did not materialise for any of the factions, and the fighting continued. After the collapse of the regime, Mogadishu remained the centre of gravity of the armed interactions. At first, Aidid and USC men pursued the remaining Barre forces south. Furthermore, he confronted Omar Jess and his faction, who also contested the USC-claimed victory. Subsequently, in April 1991 Barre's forces advanced towards Mogadishu. In this operation the former president managed to put together a regular armed force, operating in an orderly fashion, made up mostly of his clansmen.[8] Barre was again pushed back and withdrew to the south of the country.

The focus on the capital was confirmed towards the end of the year, when the confrontations between Aidid and Ali Mahdi intensified. The confrontations involved the use of heavy weapons and capturing and holding strategically important positions in the town. This battle led to large-scale destruction in Mogadishu. In September 1991, Barre's faction was back in the area of Mogadishu 'with three divisions of regular *Marrehan* troops'. Aidid confronted these troops with his 'motorised militia with mobile artillery, missiles and anti-aircraft guns . . . fired horizontally'.[9] Here again we see that control of the capital was extremely important and that in the battles for control over this centre of gravity, the factions used the most powerful weapons they possessed.

The focus on Mogadishu continued during the course of the war. In February 1992 Aidid launched a large-scale offensive on Mogadishu, which was intended to deal a blow to Ali Mahdi's positions. However, complete control remained elusive, and a ceasefire for the capital was concluded under the auspices of the United Nations in March 1992. After the ceasefire, Barre's forces launched another offensive on the capital. This offensive was characterised by his command over regular troops, who again used heavy weapons to fight the opposing factions. Barre's forces managed to advance to Mogadishu but were again pushed back. The faction fighters fled south.

With a ceasefire in Mogadishu and Barre in exile in Nigeria, Aidid saw a chance to extend his position in the rest of Somalia. The Somali National Alliance was formed; it included Omar Jess's faction among others. Between March and September 1992, Aidid managed to establish substantial control over southern Somalia. Northern Somalia by this time had already declared independence, and central Somalia was relatively uncontested, partly because it belonged to Aidid's clan heartland. Extending claims to control over territory were probably expected to prove important in negotiations. Capturing it was thus attractive. The southern Somali

cities of Kismayo, Baidoa and Bardera were the focus of battle. These had become important since Barre and his supporters fled there in early 1991. Here the worst of the famine occurred, and the fighting over food aid (a major food aid airlift had started by this time) overlapped with military advantage, as also noted in the case of Liberia. However, the fact that the forces of the old Barre order attempted to advance towards the capital, and several times managed to do so, underlines the importance of this as the centre of gravity.

When Ali Mahdi and the Barre supporters concluded a ceasefire in September 1992, Aidid's enemies had their hands free to concentrate their efforts against him. Aidid's position started to deteriorate. The fighting again shifted to Mogadishu towards the end of the year. When the US intervention troops arrived, the factions withdrew to the countryside. Confrontations continued to occur, although on a lesser scale than before. The war resumed with force when the US troops withdrew. Aidid and Ali Mahdi again clashed violently in Mogadishu in mid-1994.

In both cases it can be observed that the focus on the capital continued after the collapse of the regime. At some points the focus on the capital was not prominent, primarily because ceasefires had formalised the positions of the protagonists. Attempts to shift the focus away from the capital, by extending control over territory or establishing a power base elsewhere, ultimately proved unsuccessful. This can be witnessed in both wars and at several points during the interactions between the protagonists. Taylorland, with its own capital, did not prove a lasting alternative to Monrovia. Aidid's control over the greater part of Somali territory was insufficient to gain him recognition as the legitimate ruler of Somalia in 1992. Control of the capital proved crucial in the military and overall success of the factions. Ultimately, none managed to establish control over this centre of gravity. This explains to a large extent the reasons why the two wars continued.

The state capital as the operational centre of gravity has an important implication for the way in which the wars were fought, namely, that it was impossible to capture the capital in a guerrilla-style struggle. Attacks on the airports or presidential mansion, for example, had to be conducted in the open because a hit-and-run strike would not lead to control over the installation. Therefore, there were frontlines in the battles for Monrovia and Mogadishu. Observers noted that fighting occurred in particular districts or suburbs. Furthermore, both advancing and retreating forces were present, whose positions could be indicated on a map. In short, an identifiable battle theatre existed in both Liberia and Somalia.

While the faction fighters were forced to operate in the open, control over the capital was difficult to establish, not only because of the many contenders for power but also because the weaponry the factions were using often fell short of their ambition. Small arms were the dominant

weapons used by the fighters in the two wars. Heavy weapons were captured, bought, donated or manufactured, as described in Chapter 4. The number of these weapons, although at times substantial, fell short of the numbers required to achieve lasting dominance over the centre of gravity. The limitations of small arms could be clearly observed, for instance, in Monrovia, where the factions failed to capture the presidential mansion quickly at the beginning of the wars.[10] The available weaponry could not meet the fighters' ambition. During the course of the two wars, heavy weapons were purchased whenever finances allowed. These heavy weapons were used in the confrontations in and around the capitals.

While the weaponry the fighters were using was inadequate for a decisive conventional confrontation, coordination of and command over the rebel fighters as an instrument for the promotion of political objectives could not always be strictly maintained. The command and control that was exercised was often not effective over the faction fighters as a whole. There was not enough communication material, and a logistical apparatus was often small or non-existent.[11] These shortcomings frequently led to a malfunctioning of the rebel factions, considered as conventional fighting forces.

At the start of the war in Liberia, there was no evidence of a formal command structure.[12] However, the new recruits from the countryside formed 'a military culture . . . from the bottom upward'.[13] Gradually, most of the groups in the Liberian war became organised along the US army model, probably as a result of the US training of some of the rebels.[14] They consisted of a general staff, line units, brigades and battalions with hierarchical ranks. The general staff was presided over by Charles Taylor, who integrated the political and military leadership at the top.

In Somalia the USC had a similar organisation structure. Aidid was initially its military leader. The USC consisted of regiments, which were all composed of a sub-clan. A similar organisation was also apparent in the SNM and SPM. The USC had a formal command structure. The supreme command, initially based in Ethiopia, gave directions to the field commander, General Aidid.[15] After the split in the USC, Aidid became the supreme commander, with six field commanders taking his orders.[16] In Mogadishu, Aidid divided the area under his control into 18 military sectors commanded by a USC officer with a warning system and direct contact with Aidid.[17]

Despite command and control problems, the confrontations over the capital at crucial times formed a distinct exception. Among the most notable examples of efficient command and control was the execution of Operation Octopus by Taylor's forces in 1992. Command and control problems do not undermine the use of military force to promote political objectives, and neither do they contradict the fundamentally conventional nature of the confrontations. In military history, the experiences with large

unruly armed forces in early modern Europe, for example, show that this is a not uncommon picture.[18]

The capital was thus the centre of gravity throughout the duration of the two wars. The military focus on the capital overlapped with the main political interest of the warring factions, i.e. control over the state. This centre of gravity was fought over in confrontations that were drawn out in the open. Mogadishu and Monrovia needed to be captured and physically occupied in order to establish political control and, in the process, dominance over other factions. Guerrilla warfare was not suited to this objective. The main forces and heavy weapons that the factions possessed were used for this confrontation. The lack of weapons superiority and the absence of a well-oiled machinery of command and control were among the reasons why success in establishing control remained elusive. The capital turned out to be both the best and the worst place to be for the population. It was the worst because it was the main preoccupation of the factions and their armed interactions. It was the best place to be because the intervention forces and aid agencies had chosen the capital as a base for their operation to create security for the population and provide them with food aid.[19]

Distinction between combatants and non-combatants

As already noted, the factions were forced to operate in the open because of the main interests for which they were fighting. Does this also mean that a clear distinction between combatants and non-combatants could be made? There are several reasons for believing that this was the case.

First, as has already been noted in Chapter 4, local beliefs and symbols were picked up and used to create legitimacy for the factions. Among these local beliefs were initiation practices, disguises and the role of women and children. In Liberia in particular, the faction fighters participated in initiation rituals in which they were tattooed. These physical markings not only made a return to their villages impossible, but also were visible to others and a means of identification. Apart from a tattoo, the warrior traditions of dressing up and cross-dressing also made the fighters stand out.[20] They wanted to attract spiritual power as a preparation for combat with the enemy. Civilians did not share this practice and did not wear disguises in their daily occupations.

It was not only these, in Western eyes unusual, distinctions that made the rebel fighters stand out. Their use of other rudimentary attributes distinguished them from the rest of the population. Armbands or headbands and parts of old uniforms were important attributes of the fighters: 'They wear uniforms, albeit often ragged or incomplete ones; they have ranks and command structures that imitate those of conventional armies'.[21] These more common signs of distinction have been prevalent in other

armed conflicts in Africa as well.[22] Some factions in the two wars under investigation managed to provide large sections of their fighting forces with uniforms.

The INPFL of Prince Johnson consisted of many former professional soldiers, and they wore combat fatigues.[23] Even Charles Taylor, who was not a military man, often wore a military outfit.[24] This continued throughout the course of the war. In NPFL confrontations with the ULIMO forces – for example, before the attack on the capital in 1992 – the fighters were described as wearing uniforms.[25] In the war in Somalia, the USC forces were recognisable by their white headbands.[26] Furthermore, during the course of the war the faction leaders had the ambition of providing their fighters with uniforms.[27]

Second, as important as the outward determinants was the fact that the local population knew where the fighters were active. Their behaviour towards the population was crucial in this respect.[28] Seemingly small details arising from the fact that the fighters were mainly from the countryside but fought in the city played a role. One important factor here was that these fighters often spoke different dialects from the local population in the areas in which they were operating. This was the case in both Liberia and Somalia. Most importantly, however, was the fact that the fighters were forced to live off the land. Requisitioning foodstuffs and goods in order to maintain the fighting machinery forced the fighters to identify themselves.

The fact that the population was used to facilitate the war effort does not undermine the Clausewitzean argument that the political actor needs to have support from the population. Even in the Napoleonic wars, the main source of inspiration for Clausewitz's work, living off the land was common. In this case, of course, the enemy population was antagonised against the war effort. In the case of civil war, too, the population of the state, which forms the ultimate object of the struggle, is antagonised. However, the choice for the population was relatively straightforward. The population could accommodate the wishes of the factions and obtain a measure of peace by their compliance. Alternatively, they could refuse to hand over the coveted items, and their security, including their lives, would remain threatened. As was argued in the previous chapters, there were no alternative actors to take care of their security, and so the choice often turned out in favour of the rebels. This accommodation also implies a distinction between combatant and non-combatant. The civilian population knew who to cooperate with.

Third, and perhaps most importantly, the fighters active in the factions knew where and how to confront the enemy faction. The fact that cooperation between the factions was possible meant that the fighters at least had an idea who to attack and who to protect. Cooperation would show the extent to which the faction leaders were in control of their men.[29] As illus-

trated earlier with regard to legitimacy, the fact that ceasefires held relatively well shows that a large measure of control was present. The fighters knew whom they were fighting with and against. This is most clearly visible in the case of Somalia. The many alliances that were concluded held relatively well. If it had not been in the factions' interest to do so, they would not have continued to agree to those alliances during the course of the war. Neither would alliances have been concluded if they were insignificant on the battlefield and an alliance partner would attack the allied faction in spite of an agreement to the contrary.

The fact that many non-combatants or innocent civilians were hurt in the clashes between the factions does not undermine the argument that the fighters knew who they were fighting against. Rather, the fact that conclusions on civilian casualties were reached confirms that a distinction could be made.[30] Civilian casualties have been an important feature of wars in the past.[31] That this might be seen as unwelcome should not blind observers to the essentially conventional features of these wars. The ways in which combatants could be distinguished from civilians have been discussed in this section.

The prominent use of disguises in Liberia, the behaviour towards the population at large and the combatants' actions in both Liberia and Somalia made the rebels stand out from the rest of the population. These features of the two wars show that a distinction between combatants and non-combatants could be made by those involved in the fighting and those affected by the wars. This distinction was important throughout the duration of the two wars.[32]

Number of recruits

The number of fighters that could be used as an instrument of military power is the last feature of conventional war that needs to be addressed. As opposed to guerrilla operations, which rely on a small number of fighters operating covertly, or even one individual carrying out an act of sabotage or terrorism, conventional warfare relies on large numbers of combatants who operate openly.

As has already become clear, the centre of gravity was the capital. The capital could not be taken by the use of small arms alone, nor could it be captured by a small number of fighters. As was described in Chapter 4, in order to recruit large numbers of fighters, the rebel factions used the local circumstances to their maximum advantage. Local and regional resentments and dissidence, and the timing and location for the invasion, were carefully selected to prove beneficial to the rebels' cause. The result was that the factions commanded a large number of fighters during the advance on the capital.

While a large number of the fighters in the top layers of the factions had

received military training and had been professional soldiers, they came to lead a mass of countryside recruits who had had little formal education. A lack of educational opportunities had, notably in Liberia, been one of the grievances against the regime. The command, control and logistics were not geared to coping with the large number of recruits. In Somalia there existed a situation that proved advantageous for the factions. The rebel factions could count on a population possessing some military skills because during the Barre regime military training had been compulsory. The rebel factions used this existing knowledge to their advantage.

In the case of Liberia there was no such trained population. The training these new recruits received ranged from a few hours up to three months. The NPFL managed to increase the amount of training its forces received after the ceasefire in 1990 to six weeks. This training usually consisted of the bare essentials, e.g. the operation of the fighter's weapon. A highly inflated hierarchy of ranks marked the military culture that was developed among the recruits.[33] The groups counted a huge number of (self)-appointed generals and colonels: 'There are colonels and generals who can't write their names, intelligence officers who are illiterate, and field commanders who can't read a map'.[34]

After the collapse of the regime, large-scale operations of the factions in which substantial numbers of fighters were used were again occurring in and around the capitals, the details of which have already been discussed. The recruitment of fighters during the course of the wars became more difficult, because of the increase in the number of factions. Ethnic and clan categories reduced in importance as recruitment calls. The standing of the faction leader and his ability to provide security and a living for his fighters became crucial. Shifts in the fighters' allegiances were common in both Liberia and Somalia. When the factions fragmented, this led to a reduction in the military force they could command. The popular support they received also decreased. While anger was expressed at the rule of the factions, and widespread dislike for the factions was claimed, in practice this dislike had few consequences. No mass exodus of fighters from the armed factions occurred. They remained the focal point throughout the duration of the two wars.

Conventional war

The features of an operational centre of gravity that overlaps with the political interests of the actor, the distinction between combatants and non-combatants, and the number of recruits confirm the conventional nature of the wars in Liberia and Somalia. However, there were very prominent features of these two wars, such as cruelty, looting and starvation, that are still left largely unexplained. These features in particular have led many observers to call these wars guerrilla struggles, if not chaos

or madness. It should not be forgotten however, that these features have accompanied many if not all wars in the past. They do not disprove that the two wars were in essence conventional confrontations. A fundamental problem for the rebel forces was that they were not equipped to feed, clothe and house all the recruits. Therefore, armed force was used to acquire what was necessary to keep the rebel force functioning. Individual rebels used their weapon to acquire food, clothes and shelter.[35] The training (or the lack thereof), the control of the faction leaders over their men and the difficulties with communications between the different parts of the factions tended to promote this kind of independent action.

The spreading of terror, cruelty, looting and starvation were important phenomena that received attention during the two wars. Not only can they be described as the effects of the use of the military instrument, they were also used as instruments themselves.

Terror and the kidnapping of foreign aid workers or other foreigners were important means of gaining international attention.[36] They created an audience beyond the borders of the conflict.[37] The international audience was often reached through BBC broadcasts, which had audiences in both Liberia and Somalia. This international audience could help in the process of creating legitimacy for the faction, as described in Chapter 4. Not only could terror create an audience, but the factions also wanted to show that they were in control. Terror can be a very potent means of bringing across a basic message of control and can instil fear, resulting in obedience of the population.

Cruelty has also been a common phenomenon accompanying war. Like terror, cruelty can also be used to convey a message or stress control. There are strong indications that practices of cruelty, such as dismemberment, rape and, in the case of Liberia, cannibalism, were condoned if not ordered by the leaders of factions and were not just individual initiatives.[38] The faction leadership also committed acts of violence themselves, i.e. the torture and death of Doe, which was videotaped, and the killing of their faction fighters. Important features of the cruelty were the mutilations and the displaying of the body parts or bodies of the mutilated. These acts meant that the message the rebels wanted to convey could reach further.[39] Cruelty was often used by 'factions operating in enemy areas which committed the worst atrocities, with the aim either to frighten people away or, in other circumstances, of terrifying them into dumb obedience'.[40]

Committing acts of cruelty, in a more personal way, can create a sense of power for the perpetrators: 'Killing and torture is the most primitive and personal assertion of ultimate power, and the weaker the rebel feels himself to be at bottom, the greater, we may suppose, the temptation to assert it'.[41] Furthermore, cruelty destroys the social structure. For example, families that have been the victim of rape or mutilation often fall apart. In the case of Liberia, 'rape was specifically elevated to a central

position in its intimidation tactics and exercised as a tool of coercion and terrorism'.[42]

Looting too has been a common phenomenon associated with war.[43] Mostly because in the past fighters did not have any other way of acquiring basic needs, such as food, to sustain themselves, they reverted to robbing the local population. During the wars in Liberia and Somalia, the looting activities were described as a structural phenomenon. Right from the start, the rebel groups used the surroundings in which they operated to plunder. Especially popular for plunder were the places where villagers still worked on the land and produced food, and along routes that were used by aid convoys.

In Liberia, what was established was 'a veritable mode of production . . . in which the main aim was enrichment through looting'.[44] Traditionally, warfare and plunder had been closely connected in Liberia.[45] In Somalia, looting also took on institutionalised forms.[46] Mogadishu was almost stripped bare. Even the underground copper electricity cables were removed to be sold or used. When the Somali food shortage became more pressing, more attacks were carried out on aid workers and aid storage sites. Since the shortage of food drove up the prices on the black market, more wanted to profit, therefore more attacks occurred. Traders, who had an interest in keeping the price of food high, paid fighters to attack aid ships and to prevent them from docking in Mogadishu port. Groups of fighters contesting control over the airport started fighting whenever a plane arrived to determine who was to exact the bribe. On one occasion the fighters entered an aeroplane to rob the passengers of their belongings.[47]

Starvation was one of the results of the activities of the factions.[48] The population could no longer work the land or produce in order to buy food-stuffs because of the disruptions caused by warfare. Famine in general is less the result of the forces of nature than the consequence of human actions.[49] When food is actively withheld from groups of people, starvation is created. In war, after the state's supplies are exhausted and after the breakdown of trade links, food comes into the country mainly in the form of aid. For the factions, the control of aid has a three-way positive effect. First, it weakens the opponent by affecting the distribution of food among his forces and supporters. Second, it strengthens the leader's own network when more food can be distributed. Third, when there is a scarcity of food, the prices rise, and it becomes lucrative for the leader to sell food and make a profit. Starvation thus becomes an instrument in waging war.[50]

In the case of Somalia, aid workers estimated that a tiny percentage of the food aid that was brought into the country reached the hungry people.[51] Aid workers, aid planes, vehicles and storage sites became the focus of attacks. For example, when General Morgan made gains in the south, he mined the route to the frontline to prevent the aid reaching the opponents and the famished population in general.[52]

Terror, cruelty, looting and starvation have accompanied war through-out the ages and are not in contradiction with a conventional style of war-fighting. When factions see a chance to weaken the opponent by means other than a direct military confrontation, these are likely consequences, as also noted by Clausewitz.[53] Engaging in these activities does not remove the preoccupation of the factions with capturing the main prize of the presidential seat. It can be suggested that these features have received a lot of attention because they show a side of war that is abhorrent to Western audiences. As already suggested in the previous chapter, Western ideas about progress do not see a link between war and political develop-ment. In the two African case-study countries, the abuses of human rights are in contradiction with the way in which Western audiences prefer to see war waged.

Concluding remarks

Actors involved in armed conflict in Liberia and Somalia used armed force as an instrument with which to further political aims. The two wars in this study each consisted of an operational plan to control the capital, coupled with a strategic goal of capturing political power. The military were the main instrument used to achieve this. The arguments presented in this chapter support the view that the warring factions in these two conflicts had a clear operational centre of gravity and fought a conventional war.

There existed a clear operational centre of gravity towards which all military action was directed. This overlapped with the political aim of the political actor. Military force was thus used as a political instrument. A dis-tinction between combatants and non-combatants can also be found in the two wars. The use of disguises, the presence of rudimentary or even com-plete uniforms and the activities of the combatants support this argument. The last important conventional feature, a large number of fighters operat-ing in the open, was also found in the empirical material. In particular, in the attempts to capture the capital there was activity displayed by large numbers of recruits operating openly, not only at the beginning of the two wars but throughout their duration. This was not only possible, because of the support the factions acquired, but also necessary in order to realise the factions' goals.

The actor has few means under its control when it decides on its chal-lenge. The actor aspires to fight a conventional war, perhaps because this type of war is associated with state power. The rebel actor has to start from scratch trying to control power to gain the upper hand. The challenge to the state leads to the weakening of the state structures and to their ulti-mate collapse. Still the actor is interested in state power, as it existed before the actor embarked on the path of war. The collapse of the state leads to the spread of the means available to challenge, i.e. weaponry.

Other groups also start operating, because the means have become available and the necessity is shown of defending their interest before others enter the battlefield or take over. The lack of heavy weaponry, difficulties of command and control, and the proliferation of factions make the achieving of decisive victories problematic. One way to increase power is by relying on the remaining resources, namely, the assets of individuals – among others, property, cars, food and clothes. These can strengthen the faction and its operation. The violence that is associated with the direct and forcible appropriation of sources of power seems barbaric because few other means are available. This is the paradox of the wars in Liberia and Somalia: destroy the state in order to control it.[54] Charles Taylor managed to achieve this, while Aidid failed.

POLITICS AND STRATEGY IN AFRICAN WARS

Intervention dilemmas

Findings

This study, with the aid of empirical evidence, has provided a Clausewitzean and trinitarian explanation for the wars in Liberia and Somalia, which hitherto have usually been described as non-trinitarian. These wars are concerned with politics, the state and the instrumental use of military force. War can be an instrument through which to realise political aims, even in cases where the state has collapsed. Politics was defined as concerned with power, authority and rule. By using these concepts to analyse the main warring factions in the two armed conflicts, it was demonstrated that they strove to increase their power so as to claim legitimacy in order to acquire authority and establish rule.

Initially the factions exercised mainly coercive power, i.e. they commanded fighters and weaponry. The faction leaders aimed to transform this power into authority by claiming legitimacy. Legitimacy was found in existing conventions, such as ethnic and clan identity, patrimonialism, widely shared beliefs (such as the importance of social background), military skill of the faction leaders, religion and symbolism. Legitimacy was further derived from the actions of those over whom power was exercised, illustrated by the support from followers, both in their numbers and in their compliant behaviour. Furthermore, the actions of foreign actors, as witnessed in negotiations and peace missions, for example, conferred legitimacy to the factions.

These forms of legitimacy turned coercive power into authority. When authority was attained, it was in the interest of the factions to perpetuate it, because this authoritative power could be used with less cost than coercive power. The establishment of rule, i.e. the persistent exercise of authority, was possible. The possession of authority by the factions allowed them to create more legitimacy, among other ways by using this authority. However, faction rule faced several challenges. The personal ambitions of the faction leaders became the focus of rivalry. In particular, the presidential ambitions of Charles Taylor and Mohammed Aidid

caused problems. The other factions claimed legitimacy on the basis of the same factors, which increased competition. The use of ethnicity and clan identity had a divisive effect. Furthermore, the patron–client network of the old regime, which had been a basis for stability before, could not be taken over because of the competition between the factions.

The trinity of political leadership, armed force and support of a number of people existed in the warring factions in the two wars. The role of individual leadership was of great importance. The rebel leader, by playing local grievances and circumstances to his advantage, acquired a large armed force. By providing a network of patrons and favours, he aimed to set up the same system of rule as the deposed president's in order to establish his own rule and win over the population. Even though the support changed during the course of the wars from popular acclamation to passive non-resistance or compliance, this does not undermine the essential component of the population in the trinitarian explanation of these wars.

Concerning the interests of the actors, it has been found that actors involved in armed conflict in which the state structures have collapsed fight for political interests, which are achieved by control over the state. The rebel leaders had been outside the inner circle of power of which they previously were members. Other routes to influence and power were closed. Political dialogue was cut off by the authoritarian regimes. The invasions started a process of opposition, again using the very local grievances of the countryside population to propel the rebel movements to the seats of power, the capitals. Political disagreements also led to a continuation of the wars after the fall of the presidents. Who was to occupy the top position was the most important bone of contention among the protagonists.

The links to the other interests the actors might have fought for were close, because of the patrimonial idea of state power in which all power sources are closely connected. For example, to sustain the rebel advances, the movements had to be fed, clothed and armed. This could be achieved by gaining access to economic resources. Therefore, the fighting over exportable goods such as timber, diamonds and foodstuffs was intense. Furthermore, with regard to ethnic factors, the allegiance to the movements was initially low; however, reference was made to ethnic or clan identity and religious factors to increase the strength of the movements. Ethnic or clan identity was used by the leadership as a means to create a following; few other identities existed that could be used. The problem with the use of ethnic or clan identity, however, was that it was necessarily limited: while the aim was to control political power and the state, ethnic identity did not overlap with this aim; political control would be exercised at the cost of some ethnic groups. Other groups copied the organisation on the basis of ethnic representations. When the goal of bringing down the

regime became imminent, splits occurred within the rebel movements, primarily because of political rivalry over the future government. These rivalries did not so much concern the type of rule, which was patrimonial, but more the hands in which rule rested.

Placing emphasis on one concept of analysis can be criticised for creating a distorted picture.[1] This applies to the non-trinitarian explanations, such as resources and ethnicity, but equally so to political explanations. To do justice to the practice of politics in sub-Saharan Africa, these factors need to be looked at together. Politics and economics are difficult to separate in the patrimonial systems of rule that this study has been concerned with. The political power of the leadership is expected to lead to economic power. However, as this study has argued, stable political rule is the most secure way to establish lasting economic power. Furthermore, ethnic and clan categories have been given a place in the analysis in this study. These identities played a more important role in legitimising the authority of the regimes and factions. They were of a highly instrumental nature.

The use of military force as a political instrument and a conventional manner of warfare have both been found in the empirical material. The military and political centres of gravity overlapped, with control over the capital being the defining feature of both. The conventional style of operations could be further seen in the fact that the actors could be identified in the battle theatre; they operated clearly, in the open. Furthermore, the factions operated with large numbers of recruits. The fighters were commanded as an instrument for the promotion of the political objectives of the faction leadership.

The following factors have been found to be important in explaining the conduct of the wars in Liberia and Somalia after the collapse of the state. The desire to gain power was dominant. The proliferation of the factions, the diminished appeal of ethnic and clan identity, the lack of decisive weaponry and problems with command and control made it difficult for the factions to realise the interest of control over state power as it had existed before state collapse. What worked in the factions' favour was the control over armed force, mainly small arms, and resources, which could strengthen the faction and its patron–client network. It was the existence and operation of the faction that could promote their ultimate ambition, i.e. the occupation of the presidential seat. However, because of the proliferation of the factions, the chances of controlling the state became smaller and smaller. The zero-sum nature of the political domain had as an implication that giving up would mean a loss of influence, and submission to the strongest faction. This was not an option for the factions, because it signified a complete loss of power. The inability simply to give up contributed to the continuation of the two wars in this study.

With the aid of the political science concepts of power and legitimacy,

striking parallels have been uncovered between the rule of the factions and the rule of the collapsed regimes. The manipulation of local circumstances and the excessive reaction to the rebel invasion by the regular armed forces were the most important factors in rallying people behind the factions. The interests these factions present have given cause to doubt the utility of labels such as ethnic and resource conflict that have been attached to recent wars and their mono-causal explanations. The rebel leaders, to increase their appeal, manipulate ethnic rivalry. Economic hardship – or rather, conflict over resources – similarly has most clearly been used as a means to oil the machinery of the rebel movement. Of primary importance were factors of political rivalry. The contest over the control of the former state gave an important impetus to the interactions among the factions. The use of the military instrument has brought forward the continued applicability of categories of conventional warfare.

Implications

These findings and conclusions about the trinitarian nature of these African wars have several implications for the practice of intervention by outside agents in these kinds of conflicts. During the first half of the 1990s, many intervention operations were mounted, including in Liberia and Somalia. While in general their main aim was the mitigation of the conflict, the instruments that were used to achieve this mitigation were predominantly military. The reaction of the Western military establishment, asked to intervene in armed conflicts in the developing world, has been to look at familiar concepts used in military training and operations.[2] It has been argued that their outlook on armed conflict, dominated by Cold War inter-state war thinking, was at the heart of the many difficulties the intervening states faced in these interventions.[3] Many pages have been written in the past ten years evaluating the intervention experiences and drawing lessons for future operations. While the concept of lessons learned can itself be questioned – what is a lesson and when is it truly learned?[4] – the overall literature on this topic is rather introspective. What has gone wrong, what could have been done differently and how are we to change our approach? Answers to these problems range from instituting a different emphasis in the training of soldiers, to reform of the United Nations to deal with armed conflicts.[5] Instead it will be suggested in the following pages that we should be asking different questions: is there something wrong with our perspective on or attitude towards the conflict we are intervening in?

The following part of this chapter aims, in the light of the findings of this study, to present several important dilemmas that intervening states are faced with during intervention operations. Furthermore, it proposes some alternative approaches to intervention based on these dilemmas and

the choices they force intervening states to make. From the perspective of the conflict itself, what factors can be brought forward that can be affected by outside forces in order to bring closer a quick end to the hostilities and killings? While it is common to use a military strategy instead of an economic or political/diplomatic one when interventions occur,[6] it will be argued in more detail in what follows that non-military options could have more effect in achieving mitigation of the kind of conflict that occurred in Liberia and Somalia.

Political dilemmas

The findings of this study together with the experience of the intervening states in the two wars have brought forward three striking political dilemmas. In this study it has been found that the role of the individual leader was of crucial importance for the conduct and continuation of the two wars. The intervening forces in Liberia and Somalia did recognise the role that individual leadership played in the wars. During negotiations, for example, the intervening states, in the case of Somalia in particular the United Nations, were criticised for negotiating with faction leaders whose claim to power was said not to match reality.[7] It was recognised that the actions of the mediating states could affect the legitimacy of the factions and their leaders.

While the role of the individual leader was recognised, the intervening states disregarded the type of leadership these individuals stood for. The intervening states' vision for the future organisation of the states was diametrically opposed to those held in the countries themselves, in particular by the faction leadership. Both ECOWAS and the United Nations proposed the holding of free and fair elections to institute a democratic government. Nothing in the history of the two states had prepared them for democracy. The experience Somalia had of democratic rule immediately after independence had not been very successful. Now, democracy was suggested as a way of curing the ills that had occurred in Liberia and Somalia.[8]

Taylor aimed to control Liberia, while ECOWAS intervened to prevent Taylor from realising his ambition. Most participating ECOWAS states were governed by authoritarian and patrimonial regimes, which feared rebellions like the one in Liberia; if 'Taylor's uprising [were] to succeed, other revolutionary forces around West African [*sic*] might be encouraged to take up arms against their states'.[9] There is some irony in the fact that these dictatorships were promoting democratic rule for Liberia. The ECOWAS states feared an undermining of their power by forces that fought for change: 'ECOMOG deployment [could] thus . . . be seen as a move by corrupt repressive undemocratic and self-perpetuating regimes to save the dictatorship of Doe from collapse'.[10] In Somalia, Aidid also had

the ambition of controlling the state. This ambition was also seen as an obstacle to the resolution of the conflict.

This is the first dilemma that intervening states are faced with: what to do with the faction and its leadership? In the two cases under investigation, the dilemma was solved similarly. The view the intervening states held of the future type of rule for both states remained radically opposed to the faction leaders' ambitions. It was presupposed that the personalised rule was for a large part to blame for the wars that befell these two states.[11] To prevent similar occurrences, the type of rule had to be changed. However, the introduction of democracy and power-sharing was the most difficult course to pursue for the intervention forces because of the definition of the political system in the two states. The zero-sum nature of patrimonial rule made power-sharing arrangements very unattractive for the war leaders. For the intervening states, the ambitions of the leadership were disregarded in favour of the introduction of an unfamiliar type of rule.

The rather biased attitude of the intervention forces against the faction leaders had important repercussions. Disagreements over the future rule of the state formed the motor behind the wars among the warring parties. The intervening states did contribute to this dynamic by the non-recognition of the faction leaders' interests and ambitions. This propelled the wars, reinforced the violent interaction and its result was the opposite of mitigation. In the case of Liberia, the support of ECOMOG for the anti-Taylor factions had the effect not only of increasing the military pressure on Taylor, but also of exacerbating the fighting. ECOMOG actively promoted the establishment of new or renewed factions, i.e. the AFL and ULIMO. It thereby complicated its own position in the overall distribution of forces. These mechanisms were less pronounced in the case of Somalia, where the majority of the factions were already in existence upon arrival of the intervention troops. However, the perception of the Somalis that the United Nations favoured Ali Mahdi also increased the animosity between the factions.

Agreement between the faction leaders and the interveners did exist and, importantly, concerned the unity of the state. An aspect relating to the dominance of political issues that the intervening forces could have affected was the fact that the state, as the basic unit in the international system, was seen as the route to reconstruction. This strengthened the rebels', desire to continue to strive for control over it. If the intervening states were to recognise that sovereignty meant little in view of the collapsed state structures, a decline in the worth of the prize for the combatants would occur.[12] The state could lose its attraction. The recognition of non-sovereignty would mean that they would be no longer eligible for aid.[13] This was the case in both Liberia and Somalia: 'The state of Liberia continues to exist in international law, and the juridical recognition of sov-

ereignty which arises from this fact constitutes a crucial element in Liberia's warlord politics'.[14]

Further agreement existed on the role of the capital. The striving for control over the capitals was in fact confirmed by the intervening states. Both for the actions of the rebel factions and for the actions of the intervening states, the former seats of power represented the centre of gravity. The operational headquarters and the execution of the missions centred on Monrovia and Mogadishu. It is not clear whether any other options were seriously considered. Most of the humanitarian agencies also opted for the use of the capital because the facilities were available there to handle ships and aircraft. Intervening states could have influenced the confrontations over the control over the capital. It has been suggested that in the case of Somalia the intervention should have focused not on Mogadishu but on Kismayo or Berbera.[15] The focus on Mogadishu did confirm Aidid and Ali Mahdi in their preoccupation with the capital. Had the interventions chosen Kismayo in the south of Somalia, or Buchanan in the case of Liberia, fighting would undoubtedly have occurred there – not only because both cities were harbours and were used by the rebel factions themselves, but also because the conflict with the intervening states was not dependent on the place.

Apart from non-recognition of the state and capital, what other alternatives were available to the intervention forces to solve the dilemma regarding recognition or denial of the role of the factions and their leadership? The armed conflicts could not be resolved because the ambition of the faction leaders to become president of their country allowed no room for compromise. The quickest route to mitigation is helping the individual leader to establish stable rule.[16] This does not need to be supported by supplying weapons to help him to achieve dominance on the battlefield. A course of action for the intervening states could be entering into formal negotiations with the rebel leaders. Recognition of the leader's ambitions could be a step towards quick mitigation. Entering into negotiations with the faction leaders strengthened the legitimacy of the factions. With a strong faction present, the transition to peaceful rule, such as the case of Taylorland and Somaliland, could be speeded up. This is a course of action that the intervening states could pursue. The intervention forces could contribute to the establishment of a strong leadership to lead the country out of war.

Here, intervening states could make use of the positions of strength of the faction leaders when they become more inclined to negotiate to see their positions formalised, as discussed in Chapter 4. Only when it was to their political advantage did the faction leaders agree to ceasefires and agreements as proposed by the intervening and mediating states. Economic or ethnic interests hardly played a role here. Negotiations had a greater or lesser chance of success depending on the positions of the protagonists. Intervention efforts could be directed at formalising the position

of the faction leader when he appears at the negotiating table for the first time in order to promote stable rule.

Another, or complementary, option could be to affect the trade on which the actor relies. Trade blockades were instituted long after the fighting had started and therefore did not make much difference. It is also argued that, if successful, they hurt ordinary people most.[17] By contrast, the intervening states, or any other state for that matter, can help the actors achieve stable rule by trading with them. Controversial as this might seem, it has already been practised by Western states through the trade with Taylorland and by the Gulf states through the trade with the Somali factions. Especially in the case of Liberia, this trade significantly contributed to the establishment of a measure of peace in the country, i.e. a mitigation of the fighting. By making the actor more attractive, trade is likely to cause stabilisation of the conflict to occur much more quickly.

The practical problem with this course of action of strengthening a rebel leader is that in the cases of Liberia and Somalia both ECOWAS and the United Nations would find it hard to live with the rebel leader being in control of the state. This indicates that the interventions were hardly impartial. The promotion of stable rule might be more of a problem of perception. Western states had supported both Liberia and Somalia during the rule of Doe and Barre respectively, while these states were structured along the same lines as proposed by the rebel leaders. Furthermore, they continue to give support in many other cases on the African continent. In many cases this system works in the local circumstances.[18] It should be noted that promoting stable rule through recognition and trade is not necessarily a way of resolving the armed conflict. However, it can quickly achieve mitigation, which is most often what the outside intervention forces try to achieve. From there on, steps can be taken to tackle the root causes of conflict through, for example, aid programmes, training and education, and the (re-)building of civil society.

Instead of strengthening the support structures of the factions, the opposite could also be considered. A suggestion from the traditional counter-insurgency repertoire used to mitigate wars in other developing states would be to tackle the foreign ties that support the factions.[19] The marked effect of this course of action could be most clearly observed in the case of Liberia, when Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso were put under pressure to withdraw their support for the NPFL. This technique could have large effect in terms of mitigating war, one that in neither case was pursued to its maximum effect. This suggestion for counter-insurgency techniques does not imply that these wars should be seen as having the nature of insurgencies, a view that has been questioned in Chapter 6. Rather, all the mechanisms and techniques that are available should be contemplated when dealing with wars such as those in Liberia and Somalia.

A clear choice is necessary to either strengthen or weaken the warring parties, and this should be carried through consistently. Branding Aidid as the main obstacle to peace practically throughout the course of the intervention and at the same time renting property from him and his supporters, from which he benefited, is contradictory. Similarly, in the case of Liberia, trying to shift the military balance against Taylor but failing to consistently cut the influx of military supplies that supported his faction is clearly counter-productive.

A second political dilemma for the intervention forces concerns the role of armed force in the conflict. In order to curb faction power, the intervening states placed strong emphasis on the factions' military strength. In both cases, arms embargoes were instituted, but very late into the conflict. The efforts at active disarmament were undertaken equally late in the conflict. In Liberia a United Nations weapons embargo was instituted in November 1992, more than two years after the start of the conflict, and an embargo in Somalia began in January 1992, almost four years after the start of the war. Attempts to extend the Liberian embargo to all ECOWAS states, in particular Côte d'Ivoire, an important supplier of weapons, were unsuccessful. In the case of Somalia, efforts at active disarmament intensified only when UNOSOM II forces took over.[20] Until then, the local force commanders, rather than the centralised command, were responsible for disarmament. This half-hearted attitude to enforcement of the arms embargoes strengthened the rebels' resolve to resist disarmament. Overall, these efforts at disarmament of the intervening states were not very successful.[21]

Military power was the most difficult source of power for the intervening states to control, because both states were awash with small arms, and the power of the factions was based, as was argued in Chapter 4, on the use of arms. To judge by their attitude towards disarmament, the intervening states failed to realise the full extent to which the power of the factions and their leaders relied on weaponry. Even though the claims to power might not be based, for instance, on continuous control over territory, the faction leaders were armed and could frustrate any attempt to curb their power. As long as they were not disarmed, they had to be reckoned with in any settlement. Weapon embargoes and disarmament were the most difficult route to take to curb the power of the factions, but this was the course of action chosen by the international mediators. If instead more emphasis had been placed on creating circumstances in which the value attached to the use of armed force had been reduced, i.e. a secure environment and a reduction of the need to express political desires through armed force, disarmament would have been a much easier task. Still, it would have remained a difficult undertaking, and emphasis should perhaps be shifted away from this issue.

The third political dilemma for the intervention forces concerns the

population. The intervening states disregarded the fact that the factions were not contesting the type of rule. There is no clear evidence that the population at large thought any differently from the factions. Very few measures were undertaken to affect the attractiveness of the rebel factions in people's eyes. The rebels established a hold on the country by activating several local factors, such as political dissidence, local economic and social grievances. All these factors touched on a deeper conflict potential, one that had been growing over a number of years. The few attempts to separate the population from the factions met with little success. 'Food for Guns' programmes, for example, had limited success in both Liberia and Somalia, because the weapons far outnumbered the bags of grain present.[22]

In order to affect the faction leaders', following among the population in general, the promotion of alternative identities to the factions could have been a useful course of action.[23] However, finding an alternative focus for political activity would have been difficult. The state had been discredited through the actions of the deposed government and its army. Nationalism, which in both states was weak to start with, was not a viable alternative. The factions were already appealing to ethnic and clan allegiance. Remaining alternatives would be religion and culture. In Somalia, Islam, as the religion of the majority of the population, eventually started to provide a new binding force. In Liberia the situation was less clear-cut. Religion and culture were already being used by Taylor to increase his legitimacy.[24] Charismatic leadership could be another option to create an alternative identity.[25]

To some, the promotion of grass-roots action seemed to be the cure for all ailments with regard to remedying local grievances.[26] The UN special envoy to Somalia, Mohamed Sahnoun, an Algerian diplomat, had started on this course of action.[27] He attempted to negotiate both with the rebel leaders and with grass-roots organisations. His role in Somalia was short-lived, and many believe an opportunity was missed here.[28] In fact, however, the authority of elders in the case of Somalia increased significantly only when the power of the factions started to decline.[29] Another point to note is that the promotion of grass-roots organisations could be in contradiction to the promotion of democracy.[30]

The fragmented loyalties of the population made it difficult to find an overriding binding force that would bring them together. Often the membership of a faction was a negative choice; few other routes for security existed. Probably, very little would have been required to make people shift allegiance, especially because identity was flexible, as was described in Chapter 5. The main problem did not so much lie in winning hearts and minds, which could most likely have been won easily; the question was, what should they be won for?

Trying to take away the appeal and recruitment base for the rebels among the population is part of tried and tested counter-insurgency tech-

niques. It could be done through so-called hearts and minds campaigns and the movement of populations. While identities in both Liberia and Somalia were flexible, as noted, little significant outside effort was made to affect this aspect of the wars. Even in theories of conventional war, Clausewitz had already identified public opinion as an important centre of gravity; 'ultimately any contest of wills is a battle for the hearts and minds of the enemy, and a struggle to have public opinion everywhere on one's own side [was] something Mao in particular stressed'.[31] Here large room for manoeuvre to mitigate war was left almost untouched by the intervening states. More efforts could have been made to affect the attractiveness of the factions.

The three dilemmas that have been identified here are, first, whether to treat the faction and its leadership as partners for negotiation or as war criminals. Second, is it better to disarm the factions before establishing a secure environment, which requires a major effort in a war zone, or to create security and then disarm them? Third, should one disregard the ordinary people, who have only been victims, or engage the population at large in order to solve problems? Alternative courses of action that were suggested here are the non-recognition of the state and capital, since these are important sources for legitimacy for the factions. Help the main faction leader to establish a stable leadership in order to end the fighting at the first opportunity. Tackle the foreign and trade ties that support the factions and either use or neglect the importance faction leaders attach to recognition during processes of internationally sponsored negotiations. Disarmament should perhaps not be placed as high on the agenda as it has often been in the past. Since military power is crucial for the factions, they are least willing to give this up. The role of the population has perhaps been the most neglected factor that could be used in order to curb faction power. Setting up alternative centres of power and authority could make a large difference.

As has been stressed by many experts before, intervening early on in armed conflicts can have the largest effect in terms of mitigation. In both cases the interventions occurred long after the hostilities had escalated and, in the case of Somalia, over a year after the government had collapsed. First, early intervention can prevent the forced recognition of rebel leaders when they are still commanding a small number of men. Second, it can prevent the setting up of the embryonic trade links that sustain the factions, or cut off such links as have been established. Third, the use of local grievances can be prevented and the establishment of alternatives to the rebels can have the largest effect. Fourth, splits in factions and the rise of new factions could be influenced. Fifth, alternative identities can be more easily created when the rebel factions do not yet have a strong hold on the population. With regard to the political dilemmas, the timing of the intervention has far-reaching effects for mitigation.

However, while the early stages of war are the most crucial for intervention, it should not be forgotten that in the end the intervention operation is the product of cooperation between the intervening states. These coalitions of states are no more than the sum of their constituent members. Before interventions can be mounted, a process of internal negotiation must take place, which makes early intervention problematic.[32] Furthermore, the intervention and its mandate are usually restricted to what can be agreed among the constituent forces of the coalitions.[33] It is probably unrealistic to hope for optimal interventions from these kinds of constellations of power.

At the same time, the rebel leaders, in the early stages of conflict, usually do not recognise the usefulness of interventions. Having invested heavily in manpower and armed force, the rebel leaders do not see the limitations of their use of the military instrument. Especially in the first stages of war, armed force can have a big effect. When rebel leaders continue to see the military option as more effective than alternative courses of action, intervention can do little to alter this.[34] The likelihood of negotiations is also affected by this consideration. The reasons why rebel leaders show up at the negotiating table might not be their wish to see the conflict terminated. International recognition, a breathing space or a formalisation of a declining position can all be considerations for the rebel leader. In short, if intervention is to be undertaken, the most effective time is early on in the war. The intervening states should reach an optimal agreement on an intervention mandate, and, on top of that, the local protagonists must be convinced of the usefulness of the operation.

Military dilemmas

Intervention in armed conflict in the developing world also poses, apart from important political dilemmas, several closely related and striking military dilemmas. The first involves the mandate under which the military forces have to operate. There is often a fundamental dichotomy between the use of military force and the attainment of humanitarian ends or aims. What is the right amount of military force to be applied in order to achieve mitigation? In their operations during the two wars, the intervening forces had different approaches. Both intervention operations shared a belief that their superior weaponry and force would make a strong impression on the fighters. Neither the US nor the Nigerian approach – troops from these countries being the dominant element in the respective intervention forces – was geared specifically to the type of war that was being fought by the rebel factions. The intervention forces generally bypassed the underlying ideas and logic of warfare in the two states and concentrated on matching their military force to the specifics of the mandates they had been given.[35]

This dilemma between the requirements of the official mandate and

those of the situation with which the intervention troops were confronted had several important repercussions. The intervention forces never established control over the battle theatre because of their mandate, which was limited. Neither of the two states was cordoned off. The borders remained open for the duration of the wars, although efforts were made in the advanced stages of the conflict in Liberia to monitor border crossings, and Buchanan, the main harbour, was captured. In the case of Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya only closed their borders with Somalia just before the arrival of the UNITAF troops. The intervention forces did not achieve substantial and continuous control over the theatre of operations, and therefore the factors that contributed to the continuation of the war – international trade and arms flows – continued to have free play.

When engaged in hostilities, the US troops in Somalia used counter-insurgency concepts. They operated in small units, for example. They were highly mobile and tried to fight the rebels on their own terrain with the use of search-and-destroy operations. The period during UNOSOM II when US special forces tried to track down Aidid and his faction is the most notable. The Nigerian contingent in Liberia relied less on counter-insurgency and more on conventional techniques.[36] Their combat style in rebel terrain had more similarities with conventional patrol and confrontation operations than with counter-insurgency search-and-destroy actions. This was due in large measure to the training that these forces had received in their home states.

The most problematic factor of intervention is that the intervention troops themselves almost inevitably become part of the dynamic of the wars they are sent to monitor impartially and mitigate. Looking at the practice of intervention in the field, it becomes clear that almost any action by the intervention forces would have provoked a reaction from the rebels, mainly because of the circumstances of the intervention itself. Both operations were conducted without the full consent of the factions in the field. This applies to Liberia from the outset of the intervention and to Somalia during the development of the missions. The loss of impartiality or the loss of the perception of impartiality made the rebels look at any action of the intervention troops with special attention. The presence of the media, in particular the foreign media, gave strategic importance to single actions of individual soldiers. No matter what the intervention forces did, a hostile reaction could therefore be expected. On top of that, the factions had the advantage of better knowledge of the terrain. Especially in Somalia, they could count on support from the population to draw together in the face of a foreign threat. Despite their internal differences, with respect to the interference of the foreigners their interests coincided. In short, almost any technique would show limitations and shortcomings because of the position of the intervention troops. This situation would be very difficult to affect.[37]

This is closely connected to the exacerbation of war. It has been found that 'outside forces [trying] to mitigate conflict ... are also one of the greatest sources for intensifying the conflict'.[38] The exacerbation of war following foreign intervention is clearly indicated in the conflicts studied here. It could be observed in Somalia that once the intervening forces arrived on Somali soil, the war leaders forgot their differences. Their confrontations decreased in number and severity; in some cases there was even cooperation. This was all eventually geared towards the ultimate removal of the intervention troops. The US UNITAF force disturbed the local balance of forces and the informal economy in Somalia. The intervening troops were seen as enemies, especially when they started disarmament and tried to track down Aidid during the UNOSOM II phase.

Exacerbation can be the result not only of the presence of the outside force itself, but also of the mandate under which the interventions operate. The promotion of democracy and disarmament clearly did not fully reflect the role of political issues and weaponry in the wars. In fact, the intervening states introduced a separate and normative element into the armed conflict. From this perspective, impartiality was lost even before the operation started. The mandates formed independent interests in the war regardless of the actors. In the armed conflicts, with at least two warring sides, the mandate represented a third party, a third aim to be achieved apart from the other parties' goals. Unlike the sports referee, who has to make impartial judgements concerning the actions of the parties on the basis of previously agreed rules, the intervening forces aimed to achieve a goal regardless of the actions of the other parties. The fact that an intervention was undertaken meant that the operation 'automatically gain[ed] a stake in the outcome'.[39]

Exacerbation was also the result of the lack of control over the battle theatre. The provision of outside support contributed to the continuation of war and also offered important opportunities to mitigate the war, as was seen in both Liberia and Somalia. When intervening states are not able to control the battle theatre, the factor of outside support becomes difficult to manage. Incorporating the regional states is most important in this respect. However, involving the region might also mean inviting difficulties, because regional states especially could have a preference for the way in which a conflict develops and might have very particular interests that they wanted to see realised.[40]

Apart from a lack of consent and a lack of control over the battle space due to formulations in the mandates that were given, exacerbation was also the result of the approach the intervening states adopted towards the factions. In Liberia in particular, ECOWAS provided the anti-Taylor forces with reinforcements, weaponry, transport and communications that under other circumstances would not have come their way. By strengthening one side, ECOWAS contributed to the continuation of the war. In the

case of Somalia, it has also been argued that the intervention operation disproportionately benefited Aidid with his renting out of property, control over currency exchange and provision of security.[41]

There is very little that intervening states can do to escape this dilemma. The already suggested control over the battle theatre and the cutting of the foreign ties of the factions are the best options that can be pursued. Full control over the battle theatre and physically cutting the trade flows would involve a large-scale military operation, which goes against the more limited nature of many intervention operations and the political willingness of intervening states to act militarily in these kinds of conflicts.

A second dilemma concerns the effects of terror, cruelty, looting and starvation that were witnessed in these wars. The actions of the foreign troops were most notable in the case of starvation. In Somalia, the explicit purpose of UNITAF was the creation of a safe environment for the delivery of humanitarian aid. While this was initially very successful, the situation deteriorated again after the Americans left. Apart from forceful delivery of aid, other initiatives were started up to prevent food aid falling into the hands of the factions. One example was the kitchen programme: 'its rationale was that cooked food was less attractive to looters than dry rations'.[42] Kitchens would provide prepared food to the population. Cooked food would go off after a while and could not so easily be sold.

An important option to limit the use of terror, cruelty, looting and starvation could be to ensure that people cannot get away with committing atrocities. The institution of a court, for example, to which people would be accountable for crimes, could potentially have a deterrent effect. The breakdown of the state often makes it problematic to institute a court; however, these functions could be taken over by the intervening states.[43] The institution of a process of law could deter people from perpetrating crimes.

To summarise, the two main military dilemmas were identified. First, there is a dichotomy between the official military requirements of the mandate that the intervention forces have been given and the often very different circumstances they are confronted with in the field. Involvement in the two wars was almost inevitable, in view of the fact that the presence of the foreign troops was against the wishes of some of or all the belligerents. The second military dilemma focuses on the fact that the interventions were initially made in order to combat the symptoms of underlying problems, while these symptoms themselves, war crimes, were largely left unpunished. Killing, terror and cruelty were the result of the warfare and sometimes themselves used as practices of war, as was elaborated in Chapter 6. While the intervention forces entered the war zones to separate the warring factions in order to stop the atrocities, the perpetrators of these atrocities were not held to account. Few clear signs were given that

these activities were outside the internationally accepted boundaries of behaviour in war, and, especially in the case of Somalia, they resumed after the intervention forces had left the country.

Some alternatives to these military dilemmas were suggested. In order to escape the temptation to become involved in the war and contribute to exacerbation of the fighting, few remedies present themselves. Control over the battle theatre through cutting the foreign ties of the warring factions, and their supply routes, might make a difference. In order to escape the second dilemma, intervening states could focus on instituting deterrents to try to stop people engaging in war crimes, such as the institution of a process of law or bringing war crimes before the International Criminal Court.

This discussion about intervention dilemmas has highlighted several important and notably non-military opportunities for foreign intervention. First, intervening states could assist in precipitating the transition to stable rule. This could be achieved by making a clear choice to work towards either substantially strengthening or substantially weakening the main actors. An actor could be strengthened through trade, which would reinforce its economic position. Its political power could also be affected by outside states through formal negotiations, which should include a realistic assessment of the situation on the ground. This could help in strengthening the legitimacy of the actor. The weakening of the actor could alternatively concentrate on the structures, trade links and support that form the actor's power base. A clear choice and a consistently carried-through strategy for how to deal with the actor represents the most direct way to mitigation.

Second, the intervention states could assist in the creation of an alternative identity for the rebel factions, which could command enough allegiance to build social and political structures. This would most likely cost little effort because of the nature of these wars. Alternatives could be found, for example, in charismatic leadership, religion or grass-roots action. While democratic elements such as transparency and accountability should be stressed, a democratic transition should take place if and when it finds favour among the population of the state, and substantial time has been allowed to build legitimacy for this type of exercise of power and system of rule. Rushing through democratic elections, as was done in Liberia, does not make a democratic state and ultimately discredits democracy as a system of rule.

Third, intervention states could decide to recognise the non-sovereignty of the territory. This would cause a decline in the worth of the state the rebel groups are fighting over. Political power, exemplified by control over the capital, comes with international recognition and aid. For the rebel factions, political power in a patrimonial system is closely linked to economic power. By promoting non-recognition, this link could be severed. Sovereignty could be restored upon resolution of the conflict.

Fourth, the intervention states could promote the institution of a process of law in which people become accountable for their crimes. The tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda could be examples. However, a tribunal should be instituted beforehand to have a potential deterrent effect.[44] The further development of the International Criminal Court is therefore to be encouraged.[45]

It is striking that the elements that were in large measure responsible for the continuation of the wars in Liberia and Somalia did not offer any clear-cut opening for outside influence during the hottest phases of the wars. In particular, the proliferation of actors provided hardly any pressure points for outside forces to use. The easiest remedy for this difficulty is to promote the break-up of factions. The two options that were pursued most vigorously by the intervention forces, but which turned out to have little effect with regard to the mitigation of the fighting, were disarmament and the promotion of democracy. Weaponry and military power was what the factions were based on, and disarmament would cut their power. The type of rule was not an issue between the protagonists, and democracy was not their preferred option.[46] Emphasising these issues therefore did not promote mitigation of the fighting. Rather, it contributed to the continuation of the conflicts.

Defective judgements on the wars in Liberia and Somalia by the intervention forces can be seen as the major factor contributing to the failure of their missions. Underlying the interventions were moral agendas that found limited resonance in the two states. The promotion of democracy, the refusal to negotiate, or a half-hearted attitude to negotiation with war criminals, and the attempts at disarmament all formed part of an agenda that complicated the interaction between all the parties. Together these issues touch at the heart of the failure of the intervention operations in Liberia and Somalia. The judgements and agenda produced mandates for the interventions to carry out which were, as others have also noted, 'not relevant to the constraints and possibilities of resolving the conflicts that they were sent to end'.[47] In terms of observations on the ground, a 'weakness that repeatedly exposed . . . [the interventions] to direct attack . . . was when they were charged with implementing a normative solution that threatened the interests of a powerful belligerent'.[48]

Intervening states in general have often looked towards counter-insurgency experiences to deal with armed conflicts without taking all their recommendations on board. This is in some respects in contrast to the conclusion that has been drawn in this study that in essence the wars in Liberia and Somalia can be seen as conventional. However, it should not follow that conventional military force is the optimal intervention instrument. What these opportunities for intervention have in common is the emphasis on the non-military nature of intervention instruments. This is in contrast to the military instrument as the most-used option for mediating

conflict. The most important opportunities for intervention turn out in the main to be political, diplomatic and economic. Intervening states are thus putting emphasis on the wrong instruments in their effort to mediate.

Several conditions that seem important for the success of intervention operations can be highlighted in this discussion. The support not only of the rebel leaders but also of the population is essential if the intervention is to successfully mitigate the war. Military intervention cannot be effective when there is no consensus on the presence of the foreign soldiers; 'there is virtually nothing of a military nature that outside forces can do to prevent the possibility of protracted guerrilla resistance against their intervention'.[49] In both Liberia and Somalia, this support was questionable during several phases of the wars. Intervention is an option when for the warring parties the usefulness of military means is showing limitations, when the foreign forces are welcome, when the objectives of these forces are realistic in view of the local circumstances, when they find co-operation from both neighbouring and regional states and the population in general.

Perhaps the most important lesson to draw from this discussion is that, as Clausewitz too has stated, the soldier in an intervention must understand what kind of war he is involved in. A soldier cannot change the war into something he is trained for and which it is not. A US general commented during the Vietnam War, 'I'll be damned if I permit the United States Army, its institutions, its doctrine, and its traditions, to be destroyed just to win this lousy war'.[50] This inflexibility undoubtedly contributed to the failure to achieve results in that war. A more productive attitude was the British handling of the conflict in Malaya from 1948 to 1960: 'Throughout the "emergency" the military forces deployed in Malaya tailored their operations to the kind of war they faced rather than to the kind of fighting they had been trained and organized to carry out'.[51] ECOMOG intervened in Liberia to prevent Taylor from getting to power, UNITAF and UNOSOM intervened in Somalia to deliver aid and to bring Aidid to justice – all these reasons to intervene relied on defective interpretations of the armed conflicts in which the interventions took place.

Who is fighting, why they are fighting and how they are fighting are essential questions to be answered before intervention can be considered. Accurate assessments are essential to grasp the development of the wars. States with a potential to intervene in conflicts need to develop a proper perspective from which to view wars. Only by starting from the perspective of the conflict, its causes and the factors that cause its continuation can a proper set of instruments be developed and the chances of successful intervention increased. The main message for states willing to intervene is to stop looking at their own capabilities to intervene before looking at the conflict and the opportunities it offers for intervention.[52]

Concluding remarks

This study has led to a re-appreciation of Clausewitz's ideas. The age of the state is not quite over yet, as some have claimed. War as an instrument of politics is alive and kicking. The main difference is the context in which the instrument is used. The actor, using all kinds of sources of power, aims to control the ultimate source of power, i.e. the state. The paradoxical aim of the actor, to control the state by destroying it, makes war not only difficult to comprehend but also difficult to deal with for outside states.

As was noted in Chapter 1, certain biases are inevitable in the analysis of armed conflict in the developing world with a set of analytical tools from the developed world. Both the Western outlook on conflict and the promotion of fundamentally Western values to deal with conflict have been found to influence the dynamics of war and, in particular, the intervention operations. The refusal to recognise that war can be part of a development process has prompted some to claim that 'Societies and states have not been strengthened by conflict'.[53] However, it could very well be possible that for Africans too the development of their own vocabulary on the organisation and ordering of society and the rules governing that society is a conflict-producing process. This is not to say that violence should be encouraged; it is merely to indicate that violence can be perceived differently. States undertaking an intervention in an armed conflict in the developing world should be more aware of this, if they want to make a difference.

NOTES

1 CLAUSEWITZ, THE NATURE OF WAR AND AFRICAN WARFARE

1 Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege: Hinterlassenes Werk* (Bonn: Dümmler, 1952).
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6 Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz*, pp. 179–80.
7 Mike Smith, 'Guerrillas in the Mist: Reassessing Strategy and Low Intensity Warfare', *Review of International Studies*, 29, 1 (2003), pp. 19–37, p. 31.
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14 Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999); David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild (eds), *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998); Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Robert D. Kaplan, 'The Coming Anarchy: How Scarcity, Crime, Overpopulation, and Disease are Rapidly Destroying the Social Fabric of our Planet', *Atlantic Monthly*, February 1994, pp. 44–76; Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Pandaemonium: Ethnicity in International Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

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2 CASE STUDY I: LIBERIA, 1989–97

1 Unofficially there is mention of 28 ethnic groups: Martin Lowenkopf, *Politics in Liberia: The Conservative Road to Development* (Stanford, Calif.: Hoover Institution Press, 1976), p. 25. The ethnic groups are mostly defined on the basis of language: Eghosa E. Osaghae, *Ethnicity, Class and the Struggle for State Power in Liberia* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1996), p. 6.

2 In percentages the Kpelle (20.8 per cent), resident mostly in Bong County, are the biggest group, followed by the Bassa (16.3 per cent) from the area of Buchanan. The Gio from Nimba County are the third largest group (8.2 per cent). The other groups are the Kuwaa (8.0 per cent), who live mostly in Lofa, Mano (7.1 per cent, from Nimba), Loma (5.3 per cent, Lofa), Krahn (5.2 per cent, Grand Gedeh), Gola (4.7 per cent, Grand Cape Mount), Kissi (3.4 per cent, Lofa), Mandingo (2.9 per cent, Monrovia and Lofa), Vai (2.8 per cent, Grand Cape Mount) and Americo-Liberians (1.5 per cent). The smallest groups are the Dei (Bomi), Gbandi (Lofa), Glebo (Maryland) and Mende (Lofa). All the percentages are estimates: Earl Conteh-Morgan and Shireen Kadiver, 'Ethno-political Violence in the Liberian Civil War', *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 15, 1 (1995), pp. 30–44, p. 43. For geographical locations of ethnic groups, see Lowenkopf, *Politics in Liberia*, p. 29.

3 According to figures from 1986, 75 per cent were followers of local religions, 15 per cent were Christians and 10 per cent were Muslim. Most likely, people adhered to several religious beliefs at the same time, which is not illustrated by these figures: Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy* (London: Hurst, 1999), p. 227.

4 Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994: A Study of Ethnic and Spiritual Violence', *African Affairs*, 94, 375 (1995), pp. 165–97, p. 196.

5 Stephen Riley, *War and Famine in Africa*, Conflict Studies 268 (London: Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, 1994), p. 16.

6 Lowenkopf, *Politics in Liberia*, p. 28.

7 Amos Sawyer, *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1992), p. 50.

8 W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 'Regional Organizations and the Resolution of Internal Conflict: The ECOWAS Intervention in Liberia', *International Peacekeeping*, 1, 3 (1994), pp. 261–302, p. 265.

9 United Nations Development Programme, *Human Development Report* (New York: UNDP, 1994).

10 Ademola Adeleke, 'The Politics and Diplomacy of Peacekeeping in West Africa: The ECOWAS Operation in Liberia', *Journal of African Studies*, 33, 4 (1995), pp. 569–93, p. 589.

11 Dirk van den Boom, *Bürgerkrieg in Liberia: Chronologie – Protagonisten – Prognose*, Studien zur Politikwissenschaft, Band 80 (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1993), p. 63.

12 Abiodun Alao, 'Peacekeeping in Sub-Saharan Africa: The Liberian Civil War', in *Brassey's Defence Yearbook 1993* (London: Brassey's, 1993), p. 339.

13 There is some debate whether the lady in question was actually a daughter, stepdaughter or god-daughter of Houphouët-Boigny. See, for differing opinions, Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 66, and Klaas van Walraven, *Containing Conflict in the Economic Community of West African States: Lessons from the Intervention in Liberia, 1990–1997* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute of International Relations, 1999). The widow of Tolbert's son allegedly married Blaise Compaoré, who was to become president of Burkina Faso. This country did thus not see any reason to support Doe either.

14 Max Ahmadu Sesay, 'Collective Security or Collective Disaster? Regional Peacekeeping in West Africa', *Security Dialogue*, 26, 2 (1995), pp. 205–22, p. 206. See also Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994', p. 177.

15 Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 'Regional Organizations', p. 267.

16 For the history and importance of Nimba County, see Lindsay Barrett, 'The Nimba Equation', *West Africa*, 1 March 1993.

17 For Taylor's activities before the invasion, see Mark Huband, *The Liberian Civil War* (London: Frank Cass, 1998).

18 This organisation was said to consist of remnants of Quiwonkpa's group.

19 'Liberia: The Forces in Contention', *Africa Confidential*, 33, 22 (1992).

20 Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, pp. 54–56.

21 Mark Huband, 'Rebel Splits Threaten to Engulf Neighbours in Liberia's War', *Guardian*, 13 November 1990. For more on the financial background of the Liberian factions, see Marc-Antoine de Montclos, 'Liberia: des prédateurs aux "Ramasseurs de miettes"', in François Jean and Jean-Christophe Rufin, *Économie des guerres civiles* (Paris: Hachette, 1996), pp. 269–97.

22 'Liberia: Taylor's One-Man Band', *Africa Confidential*, 31, 15 (1990).

23 Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', Conference Paper, Conference on African Guerrilla Movements (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 1997), p. 7. An edited version of this paper appeared in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), pp. 155–71.

24 For some examples, see Bayo Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line: Anatomy of Charles Taylor's Hostage Camps* (Enugu: Delta, 1995), p. 45.

25 Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994', p. 167.

26 For ULIMO background, see Boom, *Bürgerkrieg in Liberia*, p. 48.

27 Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', in Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas*, p. 161.

28 For more on the factions involved in the Liberian conflict, see 'Liberia', *Africa Research Bulletin*, 32, 2 (1995).

29 Jonathan C. Randal, 'For Liberia Leader, a Revolt that Won't Go Away', *International Herald Tribune*, 20 March 1990.

30 Herbert Howe, 'Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping', *International Security*, 21, 3 (1996), pp. 145–76, p. 170.

31 Anton La Guardia, 'Britons Told to Leave Liberia Immediately', *Daily Telegraph*, 27 April 1990.

32 Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 61.

33 James Butty, 'Mending Fences', *West Africa*, 14 May 1990; James Butty, 'A Year of Terror', *West Africa*, 7 January 1991. Huband argues that a split occurred days after the invasion: Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 61. The reason why it was not made public was that Prince Johnson did not possess the means of communication to let others know. Taylor only confirmed the split in public in May 1990.

34 'Liberia: Waiting in the Wings', *Africa Confidential*, 31, 20 (1990).

35 Gerald Bourke, 'Doe Bows under US Pressure to Talk to Rebels', *Independent*, 9 June 1990.

36 Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, pp. 114–15.

37 Martin Lowenkopf, 'Liberia: Putting the State Back Together', in I. William Zartman (ed.), *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1995), pp. 91–108, p. 97.

38 Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 'Regional Organizations', p. 269.

39 Ibid., p. 269.

40 Mark Huband, 'Liberia Crumbles as Doe Clings On', *Guardian*, 7 July 1990.

41 AFP, 'Liberian Rebels Fight Each Other', *The Times*, 14 July 1990.

42 Howe, 'Lessons of Liberia', p. 153.

43 Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 183.

44 Robert Mortimer, 'Senegal's Rôle in ECOMOG: The Francophone Dimension in the Liberian Crisis', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 34, 2 (1996), pp. 293–306.

45 For more on ECOMOG, see 'Funmi Olonisakin, *Reinventing Peacekeeping in Africa: Conceptual and Legal Issues in ECOMOG Operations* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000).

46 AFP, 'ECOWAS Gains in Monrovia', *Independent*, 3 September 1990.

47 For a personal account by Doe's son, Cooper Doe, of what happened during this visit, see Cooper Doe and Bram Posthumus, *Cirkels van Wraak: Heden en verleden van Liberia en het doorbreken van de geweldsspiraal* (Circles of Revenge; Present and Past of Liberia and the Breaking of the Cycle of Violence) (The Hague: BZZTôH, 2001).

48 Peter Beaumont, 'Four Armies Battle in Circus of Death', *Observer*, 16 September 1990.

49 Mark Huband, 'Taylor is Forced to Sign Cease-fire', *Guardian*, 29 November 1990.

50 For summaries of the accords and ceasefires, see van Walraven, *Containing Conflict in the Economic Community of West African States*; Abiodun Alao, John Mackinlay and 'Funmi Olonisakin, *Peacekeepers, Politicians and Warlords: The Liberian Peace Process* (New York: United Nations University Press, 1999).

51 Lowenkopf, 'Liberia: Putting the State Back Together', p. 94. See also William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner), p. 99.

52 The RUF rebels captured around 25 per cent of Sierra Leonean territory in a couple of months: Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 'Regional Organizations', p. 283. Nigeria sent troops to Sierra Leone to secure the ECOMOG supply routes through that country. The war thus spilled over into a neighbouring state: 'Liberia: Taylor Goes Abroad', *Africa Confidential*, 32, 8 (1991). See also Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 2 (1998), pp. 203–35.

53 Lowenkopf, 'Liberia: Putting the State Back Together', p. 47.

54 Mark Huband, 'Old Liberian Rivals Sign New Accord as Third Force Invades', *Guardian*, 8 April 1992.
55 Boom, *Bürgerkrieg in Liberia*, p. 31.
56 Lindsay Barrett, 'ECOMOG's Peace Offensive', *West Africa*, 19 April 1993.
57 Lindsay Barrett, 'The Siege of Monrovia', *West Africa*, 23 November 1992.
58 Howe, 'Lessons of Liberia', p. 158.
59 Ibid.
60 Ibid., p. 157. For the debate on the extent of the ECOMOG support, see Abiodun Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill: The International Involvement in the Liberian Civil War* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 75–77.
61 Richard Dowden, 'US Agents Directed Air Raids in Liberia', *Independent*, 7 November 1992.
62 Howe, 'Lessons of Liberia', p. 168.
63 Eve-Ann Prentice, 'Liberia Claims Civil War Nearly Over', *The Times*, 3 March 1993.
64 Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill*, in particular chapter 5; Max Ahmadu Sesay, Civil War and Collective Intervention in Liberia', *Review of African Political Economy*, 23, 67 (1995), pp. 35–52.
65 Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994', p. 173.
66 Ibid., p. 184.
67 United Nations, 'The United Nations and the Situation in Liberia', Reference Paper (New York: United Nations Department of Public Information, 1995), p. 12.
68 Lindsay Barrett, 'Breaking the Ice', *West Africa*, 12 June 1995.
69 Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994', p. 183.

3 CASE STUDY II: SOMALIA, 1988–95

 1 The spelling of Somali place names is not standardised. In this case study the most common spelling will be used, with the spelling of the names on the UN map of Somalia given in parentheses if these are different.
 2 Jarat Chopra, Age Eknes and Toralv Nordbo, *Fighting for Hope in Somalia*, Peacekeeping and Multinational Operations Study 6 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 1995), p. 28.
 3 Africa Watch, *A Government at War with its Own People: Somalia Testimonies about the Killings and the Conflict in the North* (New York: Africa Watch, 1990), p. 208.
 4 Ibid., p. 20.
 5 The percentages of the clan populations are estimates: International Institute for Strategic Studies, *Strategic Survey, 1989–1990* (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1990), p. 86.
 6 Richard Dowden, 'Somali Faction Warns of US "Colonisation" ', *Independent*, 7 December 1992. See also 'Somalia: The Politics of Hunger', *Africa Confidential*, 33, 19 (1992).
 7 Chopra, Eknes and Nordbo, *Fighting for Hope in Somalia*, p. 24.
 8 The name Aidid is also spelled Aideed. Here the spelling adopted is the one used in Aidid's own publications. In the Somali language the name means blameless.
 9 The focus will be here on the faction leaders instead of the warring factions. The factions were not always unified and repeated splits occurred. The individual leadership provided more continuity.
10 There were several other factions involved in the war: Marc Yared, 'La Somali à feu et à sang', *Jeune Afrique*, 30 January 1992.

11 For the links between Aidid's USC faction and the SNM, see 'Somalia: Where Do We Go from Here?', *Africa Confidential*, 32, 3 (1991).

12 Jane Perlez, 'Mogadishu: The Capital of "Making Do"', *International Herald Tribune*, 8 December 1992.

13 Mariam Arif Gassem, *Hostages: The People who Kidnapped Themselves* (Nairobi: Central Graphic Services, 1994), p. 101.

14 Sam Kiley, 'Somali President Pleads for UN Aid', *The Times*, 16 December 1991.

15 Satya Pal Ruhela (ed.), *Mohammed Farah Aidid and his Vision of Somalia* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1994); Mohammed Farah Aidid and Satya Pal Ruhela (eds), *The Preferred Future Development in Somalia* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1993).

16 This will be further elaborated in Chapter 5.

17 This rivalry has also been explained as a confrontation between the old soldier – part of the authoritarian culture – and the businessman with newly acquired wealth: Daniel Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements: The Interplay of Political Entrepreneurship and Clan-Based Factions', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), pp. 73–90, p. 84.

18 Sam Kiley, 'Somali Warlords Hoard Weapons as US Airlift Begins', *The Times*, 29 August 1992; 'Somalia: Chaos Spreads to the North', *Africa Confidential*, 33, 7 (1992). Khat is pronounced 'chat'. It has to be consumed within 36 hours of harvest; thereafter it will lose its flavour: Isabelle Vouin-Bigot, 'Le Khat en Somalie: réseaux et enjeux', *Politique Africaine*, 60 (1995), pp. 135–41.

19 Keith Richburg, 'Addiction, Somali-Style, Worries Marines', *International Herald Tribune*, 15 December 1992.

20 Barbara Starr, 'US, Soviet Weapons in Somali Arsenal', *Jane's Defence Weekly*, 2 February 1993.

21 For the role of the Ogadeni, see 'Somalia: The Rise of the Ogadeni', *Africa Confidential*, 30, 2 (1989).

22 Graham Hancock, 'Rebels Carve a Swath of Death across Somalia', *Sunday Times*, 11 September 1988.

23 Hussein Ali Dualeh, *From Barre to Aideed: Somalia, the Agony of a Nation* (Nairobi: Stellagraphics, 1994), p. 112.

24 'Somalia Loses Grip on Nationhood', *Africa Analysis*, 24 June 1988.

25 Africa Watch, *A Government at War with its Own People*, p. 137.

26 Ibid., p. 129.

27 'Somalia: 'Where Do We Go from Here?', *Africa Confidential*, 32, 2 (1991). According to some sources, the pilots were white Zimbabweans or former Rhodesians.

28 Philippe Leymarie, 'Tentations séparatistes en Somalie', *Le Monde Diplomatique*, June 1989.

29 Yves Hellier, 'La Guérrilla dans le nord semble marquer le pas', *Le Monde*, 2 June 1989.

30 Catherine Bond, 'Officers Leave Somali Army to Join Rebels', *Daily Telegraph*, 27 November 1989.

31 Dualeh, *From Barre to Aideed*, p. 172.

32 'Somalia', *Africa Research Bulletin*, 27, 11 (1990).

33 Mark Bradbury, 'The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace', Oxfam Research Paper 9 (Oxford: Oxfam, 1994), p. 55.

34 AP, 'Somali Tells of Month-Long Massacre', *Independent*, 5 August 1992.

35 After the fall of the Barre regime, journalists were allowed back into the country for the first time since July 1989. Most of the reporting had been taking place from Kenya. For the role of journalists during the Somali conflict,

see Michel Sailhan, 'Un journaliste dans le maquis somalien: les risques d'un métier', *Politique Africaine*, 48, December (1992), pp. 117–22.

36 'Somalia Fighting Renewed', *Financial Times*, 11 February 1991.

37 Abdisalam M. Issa-Salwe, *The Collapse of the Somali State: The Impact of the Colonial Legacy* (London: Haan, 1994), p. 85. See also Peter Biles, 'Breakaway Somali Republic Urged to Return to the Fold', *Guardian*, 19 August 1991.

38 Roland Marchal, 'La Guerre à Mogadiscio', *Politique Africaine*, 46, June (1992), pp. 120–25, p. 124.

39 Aldon Hartley, '20,000 Casualties Feared in Somali Feud Carnage', *Daily Telegraph*, 10 January 1992.

40 See, for the role of Djibouti, 'Somalia: Still Fighting', *Africa Confidential*, 32, 16 (1991).

41 Jane Perlez, 'Aid Workers Cite Slaughter in Somalia', *International Herald Tribune*, 30 November 1991; Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', p. 75.

42 Chopra, Eknes and Nordbo, *Fighting for Hope in Somalia*, p. 30. The Somali people were suspicious about the role of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali. In his previous function as a diplomat for the Egyptian government, he had maintained a good relationship with Barre.

43 For Aidid as an obstacle to peace, see Peter Biles, 'Somali Foes under New Pressure to Accept Cease-fire', *Guardian*, 11 January 1992; Trevor Rowe, 'U.N. Asks U.S. for Help in Somali Relief Effort', *Washington Post*, 30 October 1992; William E. Smith, 'Europe Wary of U.S. Plan to Put Troops in Somalia', *International Herald Tribune*, 28 November 1992.

44 Hans Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1988–1996): Ein Handbuch bewaffnete Konflikte nach dem Ende des Ost–West Konfliktes* (Berlin: Dr. Köster Verlag, 1996), p. 69.

45 Jean Hélène, 'Percée islamiste en Somalie', *Le Monde*, 16 November 1992.

46 Richard Dowden, 'To Invade or Not to Invade: That is the Question', *Independent on Sunday*, 29 November 1992.

47 Quoted in Kenneth Allard, *Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1995), p. 14.

48 Said Samatar, 'How to Save Starving Somalia', *Guardian*, 3 December 1992.

49 Jean Hélène, 'Somalie: l'inquiétude des organisations humanitaires', *Le Monde*, 28 November 1992.

50 David Usborne, 'US Confirms Somalia Offer', *Independent*, 28 November 1992.

51 Clement Adibe and J.W. Potgieter, *Managing Arms in Peace Processes: Somalia*, Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 1995), p. 58.

52 Chopra, Eknes and Nordbo, *Fighting for Hope in Somalia*, p. 31.

53 Mark Huband, 'Women Wage War in Somali Town Split by Terrorism', *Guardian*, 9 March 1993.

54 This operation was called UNOSOM II because the peacekeeping mission under the UN flag, the United Nations Operation in Somalia, had originally been deployed, as described, in early 1992. This operation became known as UNOSOM I.

55 Sam Kiley, 'Aidid Offers Talks as UN Rocket Injures Civilians', *The Times*, 15 June 1993.

56 Julian Ozanne, 'Partial Peace Pact Signed in Somalia', *Financial Times*, 9 January 1993.

57 Mark Bowden, *Black Hawk Down* (London: Bantam, 1999).

58 Paul F. Horvitz, 'U.S. Seeking Somali Pact in Talks with Clan Leaders', *International Herald Tribune*, 9 October 1993.

59 Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia*, p. 105.

60 Juri Hälker and Marcus Narloch, 'Flucht ins Gottesgericht', *Die Zeit*, 31 March 1995.
61 By 1996 they occupied substantial territory in western Somalia: 'Somalia, Still Breathing in its Way', *The Economist*, 31 August 1996.
62 Ahmed Y. Farah and Ioan M. Lewis, 'Making Peace in Somaliland', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 37, 2 (1997), pp. 349–77.

4 POLITICAL ACTORS

1 The analysis in this and the two subsequent chapters will focus on the role and interactions of the protagonists as described in the case studies. This is not to argue that the intervention forces did not play a role in the dynamics of war. This issue, however, will be separately addressed in the concluding chapter.
2 The aims and interests of the actors will be further elaborated in the next chapter.
3 Samuel Decalo, *Psychoses of Power: African Personal Dictatorships* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1989); S.N. Eisenstadt, *Traditional Patrimonialism and Modern Neopatrimonialism* (Beverly Hills, Calif., Sage, 1973), p. 63. See also Christopher Clapham, 'Clientelism and the State', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *Private Patronage and Public Power: Political Clientalism in the Modern State* (London: Frances Pinter, 1982), pp. 1–35.
4 The male pronoun is used here, but that is not to suggest that women cannot play the same role.
5 For military factionalism, see Janet Bujra, 'The Dynamics of Political Action: A New Look at Factionalism', *American Anthropologist*, 75, 1 (1973), pp. 132–52; René Lemarchand, 'The Dynamics of Factionalism in Contemporary Africa', in Zaki Ergas (ed.), *The African State in Transition* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1987), pp. 149–65.
6 Samuel Decalo, *Coups and Army Rule in Africa: Studies in Military Style* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1976), pp. 20, 232.
7 For why and how states collapse, see I. William Zartman, *Collapsed States: The Disintegration and Restoration of Legitimate Authority* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1995); Joel S. Migdal, *Strong Societies and Weak States: State–Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988); Robert H. Jackson, *Quasi-States: Sovereignty, International Relations and the Third World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990). For an example, see William Reno, *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
8 'Warlord' is a term that has been used to describe the faction leaders, and their ways of operating have been termed 'warlordism'. Warlords have been mainly studied in the content of the rise of individual military leaders in China at the beginning of the twentieth century. Warlords came to prominence around the end of Chinese imperial rule (1916–28): Edward A. McCord, *The Power of the Gun: The Emergence of Modern Chinese Warlordism* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1993); James E. Sheridan, *Chinese Warlord: The Career of Feng Yu-hsiang* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1966). Warlords are actors who are in control of a piece of territory with a monopoly over the sources of power. This is not the case in this phase of the two wars, therefore the terms 'factions' and 'factionalism' will be used. 'Banditry' is another term used to describe the actors in the two wars. This concept is not appropriate either, because banditry is generally linked to the appropriation of resources: E.J. Hobsbawm, *Bandits* (London: Trinity, 1969). Furthermore, its relevance for the African context has been questioned, in particular

in regard to the conceptions of property and the role of the state: Ralph A. Austin, 'Social Bandits and Other Heroic Criminals: Western Models of Resistance and their Relevance for Africa', in Donald Crummey (ed.), *Banditry, Rebellion and Social Protest in Africa* (London: James Currey, 1986), pp. 89–108.

9 For the use of local factors, see also Paul Richards, 'Rebellion in Liberia and Sierra Leone: A Crisis of Youth?', in Oliver Furley (ed.), *Conflict in Africa* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), pp. 134–70, p. 153; Claude E. Welch Jr, 'Warrior, Rebel, Guerrilla and Putschist', in Ali A. Mazrui (ed.), *The Warrior Tradition in Modern Africa* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1977), pp. 82–98, p. 86; Norma Kriger, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

10 Aline Angoustures and Valérie Pascal, 'Diasporas et financement des conflits', in François Jean and Jean-Christophe Rufin (eds), *Économie des guerres civiles* (Paris: Hachette, 1996), pp. 495–541.

11 Christopher Clapham, 'The Political Economy of Conflict in the Horn of Africa', *Survival*, 32, 5 (1990), pp. 403–19, p. 413.

12 Vines, 'Mercenaries and the Privatisation of Security in Africa in the 1990's', in G. Mills and J. Stremlau (eds), *The Privatisation of Security in Africa* (Johannesburg: South African Institute of International Affairs, 1999), pp. 47–80, p. 48; A. Mockler, *Mercenaries* (London: MacDonald, 1970). Mercenary activity declined in Europe with the rise of nationalism; it became problematic to be paid for service in another nation's armed services. In Africa, with the state discredited in so many cases, it was not a problem to be paid to fight someone else's cause.

13 The pan-African ideas are said to be a result of the training in Libya: Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy* (London: Hurst, 1999), p. 71.

14 W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 'Regional Organizations and the Resolution of Internal Conflict: The ECOWAS Intervention in Libya', *Journal of African Studies*, 33, 4 (1995), pp. 569–93, p. 272. It is striking that not so much the mercenaries fighting for Taylor but more the soldiers involved in ECOMOG went on to pose a danger to their home governments. In Sierra Leone and The Gambia, soldiers who had served in the ECOMOG operation overthrew the governments. Reliance on regional dissident forces is not a new phenomenon in Africa; it occurred also, for example, in the war in Zaire/Congo: William G. Thom, 'Congo-Zaire's 1996–1997 Civil War in the Context of Evolving Patterns of Military Conflict in Africa in the Era of Independence', *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 19, 2 (1999), pp. 93–123. In particular, a deal was struck between Foday Sankoh, who would lead the RUF in Sierra Leone, to supply the NPFL with men in return for support for the struggle in Sierra Leone: Ibrahim Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 2 (1998), pp. 203–35, 220–21.

15 Hans Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1998–1996): Ein Handbuch bewaffnete Konflikte nach dem Ende des Ost–West Konfliktes* (Berlin: Dr. Köster Verlag, 1996), p. 43. There seems to be a racial bias in the recent literature about mercenaries. Most works since the end of the Cold War focus on the activities of the 'white' mercenary groups such as the Executive Outcomes and Sandline International, which have been active in combat operations in Angola and Sierra Leone. See, for example, David J. Francis, 'Mercenary Intervention in Sierra Leone: Providing National Security or International Exploitation?', *Third World Quarterly*, 20, 2 (1999), pp. 319–38; David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Intervention*, Adelphi Paper 316

(London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1998). A 'white' bias is also observable in Mockler's book *Mercenaries*. However, more important for the activities in particular in the war in Liberia were the 'black' African fighters. Taylor's bodyguard, for example, was made up of only non-Liberian nationals. Their impact on the conflict was at least as large because it contributed to the spill-over of the war.

16 Richards argues that the NPFL mounted all its major attacks during public holidays: Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone* (Oxford: James Currey, 1996), p. 6.

17 The timing of the SNM invasion was presumably right after the peak season for livestock export to Saudi Arabia, when pilgrims from all over the world would be visiting Mecca.

18 The USC started operations at the end of 1989. No clear link between favourable conditions and the timing of armed confrontations could be detected here. However, it is very likely that the USC wanted to be present in the field as soon as possible because of the activities of the other factions.

19 Recruitment in the countryside was a distinct feature of communist guerrillas in Africa during the Cold War period. See Kenneth W. Grundy, *Guerrilla Struggle in Africa: An Analysis and Preview* (New York: Grossman, 1971); Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1965). Herbst argues that the distinction between capital and hinterland dates from pre-colonial times, with little effective control exercised over the latter even during colonial times. This state of affairs opened up opportunities for rebels: Jeffrey Herbst, *State and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 254.

20 The role of ethnic and clan identity will be further elaborated on below and in Chapter 5.

21 Richards, 'Rebellion in Liberia', p. 135; William Reno, 'Humanitarian Emergencies and Warlord Economies in Liberia and Sierra Leone', Working Paper 140 (Helsinki: World Institute for Development Economics Research, United Nations University, 1997), p. 14. For the historical overlap between class and ethnicity in Liberia, see Eghosa E. Osaghae, *Ethnicity, Class and the Struggle for State Power in Liberia* (Dakar: CODESRIA, 1996).

22 Richards, 'Rebellion in Liberia', p. 154.

23 Peter D. Little, 'Rural Herders and Urban Merchants: The Cattle Trade in Southern Somalia', in Catherine Besteman and Lee Cassanelli (eds), *The Struggle for Land in Southern Somalia: The War behind the War* (London: Haan, 1996), pp. 91–113, p. 111. See also Peter D. Little, 'Conflictive Trade, Contested Identity: The Effects of Export Markets on Pastoralists of Southern Somalia', *African Studies Review*, 39, 1 (1996), pp. 25–53; Catherine Besteman, *Unraveling Somalia: Race, Violence and the Legacy of Slavery* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

24 It is a clear misconception that women did not participate actively and were merely victims of war. The 'women as victims' point of view has been presented, for example, by Mark Bradbury, 'The Somali Conflict: Prospects for Peace', Oxfam Research Paper 9 (Oxford: Oxfam, 1994), p. 20. It can be observed that women play an increasing role on the battlefields of war in Africa: Meredith Turshen and Clotilde Twagiramariya (eds), *What Women Do in Wartime* (London: Zed Books, 1998). Even though the editors state that women play active roles in warfare, in the book they find it hard to come up with evidence for this. More attention is paid to women as victims. For a better example of the active role of women in war, see African Rights,

Rwanda, Not So Innocent: When Women Become Killers (London: African Rights, 1995).

25 Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, 'Gender and Civil War: The Cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone', *Civil Wars*, 1, 4 (1998), pp. 1–26, p. 18.

26 Child soldiers are not a new phenomenon. For more on the role of child soldiers, see Oliver Furley, 'Child Soldiers in Africa', in Furley (ed.), *Conflict in Africa*, pp. 28–45; Ilene Cohn and Guy S. Goodwin-Gill, *The Role of Children in Armed Conflict* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1994); Human Rights Watch, *Easy Prey: Child Soldiers in Liberia* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994). Child soldiers are usually considered to be youngsters under 18. In this study a distinction will be made between children and adolescents, because they played different roles during the fighting. Note that the categories 'children' and 'adolescents' might have a different meaning from the one in the West in relation to the general life expectancy. At birth, life expectancy in Liberia was 50 years and in Somalia 47 years. See Naomi Chazan, Robert Mortimer, John Ravenhill and Donald Rothchild, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1992), pp. 10–11. It is possible that if life expectancy is short, children are expected to be mature at an early age. As in the discussion on the role of women, children can also be seen as both victims of and active participants in war. This is clearly illustrated by interviews Krijn Peters and Paul Richards carried out with child combatants in Sierra Leone: Krijn Peters and Paul Richards, 'Jeunes combattants parlant de la guerre et de la paix en Sierra Leone', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 38, 150–52 (1998), pp. 581–617; Krijn Peters and Paul Richards, 'Why We Fight: Voices of Youth Combatants in Sierra Leone', *Africa*, 68, 2 (1998), pp. 183–210.

27 It was estimated that about 30 per cent of Taylor's troops consisted of children under the age of 17: Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994: A Study of Ethnic and Spiritual Violence', *African Affairs*, 94, 375 (1995), pp. 165–97, p. 182.

28 Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), p. 168. See also Leonard Brehun, *Liberia: The War of Horror* (Accra: Adwisa, 1991).

29 Human Rights Watch, *Easy Prey*, pp. 37–38.

30 Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future: Human Rights in a Fragmented Society* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1995), p. 44.

31 Mariam Arif Gassem, *Hostages: The People who Kidnapped Themselves* (Nairobi: Central Graphic Services, 1994), p. 5.

32 Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future*, p. 48.

33 In an analysis of the war in Sierra Leone, a 'lumpenproletariat' that consisted of young men, usually school drop-outs, unemployed youths who got by on petty crime, drunkenness and anti-social behaviour, has been identified as the driving force behind the rebellion: Abdullah, 'Bush Path to Destruction'.

34 Ibid., p. 235.

35 Jeffrey Boutwell and Michael T. Klare (eds), *Light Weapons and Civil Conflict: Controlling the Tools of Violence* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1999); Michael Renner, 'Small Arms, Big Impact: The Next Challenge of Disarmament', World Watch Paper 137 (Washington, D.C.: World Watch Institute 1997); Jeffrey Boutwell, Michael T. Klare and Laura Reed (eds), *Lethal Commerce: The Global Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons* (Cambridge, Mass.: American Academy of Arts and Science, 1995).

36 Africa Watch, *Liberia, Flight from Terror: Testimony of Abuses in Nimba County* (London: Africa Watch, 1990).

37 Jonathan C. Randal, 'For Liberia Leader, a Revolt that Won't Go Away', *International Herald Tribune*, 20 March 1990.

38 Bradbury, *The Somali Conflict*, p. 10.
39 Mark Huband, 'The Disintegration of Somalia', *Guardian*, 7 August 1992; Clement Adibe and J.W. Potgieter, *Managing Arms in Peace Processes: Somalia*, Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 1995), p. 71.
40 Somali aid worker quoted in Lee Feinstein, 'Relief Forces in Somalia Facing Country Awash in Small Arms', *Arms Control Today*, December 1992.
41 Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs quoted ibid.
42 Catherine Simon, 'Somalie: les aléas de l'aide aux réfugiés', *Le Monde*, 17 January 1990.
43 Richard Dowden, 'A Place, No Longer a City, of Complete Madness', *Independent*, 13 January 1992.
44 Others are, for example, religious, symbolic, ideological, material. They will be discussed in what follows and in Chapter 5.
45 For a general treatise of the role of ethnicity in Africa, see also Jean François Bayart, *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly* (London: Longman, 1993).
46 For an instrumentalist explanation of Liberian ethnicity, see also Osaghae, *Ethnicity, Class and the Struggle for State Power in Liberia*; Abiodun Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill: The International Involvement in the Liberian Civil War* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998), pp. 34–35.
47 What were more important in this respect were the actions of the government armies, which will be discussed in what follows.
48 This will also be further discussed in the next chapter.
49 For the case of Liberia, see Quentin Outram, ' "It's Terminal Either Way": An Analysis of Armed Conflict in Liberia, 1989–1996', *Review of African Political Economy*, 24, 73 (1997), pp. 355–71. For the case of Somalia, see Little, 'Conflictive Trade, Contested Identity', pp. 26, 33, 46.
50 Human Rights Watch, *Easy Prey*, pp. 29–30; William Reno, 'Reinvention of an African Patrimonial State: Charles Taylor's Liberia', *Third World Quarterly*, 16, 1 (1995), pp. 109–20, pp. 116–17; Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 141–42. This is not a phenomenon exclusive to these wars. See also Mario J. Azevedo, *Roots of Violence: A History of War in Chad*, War and Society, vol. 4 (Amsterdam: Gordon and Breach, 1998), p. 130.
51 For a general argument along these lines, see Jean François Medard, 'The Underdeveloped State in Tropical Africa: Political Clientelism or Neo-patrimonialism', in Clapham (ed.), *Private Patronage and Public Power*, pp. 162–92, pp. 172–73.
52 Mohamed Osman Omar, *Somalia: A Nation Driven to Despair: A Case of Leadership Failure* (New Delhi: Somali Publications, 1996), p. 31. See also Daniel Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements: The Interplay of Political Entrepreneurship and Clan-Based Factions', in Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas*, pp. 73–90.
53 Patrimonialism can be distinguished from neo-patrimonialism by the latter's incorporation of bureaucratic structures, which overlap with client networks. This concept of neo-patrimonialism will not be used here, because for the period of the armed conflicts on which this study focuses, the bureaucracies played almost negligible roles in the weak and collapsed state.
54 George Ayittey, *Indigenous African Institutions* (Ardsley-on-Hudson, N.Y.: Transnational, 1991), p. 72. For early African society and states, see S.N. Eisenstadt, Michael Abitol and Naomi Chazan (eds), *The Early State in African Perspective: Culture, Power and Division of Labor* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1988).

55 Amos Sawyer, *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1992). See also Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 33.

56 For a discussion of the Tubman and Tolbert era, see Robert H. Jackson and Carl G. Rosberg, *Personal Rule in Black Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), pp. 112–20; Christopher Clapham, 'The Politics of State Failure: Clientelism, Political Instability and National Integration in Liberia and Sierra Leone', in Clapham (ed.), *Private Patronage and Public Power*, pp. 76–92.

57 Abdi Ismail Samatar, 'Leadership and Ethnicity in the Making of African State Models: Botswana versus Somalia', *Third World Quarterly*, 18, 4 (1997), pp. 687–797, p. 693; Ahmed Samatar, *The Somali Challenge: From Crisis to Renewal?* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1994). See also Anna Simons, *Networks of Dissolution: Somalia Undone* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1994); Lee V. Cassanelli, *The Shaping of Somali Society: Reconstructing the Past of a Pastoral People, 1500–1900* (Philadelphia, Pa.: University of Pennsylvania, 1982).

58 Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', p. 158.

59 'Liberia: Another Bend in the Road', *Africa Confidential*, 33, 11 (1992).

60 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, pp. 135, 136, 139.

61 Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', p. 83. See also Maria Bongartz, *The Civil War in Somalia: Its Genesis and Dynamics*, Current African Issues series no. 11 (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1991).

62 This point will be further elaborated in the next two chapters.

63 Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, in particular chapter 7, 'The Coin of the Realm'.

64 Ibid., p. 202.

65 Jamil Abdalla Mubarak, *From Bad Policy to Chaos in Somalia: How an Economy Fell Apart* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996), pp. 149–50.

66 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 97.

67 Robert Sayon Morris, 'Horrors of War', *West Africa*, 14 June 1995.

68 On legitimacy of rulers, see also Kalevi J. Holsti, *The State, War and the State of War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 85–87.

69 Bujra, 'The Dynamics of Political Action'; Medard, 'The Underdeveloped State'; Robert L. Carneiro, 'The Chiefdom: Precursor to the State', in Grant D. Jones and Robert R. Kautz (eds), *The Transition to Statehood in the New World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 37–79.

70 With regard to social standing, Iliffe has noted that honour plays an important role in African politics: John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 4. Both Taylor and Aidid can be seen as aiming to restore their honour, which had been damaged before the start of the wars.

71 This is common in rebel movements; see, for example, the case of Mozambique: Tom Young, 'The MNR/Renamo: External and Internal Dynamics', *African Affairs*, 89, 357 (1990), pp. 491–509, p. 500.

72 Gassem, *Hostages*, p. 5.

73 In Somalia, adolescents, in particular, have been described as susceptible to violent images and messages on television or radio. Their crimes were said to be copies of what 'the media (in particular the BBC which broadcasts in Somali every day) reported on the events in Liberia and of the ultra-violent videos in circulation in Mogadishu': Didier Morin, 'Reconstruire la Somalie', *Politique Africaine*, 49 (1993), pp. 117–31, p. 121.

74 Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, 'Religion and Politics in Sub-Saharan

Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 2 (1998), pp. 175–201; Stephen Weigert, *Traditional Religion and Guerrilla Warfare in Modern Africa* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1996); Heike Behrend, 'War in Northern Uganda: The Holy Spirit Movement of Alice Lakwena, Severino Lukoya and Joseph Konyo (1986–1997)', in Clapham, *African Guerrillas*, pp. 107–18.

75 For another example, see the case of Renamo in the war in Mozambique: Young, 'The MNR/Renamo'; K.B. Wilson, 'Cults of Violence and Counter-violence in Mozambique', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18, 3 (1992), pp. 527–82.

76 Kenneth Little, 'The Political Function of the Poro, Part I', *Africa*, 35, 4 (1965), pp. 319–65; Kenneth Little, 'The Political Function of the Poro, Part II', *Africa*, 36, 1 (1966), pp. 62–71. For the rituals in Sande, the female equivalent of Poro, see M.C. Jedrej, 'Medicine, Fetish and Secret Society in a West African Culture', *Africa*, 46, 3 (1976), pp. 247–57.

77 For the application of Poro ideas in the factions in the war in Sierra Leone, see Peters and Richards, 'Why We Fight', p. 189.

78 Mark Huband, *The Liberian Civil War* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), p. 59. For the role of oaths in African warrior culture, in particular in the Mau Mau movement in Kenya, see Mazrui, *The Warrior Tradition in Modern Africa*. Initiation rites and warrior culture continue to play an important part in African warfare: Anthony Clayton, *Frontiersmen: Warfare in Africa since 1950* (London: UCL Press, 1999), p. 2.

79 This seems to be a common practice; see also Cohn and Goodwin-Gill, *The Role of Children in Armed Conflict*; Human Rights Watch, *Easy Prey*. For other examples, see the conflict in Mozambique: Young, 'The MNR/Renamo', p. 500.

80 Huband, *The Liberian Civil War*, p. 127.

81 Mary Anne Fitzgerald, 'Heads on Pikes Point Way to Last Stand in Liberia', *Sunday Times*, 17 June 1990.

82 It is striking that the belief in witch doctors who could make fighters invincible by turning bullets into water was also part of the rebel beliefs in Mozambique: Wilson, 'Cults of Violence', p. 546.

83 Mary Moran, 'Warriors or Soldiers? Masculinity and Ritual Transvestism in the Liberian Civil War', in Constance R. Sutton (ed.), *Feminism, Nationalism and Militarism* (Arlington, Va.: Association for Feminist Anthropology/ American Anthropological Association, 1995), pp. 73–88; Michel Galy, 'Liberia, machine perverse: anthropologie politique du conflit libérien', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 38, 150–52 (1998), pp. 533–53. See also G.N. Uzoigwe, 'The Warrior and the State in Precolonial Africa', in Mazrui (ed.), *The Warrior Tradition in Modern Africa*. Uzoigwe argues that in pre-colonial Africa, warrior culture and the state were inextricably linked: 'excellence as a warrior was an impeccable passport to important political offices, wealth, glory, honour', p. 46. For the warrior ethic, see also John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (London: Random House, 1993).

84 Timothy Earle, *How Chiefs Come to Power: The Political Economy in Prehistory* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 207.

85 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 199.

86 Moran, 'Warriors or Soldiers?', p. 80. See also Steve Weizman, 'Into Battle with Guns and Magic', *Guardian*, 14 July 1994.

87 Matthew Campbell, 'Rebels Deal Out Death on Road to Monrovia', *Sunday Times*, 12 August 1990.

88 Sam Kiley, 'Somali President Pleads for UN Aid', *The Times*, 16 December 1991.

89 This group has been linked to the Al-Qaeda network of Osama bin Laden.
90 Satya Pal Ruhela (ed.), *Mohammed Farah Aidid and his Vision of Somalia* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1994), p. 135.
91 Gerald Bourke, 'Liberian Battles "Spreading South"', *Independent*, 19 January 1990. See also Mark Huband, 'US Advisors Help Liberia Deal with Rebels', *Financial Times*, 30 January 1990.
92 Randal, 'For Liberia Leader, a Revolt that Won't Go Away'.
93 Susan MacDonald, 'Liberians Flee Doe Soldiers after Bungled Coup Attempt', *Times*, 18 January 1990.
94 Bourke, 'Liberian Battles "Spreading South"'.
95 Mohamed Osman Omar, *The Road to Zero: Somalia's Self-Destruction: Personal Reminiscences* (London: Haan, 1992), p. 202.
96 Interviewee in Africa Watch, *A Government at War with its Own People: Somalia Testimonies about the Killings and the Conflict in the North* (New York: Africa Watch, 1990), p. 172.
97 The phenomenon of the actions of the regular army creating support for the rebels has also been witnessed in other wars: Anthony James Joes, *Guerrilla Conflict before the Cold War* (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996), p. 179; Paul B. Rich and Richard Stubbs, 'Introduction: The Counter-insurgent State', in Paul B. Rich and Richard Stubbs (eds), *The Counter-insurgency State: Guerrilla Warfare and State Building in the Twentieth Century* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan), pp. 1–25, p. 7. In some versions of Latin American Cold War guerrilla ideology, this phenomenon is actively put to use: the government army 'takes over the responsibility of radicalizing the masses'. See Régis Debray, *Revolution in the Revolution? Armed Struggle and Political Struggle in Latin America* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1980). Quoted in Grundy, *Guerrilla Struggle in Africa*, p. 65. In Africa, the excessive use of force of regular troops against civilians has been noted before. See Human Rights Watch, *Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War since the 1992 Elections* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994), p. 4; Human Rights Watch, *Civilian Devastation: Abuses by All Parties in the War in Southern Sudan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994), p. 2. The dichotomy of conventionally trained government military forces and rebel uprisings is very pressing in Africa: Anthony Marley, 'Problems of Terminating Wars in Africa', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 8, 3 (1997), pp. 109–14, p. 110.
98 Fitzgerald, 'Heads on Pikes Point Way to Last Stand in Liberia'.
99 Gassem, *Hostages*, p. 35.
100 Interviewee in Africa Watch, *A Government at War with its Own People*, p. 162.
101 The number of recruits will be further discussed in Chapter 6.
102 Notably, no negotiations took place for economic concessions, ethnic or religious safeguards. This already puts a question mark over these explanations for civil war, which will be further discussed in the next chapter.
103 Reno argues that 'Taylor the rebel leader and those like him do not seek or need immediate formal recognition as members of international society': Reno, 'Reinvention of an African Patrimonial State', p. 113. This leaves unexplained his public relations offensive, including the hiring of the services of an American public relations firm: Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 168.
104 Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 'Regional Organizations', p. 288. See also Yeketiel Gershoni, 'War without End and an End to a War: The Prolonged Wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone', *African Studies Review*, 40, 3 (1997), pp. 55–76, p. 62.
105 Gershoni, 'War without End', p. 72.

106 Reno, *Warlord Politics*, p. 101; Ben Asante, 'Carter Backs Taylor', *West Africa*, 21 September 1992.
107 Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', p. 87.
108 Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia*.
109 Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', p. 159.
110 This will be further discussed in the concluding chapter.
111 Mancur Olson, 'Dictatorship, Democracy and Development', *American Political Science Review*, 87, 3 (1993), pp. 567–76; Charles Tilly, 'War Making and State Making as Organised Crime', in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol (eds), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 169–91; Michael Mann, *The Sources of Social Power*, vol. 1: *A History of Power from the Beginning to A.D. 1760* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).
112 David Beetham, *The Legitimation of Power* (London: Macmillan, 1991), p. 106.
113 See the literature on the security dilemma for the role of security as a basic driving force: Robert Jervis, 'Cooperation under the Security Dilemma', *World Politics*, 30, 2 (1978), and the discussion in Chapter 1.
114 Here the terms 'warlord' and 'warlordism' would be appropriate. The faction leaders are in control of a piece of territory with a monopoly on sources of power.

5 POLITICAL INTERESTS

1 Based on Isabelle Duyvesteyn, 'Contemporary War: Ethnic Conflict, Resource Conflict or Something Else?', *Civil Wars*, 3, 1 (2000), pp. 90–114.
2 A diplomat quoted in Peter Biles, 'Somalia's Rebel Clans Gathering for the Kill', *Observer*, 13 January 1991.
3 This is not an uncommon phenomenon. In the example of Renamo in Mozambique the same has been concluded: Tom Young, 'The MNR/Renamo: External and Internal Dynamics', *African Affairs*, 89, 357 (1990), pp. 491–509. 'Renamo has not been pro anything; it has been anti-Frelimo' (p. 508). See also the example of Frolinat in Chad: Robert Buijtenhuis, *Le Frolinat et les guerres civiles du Tchad, 1977–1984: la révolution introuvable* (Paris: Karthala, 1987); and Michael P. Kelley, *A State in Disarray: Conditions of Chad's Survival* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1986). Kelley concludes, 'The declining importance of the Frolinat political program as a factor of cohesion has given way to personal power struggles, where allegiance is given to leaders on the basis of their access to resources and their strength relative to other factional leaders' (p. 21). Clayton concludes about recent African wars that 'war aims represented nothing more than the personal fiefdom ambitions of a man or a clique not always even representative of an area concerned': Anthony Clayton, *Frontiersmen: Warfare in Africa since 1950* (London: UCL Press, 1999), p. 73.
4 Herbert Howe, 'Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping', *International Security*, 21, 3 (1996), pp. 145–76, p. 149.
5 Prince Ebow Godwin, 'Taylor: "I Was Betrayed by the West"', *New African*, 284 (1991), p. 27. Quoted in Dirk van den Boom, *Bürgerkrieg in Liberia: Chronologie – Protagonisten – Prognose*, Studien zur Politikwissenschaft, Band 80 (Münster: Lit Verlag, 1993), p. 35.
6 Doe's deputy information minister, Paul Allen Wie, quoted in Mark Huband, *The Liberian Civil War* (London: Frank Cass, 1998), p. 167. See also Cameron Duodu, 'Liberia Hostage to Tribalism as Final Battle Looms', *Observer*, 3 June 1990.

7 Satya Pal Ruhela, *Mohammed Farah Aidid and his Vision of Somalia* (New Delhi: Vikas, 1994), p. 166. Only the USC in early 1990 could be described as having a political programme: Maria Bongartz, *The Civil War in Somalia: Its Genesis and Dynamics*, Current African Issues series no. 11 (Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies, 1991), pp. 24–25.

8 Ruhela, *Mohammed Farah Aidid and his Vision of Somalia*, p. 133 (italics and capitals in original).

9 Alvin Toffler, *The Third Wave* (London: Pan Books: 1980). Toffler's ideas also played a role in the war in Sierra Leone: Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone* (Oxford: James Currey, 1996), p. 21. Aidid's description here seems to echo some of Muammar Qaddafi's ideas of direct democracy. See Henry M. Christman (ed.), *Qaddafi's Green Book: An Unauthorized Edition* (Buffalo, N.Y.: Prometheus, 1988), p. 51.

10 Ruhela, *Mohammed Farah Aidid and his Vision of Somalia*, p. 159.

11 Ibid., p. 149.

12 Ibid., p. 157.

13 Hussein Ali Dualeh, *From Barre to Aideed: Somalia, the Agony of a Nation* (Nairobi: Stellagraphics, 1994), p. 36.

14 Jeffrey Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), p. 110. Herbst argues that this is not a break with the past. During pre-colonial and colonial times the exercise of control over the capital was how political power and control was recognised.

15 This move to the capital can also be observed in other wars, for example Freetown in the case of the RUF in Sierra Leone, Kinshasa in the case of Kabila and his men in Zaire/Congo, Kigali in the case of the Rwandese Patriotic Front in Rwanda. See also Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, p. 157. He argues that 'wars in larger states have the potential to end with territorial division . . . or simply drag on because the capital cannot reach the rebels in the countryside. . . . The size and shape of African countries does not guarantee a particular outcome but does determine the contours a conflict may follow' (pp. 157–59). This is linked to the town–countryside division as touched on in Chapter 4. See also recent developments in the field of conflict geography: Mika Vehnämäki, 'Diamonds and Warlords: The Geography of War in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Sierra Leone', *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 11, 1 (2002), pp. 48–74; Halvard Buhaug and Scott Gates, 'The Geography of Civil War', *Journal of Peace Research*, 39, 4 (2002), pp. 417–33.

16 Daniel Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements: The Interplay of Political Entrepreneurship and Clan-Based Factions', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), p. 79.

17 Interview with Aidid, quoted in Dualeh, *From Barre to Aideed*, p. 172.

18 Anna Simons, *Networks of Dissolution: Somalia Undone* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1995), p. 91. See also Roland Marchal, 'Les *Mooryaan* de Mogadiscio: formes de la violence dans un espace urbain en guerre', *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, 33, 2 (1993), pp. 295–320, p. 301; Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', p. 86.

19 For the proliferation of parties in Liberia, see also Abiodun Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill: The International Involvement in the Liberian Civil War* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998); Yeketiel Gershoni, 'War without End and an End to a War: The Prolonged Wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone', *African Studies Review*, 40, 3 (1997), pp. 55–76, pp. 59–60.

20 Pierre Atlas and Roy Licklider, 'Conflict among Former Allies after Civil War

Settlements: Sudan, Zimbabwe, Chad and Lebanon', *Journal of Peace Research*, 36, 1 (1999), pp. 35–54. Atlas and Licklider have found that wars can continue, even after a ceasefire or peace agreement, not because of violence between antagonists but as a result of differences between former allies. In the wars in Sudan, Zimbabwe, Chad and Lebanon, they observed that violence resumed between previous allies after a break in the hostilities. The renewed violence focused on a close personal rivalry or personal ambition within a faction. Furthermore, the intra-alliance fighting is most likely to occur in the faction that has been on the winning side, i.e. the side with preponderance. Here, disappointment with the results of the war or disillusionment with the personal spoils of the war can lead to renewed fighting.

21 For the case of the Somali war, see Hans Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1988–1996): Ein Handbuch bewaffnete Konflikte nach dem Ende des Ost–West Konfliktes* (Berlin: Dr. Köster Verlag, 1996).

22 Paul Richards, 'Rebellion in Liberia and Sierra Leone: A Crisis of Youth?', in Oliver Furley (ed.), *Conflict in Africa* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), p. 153.

23 For the opposite conclusion, see Paul Rich, 'Warlords, State Fragmentation and the Dilemma of Humanitarian Intervention', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 10, 1 (1999), pp. 78–96, p. 90. Rich argues that 'warlords pose a considerable challenge to strategic thinking given the way that warlord-based conflict dissolves the Clausewitzean distinction between politics and war'. See also Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest*, who comments on the conflict in Sierra Leone as follows: 'This is war as a dramaturgy of social exclusion, not war as a business, as envisaged by von Clausewitz' (p. 85). See also Donald M. Snow, *Distant Thunder: Patterns of Conflict in the Developing World* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1997). Snow argues that the new internal wars are not 'intent on gaining control of the political system at all' (p. 115).

24 Robert A. Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1965), p. 51.

25 Factions have been found to be part of a continuum and can develop into political parties, governments or armies: Janet Bujra, 'The Dynamics of Political Action: A New Look at Factionalism', *American Anthropologist*, 75, 1 (1973), pp. 132–52, p. 133.

26 Dahl, *Modern Political Analysis*, p. 18.

27 The original formulation is by David Laitin, who called it 'War of Attrition' and used it to explain the conflict in Somalia in the 1990s: David Laitin, 'Somalia, Civil War and Intervention', in Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder (eds), *Civil War, Insecurity and Intervention* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999). For the explanation of the declining prize dilemma, see Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn, 'Evaluating Realist Explanations of Internal Conflict: The Case of Liberia', *Security Studies*, 10, 3 (2001), pp. 187–222.

28 The role of religious identity and beliefs in the dynamics of war has been treated in Chapter 4 in the discussion of legitimacy. They did not constitute an interest the factions fought for.

29 William Reno, 'Foreign Firms and the Financing of Charles Taylor's NPFL', *Liberian Studies Journal*, 18, 2 (1993), pp. 175–87; 'Liberia: Sparking Fires in West Africa', *Africa Confidential*, 32, 10 (1991).

30 John Markakis, *Resource Conflict in the Horn of Africa* (London: Sage, 1998).

31 Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999), p. 52. See also Jean François Medard, 'The Underdeveloped State in Tropical Africa: Political Clientalism or Neo-patrimonialism', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *Private Patronage and*

Public Power: Political Clientalism in the Modern State (London: Frances Pinter, 1982), pp. 162–92, pp. 181–82.

32 'Liberia: Sparking Fires in West Africa', *Africa Confidential*, 32, 10 (1991). See also Alao, *The Burden of Collective Goodwill*, pp. 40–41.

33 William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner), p. 97.

34 This included French president François Mitterrand's son: Robert A. Mortimer, 'ECOMOG, Liberia and Regional Security In West Africa', in Edmond J. Keller and Donald Rothchild (eds), *Africa in the New International Order: Rethinking State Sovereignty and Regional Security* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1996), pp. 149–64, pp. 155–56. See also Reno, *Warlord Politics*, in particular chapter 3, 'The Organisation of Warlord Politics in Liberia', pp. 79–111.

35 Catherine Simon, 'Somalie: les aléas de l'aide aux réfugiés', *Le Monde*, 17 January 1990.

36 Scott Peterson, 'Warlord's Troops in Reign of Terror', *Daily Telegraph*, 16 September 1992.

37 Mark Huband, 'Somali Town Waits to Die as Warlords Feud', *Guardian*, 29 October 1992.

38 Roland Marchal, 'La Guerre à Mogadiscio', *Politique Africaine*, 46 (1992), pp. 120–25, p. 122.

39 Sam Kiley, 'Somali Warlords Hoard Weapons as US Airlift Begins', *The Times*, 29 August 1992.

40 Martin Fletcher and Michael Binyon, 'US Troops Ready to Land in Mogadishu', *The Times*, 2 December 1992.

41 This issue will be further addressed in Chapter 6.

42 Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', p. 86.

43 Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*.

44 John F. Stack Jr, 'Ethnic Mobilization in World Politics: The Primordial Perspective', in John F. Stack Jr (ed.), *The Primordial Challenge: Ethnicity in the Contemporary World* (New York: Greenwood, 1986).

45 Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1985), p. 291.

46 David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild (eds), *The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1998).

47 Herbst argues that this is the case for most ethnic identities in Africa: Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, p. 45.

48 Amos Sawyer, *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge* (San Francisco: Institute for Contemporary Studies, 1992), p. 54. See also Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy* (London: Hurst, 1999), p. 33.

49 Simons, *Networks of Dissolution*, p. 57.

50 Ioan Lewis, quoted in Maria Bongartz, *Somalia im Bürgerkrieg: Ursachen und Perspektiven des innenpolitischen Konflikts*, Arbeiten aus dem Institut für Afrika-Kunde 74 (Hamburg: Institut für Afrika-Kunde, 1991), p. 7. See also I.M. Lewis, *A Pastoral Democracy: A Study of Pastoralism and Politics among the Northern Somali of the Horn of Africa* (London: Oxford University Press, 1961).

51 Simons, *Networks of Dissolution*, p. 114.

52 For the primordialist argument in the Liberian case, see Earl Conteh-Morgan and Shireen Kadiver, 'Ethno-political Violence in the Liberian Civil War', *Journal of Conflict Studies*, 15, 1 (1995), pp. 30–44, p. 41. See also D. Elwood Dunn, 'The Civil War in Liberia', in Taisier M. Ali and Robert O. Matthews (eds), *Civil Wars in Africa: Roots and Resolution* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's

University Press, 1999). For Somalia, see Ioan M. Lewis, *Blood and Bone: The Call of Kinship in Somali Society* (Lawrenceville, N.J.: Red Sea, 1994).

53 Abdi Ismail Samatar, 'Destruction of State and Society in Somalia: Beyond the Tribal Convention', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 30, 4 (1992), pp. 625–42, p. 640.

54 Abdalla Omar Monsur, 'The Nature of the Somali Clan System', in Ali Jimale Ahmed (ed.), *The Invention of Somalia* (Lawrenceville, N.J.: Red Sea, 1995), pp. 117–34.

55 It has also been argued that race more than clan defined the war in Somalia. The population in southern Somalia was distinctly different from that in the rest of the country. They were mostly immigrants and had different physical traits, and could not trace their clan lineage, as the rest of the Somalis could. On top of that, they had their own dialect. Among them the death toll was significantly higher than for any other group in Somali society. See Catherine Besteman, 'Violent Politics and the Politics of Violence: The Dissolution of the Somali Nation-State', *American Ethnologist*, 23, 3 (1996), pp. 579–96; Catherine Besteman, *Unraveling Somalia: Race, Violence and the Legacy of Slavery* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999); Mohamed Haji Mukhtar, 'The Plight of the Agro-pastoral Society of Somalia', *Review of African Political Economy*, 23, 70 (1996), pp. 543–53. However, when race is the defining factor, how is the political violence explained? In the south, two organisations were fighting for the interests of the same group, the Somali Democratic Movement and the Rahanweyn Resistance Army, the former eventually fighting alongside Aidid. Furthermore, these southern Somali groups were agriculturalists; their produce was highly coveted by the fighters. It seems more likely that they were attacked because of their relative prosperity than because of their race.

56 Anthony Smith, 'War and Ethnicity: The Role of Warfare in the Formation, Self-Images and Cohesion of Ethnic Communities', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 4, 4 (1981), pp. 375–97. In the case of the United Kingdom, it has been argued that warfare formed national identity: Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707–1837* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1992). In the case of Liberia, Ellis argues that ethnicity started to play a less significant role after 1990: Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia's Warlord Insurgency', Conference Paper, Conference on African Guerrilla Movements (Leiden: African Studies Centre, 1997), p. 157.

57 Kenneth Noble, 'Liberia's Fragile Peace Shows Signs of Fraying', *International Herald Tribune*, 6 November 1993; James Butty, 'Reign of Terror', *West Africa*, 4 July 1994; Phillip van Niekerk, 'Hundreds Die as Warlords Clash in Power Struggle', *Observer*, 7 April 1996.

58 Anthony Clayton, *Factions, Foreigners and Fantasies* (Camberley, UK: Conflict Studies Research Centre, 1995), p. 17.

59 Mats Berdal and David Keen, 'Violence and Economic Agendas in Civil Wars: Some Policy Implications', *Millennium*, 26, 3 (1997), pp. 795–818, p. 797; Chris Allen, 'Warfare, Endemic Violence and State Collapse in Africa', *Review of African Political Economy*, 81, 26 (1999), pp. 367–84.

60 William Reno, 'Reinvention of an African Patrimonial State: Charles Taylor's Liberia', *Third World Quarterly*, 16, 1 (1995), pp. 109–20; William Reno, 'African Weak States and Commercial Alliances', *African Affairs*, 96, 383 (1997), pp. 165–85.

61 With the reliance on foreign trade instead of aid, Reno sees some analogies between the present form of rule and the nineteenth-century form of trade relations between West African chiefs and European business: William Reno,

'Foreign Firms and the Financing of Charles Taylor's NPFL', *Liberian Studies Journal*, 18, 2 (1993), pp. 175–87, p. 175. This is part of a larger argument that sees these wars as part of a process of globalisation. See also Mark Duffield, 'Post-modern Conflict: Warlords, Post-adjustment States and Private Protection', *Civil War*, 3, 1 (2000), pp. 90–114; Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era*, (Cambridge: Polity, 1999).

62 Duffield, 'Post-modern Conflict'.

63 This finding is in contrast to the existing conflict termination literature, which stresses the importance of war-weariness and a stalemate as prerequisites for termination. In the cases of Liberia and Somalia these were present long before the termination was achieved: Charles King, 'Ending Civil Wars', Adelphi Paper 308 (London: International Institute for Strategic Studies, 1997); Stephen John Stedman, 'Negotiation and Mediation in Internal Conflict', in Michael E. Brown (ed.), *The International Dimensions of Internal Conflict* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 341–76; I. William Zartman (ed.), *Elusive Peace: Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1995). Roy Licklider (ed.), *Stopping the Killing: How Civil Wars End* (New York: New York University Press, 1993); Paul Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983). For the specific role of war-weariness and stalemate, see Barbara Walter, 'The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement', *International Organization*, 52, 3 (1997), pp. 335–64; Caroline A. Hartzell, 'Explaining the Stability of Negotiated Settlements to Intrastate Wars', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 43, 1 (1999), pp. 3–22.

64 New armed confrontations occurred after the conclusion of the war, in which old ULIMO fighters were heavily involved. It formed a repeat of the armed challenge against patrimonial rule, this time Charles Taylor's. See Human Rights Watch, *World Report 2001* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 2001).

65 Some armed interactions did take place after the declaration of independence. Between December 1991 and November 1992, clashes occurred which involved the previous SNM chairman, Silanyo: Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', pp. 82–83, 85.

66 Rimmer argues that wars in Africa during the Cold War were also mostly political undertakings. See Douglas Rimmer, 'The Effects of Conflict II: Economic Effects', in Furley (ed.), *Conflict in Africa*, pp. 295–313, p. 303. For the same argument in the case of Somalia, see John Harbeson, 'Post-Cold War Politics in the Horn of Africa: The Quest for Political Identity Intensified', in John Harbeson and Donald Rothchild (eds), *Africa in World Politics: Post-Cold War Challenges* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1995), pp. 127–46. For the same argument from a quantitative perspective, see Errol A. Henderson and J. David Singer, 'Civil War in the Post-colonial World, 1946–92', *Journal of Peace Research*, 37, 3 (2000), pp. 275–99.

67 Timothy Earle, *Chiefdoms: Power, Economy and Ideology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. xi; Robert L. Carneiro, 'Cross-currents in the Theory of State Formation', *American Ethnologist*, 14, 4 (1987), pp. 756–70.

68 Christopher Clapham, 'The Politics of State Failure: Clientelism, Political Instability and National Integration in Liberia and Sierra Leone', in Clapham (ed.), *Private Patronage and Public Power*, pp. 76–92, p. 76.

69 Ali Mazrui, 'Conflict as a Retreat from Modernity: A Comparative Overview', in Furley (ed.), *Conflict in Africa*, pp. 19–27, p. 20.

70 Donald Snow, *Uncivil Wars: International Security and the New Internal Conflicts* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1996), p. 119; Jeffrey Herbst, 'War and the State in Africa', *International Security*, 14, 4 (1990), pp. 117–39, p. 128; Bruce D.

Porter, *War and the Rise of the State: The Military Foundations of Modern Politics* (New York: Free Press, 1994).

71 Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p. 137.

72 Charles Tilly (ed.), *The Formation of National States in Western Europe* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975).

73 Alexander Wendt and Michael Barnett, 'Dependent State Formation and Third World Militarization', *Review of International Studies*, 19, 4 (1993), pp. 321–47, p. 321.

74 Anthony Smith, *State and Nation in the Third World: The Western State and African Nationalism* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf, 1983), p. 1; Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States, AD 990–1990* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990); Mohammed Ayoob, 'The Security Predicament of the Third World State: Reflections on State Making in a Comparative Perspective', in Brian L. Job (ed.), *The Insecurity Dilemma: National Security of Third World States* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1992), pp. 63–80, p. 67.

75 Ali Mazrui, 'The Triple Heritage of the State in Africa', in A. Kazancigil (ed.), *The State in a Global Perspective* (Aldershot, UK: Gower, 1986), p. 108; Basil Davidson, *The Black Man's Burden: Africa and the Curse of the Nation-State* (London: James Currey, 1992).

76 Brian Job, 'The Insecurity Dilemma: National, Regime and State Securities in the Third World', in Job (ed.), *The Insecurity Dilemma*, pp. 11–35, pp. 25–26.

77 Mazrui, 'The Triple Heritage of the State in Africa', p. 108.

78 Chabal and Daloz, *Africa Works*, p. 188.

6 POLITICAL INSTRUMENTS AND CONVENTIONAL WAR

1 Based on Isabelle Duyvesteyn, 'The Concept of Conventional War and Armed Conflict in Collapsed States', in Jan Angstrom and Isabelle Duyvesteyn (eds), *The Nature of Modern War: Clausewitz and his Critics Revisited* (Stockholm: Swedish National Defence College, 2003), pp. 45–61.

2 Mao Tse-tung, *On Guerrilla Warfare*, tr. Samuel Griffith (New York: Praeger, 1965).

3 For Liberia, see John Mackinlay, 'Warlords', *Rusi Journal*, 143, 2 (1998), pp. 24–32. See also Abiodun Alao, John Mackinlay and 'Funmi Olonisakin, *Peacekeepers, Politicians and Warlords: The Liberian Peace Process* (New York: United Nations University Press, 1999). For Somalia, see Daniel Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements: The Interplay of Political Entrepreneurship and Clan-Based Factions', in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), pp. 73–90, p. 77. Compagnon does not use Mao's terminology, but argues, 'The battle of Mogadishu . . . was basically a confrontation between Hawiye clan militias on one side, and Daarood elements of the Somali army and armed Daarood civilians on the other, rather than a battle between an insurgency and a state that no longer existed.'

4 See, for example, in the case of Somalia: 'Boat Hijacked', *The Times*, 25 July 1990.

5 Before the attack on the capital, other conventional operations had taken place in Liberia, such as the occupation of Buchanan: Günter Krabbe, 'Die Rebellen dringen zum Atlantik vor', *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 27 April 1990.

6 Even before the attack on the capital, conventional confrontations had taken place in Somalia, e.g. in central Somalia, where Aidid overran the national army: John Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia?* (London: Haan, 1995), p. 26.

7 For a day-to-day description of the NPFL movements, see 'The Siege of Monrovia', *West Africa*, 23 November 1992.

8 Drysdale, *Whatever Happened to Somalia*, p. 31.

9 Ibid., p. 43. Italics in original.

10 For the idea of military stalemate in Liberia, see Yeketiel Gershoni, 'War without End and an End to a War: The Prolonged Wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone', *African Studies Review*, 40, 3 (1997), pp. 55–76, pp. 57–59.

11 There are some indications that Taylor provided those of his men who were fighting on the front lines with rice, except in circumstances in which fighting was heavy: Robert Sayon Morris, 'Horrors of War', *West Africa*, 14 June 1993.

12 Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy* (London: Hurst, 1999), p. 113.

13 Ibid., p. 111.

14 Ibid., p. 111.

15 Frances Kerry, 'Somali Rebels Announce their "Final Assault"', *Independent*, 7 January 1991.

16 Compagnon, however, claims that the USC was never a structured organisation but more a 'loose coalition of Hawiye clans': Compagnon, 'Somali Armed Movements', pp. 80, 81.

17 Hans Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1988–1996): Ein Handbuch bewaffnete Konflikte nach dem Ende des Ost–West Konfliktes* (Berlin: Dr. Köster Verlag, 1996), p. 102.

18 Michael Howard, *War in European History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975), chapters 2 and 3. For a similar suggestion regarding Liberia, see Quentin Outram, '"It's Terminal Either Way": An Analysis of Armed Conflict in Liberia, 1989–1996', *Review of African Political Economy*, 24, 73 (1997), pp. 355–71, p. 366.

19 The role of the intervention forces will be discussed further in the concluding chapter.

20 Richards interprets the use of disguises as a reaction to the discredited regular army with their army uniforms. As regards warrior costumes, the rebels wanted to distance themselves as far as possible from the government armies: Paul Richards, 'Videos and Violence on the Periphery: Rambo and War in the Forests of the Sierra Leone–Liberia Border', *IDS Bulletin*, 25, 2 (1994), pp. 88–93, p. 91. However, the fighters did also wear uniforms. See more on this later in the chapter.

21 Alex de Waal, 'Contemporary Warfare in Africa', in Mary Kaldor and Basker Vashee (eds), *Restructuring the Global Military Sector*, vol. I: *New Wars* (London: Pinter, 1997), pp. 287–332, p. 292. This contribution seems to be an edited version of Alex de Waal 'Contemporary Warfare in Africa: Changing Context and Changing Strategies', *IDS Bulletin*, 27, 3 (1996), pp. 6–16.

22 de Waal, 'Contemporary Warfare in Africa', in Kaldor and Vashee (eds), p. 292.

23 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 112.

24 Gerald Bourke, 'Taylor Talks', *West Africa*, 28 May 1990.

25 John Momoh, 'Renewed ULIMO Offensive', *West Africa*, 28 September 1992. To signify the importance of uniforms and military boots, these accoutrements were often stolen from dead government soldiers: Robert Sayon Morris, 'Horrors of War', *West Africa*, 14 June 1993.

26 Peter Biles, 'Somali President Appeals for Cease-fire in Capital', *Guardian*, 3 January 1991.

27 Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future: Human Rights in a Fragmented Society* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1995), p. 46.

28 See, for example, accounts of local residents witnessing the rebel actions: Joseph Njoh, *Through the Liberian Storm* (London: Minerva, 1996); Mariam

Arif Gassem, *Hostages: The People who Kidnapped Themselves* (Nairobi: Central Graphic Services, 1994).

29 Jean Hélène, 'Somalie: l'inquiétude des organisations humanitaires', *Le Monde*, 28 November 1992.

30 For this paradoxical argument, see, for example, Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future*, p. 23.

31 There are strong indications that the number of civilian casualties increased compared with the number of military casualties during the course of the twentieth century.

32 The fact that the intervention forces, in particular in Somalia, found it difficult to distinguish fighters from civilians should not imply that this distinction could not be made. The fighting techniques the Somalis used against the intervention forces can be seen as different from those the factions employed against each other. The mechanisms that were at work during the intervention phase will be discussed in the concluding chapter.

33 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 135.

34 Gerald Bourke, 'Panic Takes Over in Monrovia as Rebels Approach', *Independent*, 8 June 1990.

35 Robert Minangoy, 'La Tactique des rebelles ne paraît pas bien arrêtée', *Le Monde*, 23 July 1990. See also Elisabeth Levy, 'Hivernage sanglant à Monrovia', *Jeune Afrique*, 29 August 1990.

36 One example was the capture by Prince Johnson of foreign hostages, which he hoped would be a cause for international intervention: Max Ahmadu Sesay, 'Collective Security or Collective Disaster? Regional Peacekeeping in West Africa', *Security Dialogue*, 26, 2 (1995), pp. 205–22, p. 207.

37 In the case of Sierra Leone, see Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone* (Oxford: James Currey, 1985), p. xxiii: 'When the insurgents entered Sierra Leone in 1991 they demanded an international press conference to talk to an international audience'.

38 For cannibalism in Liberia, see Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*. Previously, cannibalistic practices were under the control of spiritual leaders in Liberian society. Cannibalism, when it occurs, is most often associated with war and is linked to periods of breakdown of society: Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a Cultural System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 7, 81. The cannibalism in Liberia focused mostly on the genitalia of the person. By eating the procreative organs, the cannibal hoped to acquire the person's fertile forces. Other body parts, especially hearts, were also eaten. For faction control over cruelty in the case of Sierra Leone, see also Human Rights Watch, *Getting Away with Murder, Mutilation and Rape: New Testimony from Sierra Leone* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1999), p. 9.

39 For Liberia, see Mary Anne Fitzgerald, 'Heads on Pikes Point Way to Last Stand in Liberia', *Sunday Times*, 17 June 1990. For Somalia, see Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future*, p. 22.

40 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 146.

41 Ibid., p. 56. In the case of Mozambique, Wilson argues that the fighters' 'purpose is to instil a paralysing and incapacitating fear in the wider population. They do this by conjuring a vision of inhumanity and maniacal devotion to the infliction of suffering that sets them outside the realm of social beings and hence beyond social control and even resistance': K.B. Wilson, 'Cults of Violence and Counter-violence in Mozambique', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18, 3 (1992), pp. 527–82, p. 531.

42 Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, 'Gender and Civil War: The Cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone', *Civil Wars*, 1, 4 (1998), pp. 1–26, p. 11. Rape can be seen as a

deliberate war tactic. It can also be seen as a reward for the fighters; their prowess could be a reflection or confirmation of their military power. For rape in the war in Somalia, see Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future*.

43 For other recent examples of plunder as a feature of war fighting, see, in the case of Chad, Robert Buijtenhuis, *Le Frolinat et les guerres civiles du Tchad, 1977–1984: la révolution introuvable* (Paris: Karthala, 1987). In the case of Sudan, see Human Rights Watch, *Civilian Devastation: Abuses by All Parties in the War in Southern Sudan* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994), p. 91. In the case of the Democratic Republic of Congo, see Human Rights Watch Africa, *Democratic Republic of the Congo: What Kabila is Hiding: Civilian Killings and Impunity in Congo* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1997).

44 Stephen Ellis, 'Liberia 1989–1994: A Study of Ethnic and Spiritual Violence', *African Affairs*, 94, 375 (1995), pp. 165–97, p. 186.

45 Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy*, p. 289.

46 In the war in Mozambique, looting was also structural and institutionalised. The rebel fighters were instructed 'to always bring something, anything back to prove their success in an operation': Wilson, 'Cults of Violence and Counter-violence in Mozambique', p. 538.

47 'Gunmen Rob UN Plane in Somalia', *International Herald Tribune*, 24 November 1992.

48 Joanna Macrae and Anthony Zwi (eds), *War and Hunger: Rethinking International Responses to Complex Emergencies* (London: Zed Books, 1994); Alex de Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997); Alex de Waal, 'War and Famine in Africa', *IDS Bulletin*, 24, 4 (1993), pp. 33–40.

49 Jean Drèze, Amartya Sen and Athar Hussein (eds), *The Political Economy of Hunger*, vol. 1: *Entitlement and Well-Being* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995); Amartya Sen, 'War and Famines: On Divisions and Incentives', Paper 33, Development Research Programme (London: London School of Economics, 1991); Peter Wallensteen, 'Food Crops as a Factor in Strategic Policy and Action', in Arthur H. Westing (ed.), *Global Resources and International Conflict: Environmental Factors in Strategic Policy and Action* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 143–58.

50 This is not a new phenomenon. During the Biafran War, the withholding of food was also used as an instrument: J.L.R. Huydecoper van Nigtevecht and A. van Emden, *Honger als Wapen: De Biafraoorlog 1967–1970* (Hunger as Weapon: The Biafra War, 1967–1970) (The Hague: SDU, 1992). Similarly, for the case of Sudan, see David Keen, *The Benefits of Famine: A Political Economy of Famine and Relief in South-Western Sudan 1983–1989* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1994). For other examples, see Alex de Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry in Africa* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997), p. 148; Africa Watch, *Denying "The Honor of Living": Sudan, a Human Rights Disaster* (New York: Africa Watch, 1990); Human Rights Watch, *Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War since the 1992 Elections* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1994), pp. 102–04; and (for Eritrea), Jeremy Harding, *Small Wars, Small Mercies: Journeys in Africa's Disputed Nations* (London: Penguin, 1993), pp. 336, 364–65.

51 de Waal, *Famine Crimes*, p. 183. De Waal, furthermore, criticises the large airlift of food aid, which occurred only after the worst of the famine had already passed.

52 Julian Ozanne, 'Uphill Task to Aid "Triangle of Death"', *Financial Times*, 7 December 1992.

53 Carl von Clausewitz, *Vom Kriege: Hinterlassenes Werk* (Bonn: Dümmler,

1952), pp. 119–20. Other studies have indicated that there is a military logic behind the targeting of the population: Jean Paul Azam and Anke Hoeffler, 'Violence against Civilians in Civil Wars: Looting or Terror?', *Journal of Peace Research*, 39, 4 (2002), pp. 461–85.

54 Paul Richards has suggested for the case of Sierra Leone that the destruction could be viewed as the actions of frustrated intellectuals. Their goals had not been realised, and out of frustration they opted for the destruction of every uncooperative element: Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest*. This suggestion is not very illuminating for the cases of Liberia and Somalia because neither Taylor, despite his degree in economics, nor Aidid could be seen as frustrated intellectuals. See also Yusuf Bangura, 'Understanding the Political and Cultural Dynamics of the Sierra Leone War: A Critique of Paul Richards's *Fighting for the Rainforest*', *Africa Development*, 22, 3–4 (1997), pp. 117–48, pp. 124–27. Reno has explained the destruction as a necessity because the state and in particular its bureaucracy were a means for rivals to challenge the faction leader: William Reno, 'The Reinvention of an African Patrimonial State: Charles Taylor's Liberia', *Third World Quarterly*, 16, 1 (1995), pp. 109–20, pp. 111–12. However, the bureaucracy had stopped functioning before rivals could use it to strengthen their claims. It is exactly this process, and the lack of alternative channels, that makes these wars intractable. The small alternative bureaucracy that was established in Taylorland was under the strict control of the faction leader. This control prohibited the rise of power challengers. Reno, furthermore, argues that these rebel factions made no attempts to structurally create a bureaucracy. It is unlikely that such an undertaking would be started when fighting was still going on. This situation obviously changed when the main faction leader became president.

7 POLITICS AND STRATEGY IN AFRICAN WARS: INTERVENTION DILEMMAS

1 Karl Deutsch, *Politics and Government: How People Decide their Fate* (Boston, Mass.: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), p. 12.

2 This is not an unusual practice. Great Britain, for example, used the experiences of fighting colonial wars to deal with revolutionary insurgencies in the first few decades after the Second World War: Bruce Hoffman and Jennifer M. Taw, *Defence Policy and Low-Intensity Conflict: The Development of Britain's 'Small Wars' Doctrine during the 1950s* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1991). For a similar argument regarding US counter-insurgency, see Douglas Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era: US Doctrine and Performance, 1950 to the Present* (New York: Macmillan, 1977), p. 299.

3 Edward N. Luttwak, 'Toward Post-heroic Warfare', *Foreign Affairs*, 74, 3 (1995), pp. 109–22, p. 115; Donald Snow, *Uncivil Wars: International Security and the New Internal Conflicts* (London: Lynne Rienner, 1996), p. 25; Joseph Rudolph Jr, 'Intervention in Communal Conflicts', *Orbis* 39, 2 (1995), pp. 259–73; James A. Winnefeld *et al.*, *Intervention in Intrastate Conflict: Implications for the Army in the Post-Cold War Era* (Santa Monica, Calif.: Rand Corporation, 1996), pp. 10–11; Thomas G. Weiss, 'Rekindling Hope in UN Humanitarian Intervention', in Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1997), pp. 207–28, p. 209; Thomas R. Mockaitis, 'From Counter-insurgency to Peace Enforcement: New Names for Old Games?', in Erwin A. Schmidl (ed.), *Peace Operations: Between War and Peace* (London: Frank Cass, 2000), pp. 40–57; Larry Cable, 'Reinventing the Wheel: Insurgency

Post Cold War', *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, 4, 2 (1993), pp. 228–62; Thomas Mockaitis, 'A New Era of Counterinsurgency', *RUSI Journal*, 136, 1 (1991), pp. 73–78.

4 Jeffrey W. Knopf, 'The Importance of International Learning', *Review of International Studies*, 29, 2 (2003), pp. 185–207.

5 Works evaluating post-Cold War peace operations would fill a small library. For some examples, see Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds), *Peacekeeping in Africa* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, 1998); Tom Woodhouse, Robert Bruce and Malcolm Dando, *Peacekeeping and Peace Making: Towards Effective Intervention in Post-Cold War Conflicts* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1998); Michael Wesley, *Casualties of the New World Order: The Causes of the Failure of UN Missions to Civil Wars* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan, 1997). For the case of Liberia, see Herbert Howe, 'Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping', *International Security*, 21, 3 (1996), pp. 145–76; Klaas van Walraven, *Containing Conflict in the Economic Community of West African States: Lessons from the Intervention in Liberia, 1990–1997* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute for International Relations, 1999). For the case of Somalia, see Kenneth Allard, *Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University Press, 1995); Walter Clarke and Jeffrey Herbst (eds), *Learning from Somalia: The Lessons of Armed Humanitarian Intervention* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1997); John Hirsch and Robert Oakley, *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995).

6 Lincoln P. Bloomfield and Allen Moulton, *Managing International Conflict: From Theory to Policy: A Teaching Tool Using CASCON* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1997), p. 114; Patrick M. Regan, 'Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention in Intra-state Conflicts', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 40, 2 (1996), pp. 336–59, p. 345; David Carment and Dane Rowlands, 'Three's Company: Evaluating Third-Party Intervention in Intrastate Conflict', *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 42, 5 (1998), pp. 572–99; Michael Wesley, *Casualties of the New World Order: The Causes of Failure of UN Missions to Civil Wars* (Basingstoke, UK: Macmillan), p. 129.

7 William Reno, 'Humanitarian Emergencies and Warlord Economies in Liberia and Sierra Leone', Working Paper 140 (Helsinki: World Institute for Development Economics Research, United Nations University, 1997), p. 17; Ioan M. Lewis and James Mayall, 'Somalia', in James Mayall (ed.), *The New Interventionism 1991–1994: United Nations Experience in Cambodia, Former Yugoslavia and Somalia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 122–23; Clement Adibe and J.W. Potgieter, *Managing Arms in Peace Processes: Somalia*, Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project (Geneva: United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research, 1995), p. 144; Mary Kaldor, *New and Old Wars: Organized Violence in a Global Era* (Cambridge: Polity, 1999), pp. 119–20.

8 The advancement of democracy as the best form of government has gained a prominent place, especially after the end of the Cold War: Francis Fukuyama, *The End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992). This is linked to the popularity of the democratic peace theory, the idea that democratic states do not fight wars against each other: Jack Levy, 'Domestic Politics and War', in Robert I. Rotberg and Theodore K. Rabb (eds), *The Origin and Prevention of Major War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 79–99. The original formulation was by Immanuel Kant; see James Bohman and Matthias Lutz-Bachmann, *Perpetual Peace: Essays on Kant's Cosmopolitan Ideal* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1997). The Clinton administration, among

others, had chosen this to guide its foreign policy. See, for example, President Clinton's 1994 State of the Union Address, cited in Edward Mansfield and Jack Snyder, 'Democratization and War', *Foreign Affairs*, 74, 3 (1995), pp. 79–97, p. 79. Democracy was accorded power to remedy the problems of Liberia and Somalia. For the importance attached to democracy, see Larry Diamond, 'Promoting Democracy in Africa: U.S. and International Policies in Transition', in John W. Harbeson and Donald Rothchild (eds), *Africa in World Politics: The African State System in Flux* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview, 1995), pp. 250–77. However, there are indications that the democratic peace does not apply to wars within states: Matthew Krain and Marissa Edson Myers, 'Democracy and Civil War: A Note on the Democratic Peace Proposition', *International Interactions*, 23, 1 (1997), pp. 109–18.

9 Bayo Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line: Anatomy of Charles Taylor's Hostage Camps* (Enugu: Delta Publications, 1995), p. 62.

10 Max Ahmadu Sesay, 'Collective Security or Collective Disaster? Regional Peacekeeping in West Africa', *Security Dialogue*, 26, 2 (1995), pp. 205–22, p. 213.

11 For the case of Liberia, see also Ogunleye, *Behind Rebel Line*, p. 62.

12 For a discussion of the issue of sovereignty and options for the international community, see Jeffrey Herbst, 'Responding to State Failure in Africa', *International Security*, 21, 3 (1996), pp. 120–44; Winnefeld *et al.*, *Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, pp. 23–24. For the changing role and interpretation of sovereignty, see J. Samuel Barkin and Bruce Cronin, 'The State and the Nation: Changing Norms and the Rules of Sovereignty in International Relations', *International Organization*, 48, 1 (1994), pp. 107–30. Another suggestion has been to institute a trusteeship over collapsed states: Gerald B. Helman and Steven R. Ratner, 'Saving Failed States', *Foreign Policy*, 89 (1992), pp. 3–20.

13 Herbst, 'Responding to State Failure in Africa', pp. 142–44.

14 Stephen Ellis, *The Mask of Anarchy* (London: Hurst, 1999), p. 187.

15 Hans Krech, *Der Bürgerkrieg in Somalia (1988–1996): Ein Handbuch bewaffnete Konfliktes nach dem Ende des Ost–West Konfliktes* (Berlin: Dr. Köster Verlag, 1996), p. 142.

16 Mary B. Anderson, *Do No Harm: How Aid Can Support Peace – or War* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1999), p. 51. Anderson argues for engaging the rebel leader and helping him to establish responsibility for civilian welfare. For a similar point, see Herbst, *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 269–70. For a suggestion to exercise influence on the elite, see Winnefeld *et al.*, *Intervention in Intrastate Conflict*, p. 25. For the opposite argument, see Jean Paul Azam and Anke Hoeffler, 'Violence against Civilians in Civil Wars: Looting or Terror?', *Journal of Peace Research*, 39, 4 (2002), pp. 461–85. They argue, on the basis of quantified research, that 'there will be more refugees if the government gets more resources than if it gets less' (p. 482).

17 Thomas G. Weiss, David Cortright, George A. Lopez and Larry Minear (eds), *Political Gain and Civilian Pain: Humanitarian Impacts of Economic Sanctions* (Lanham, Md.: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997).

18 Patrick Chabal and Jean Pascal Daloz, *Africa Works: Disorder as Political Instrument* (Oxford: James Currey, 1999).

19 For counter-insurgency literature, see Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: Experiences from Malaya and Vietnam* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1967); Roger Trinquier, *Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency* (London: Pall Mall, 1964); John S. Pustay, *Counterinsurgency Warfare* (New York: Free Press, 1965); John J. McCuen, *The Art of Counter-*

revolutionary War: The Strategy of Counter-insurgency (London: Faber and Faber, 1966); Frank Kitson, *Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency and Peacekeeping* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971); Blaufarb, *The Counter-insurgency Era*; Michael D. Shafer, *Deadly Paradigms: The Failure of U.S. Counterinsurgency Policy* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988).

20 It was argued that if UNITAF pursued disarmament, it would take away much-needed personnel from the humanitarian aid delivery effort. See also Janet Chopra, Age Eknes and Toralv Nordbo, *Fighting for Hope in Somalia*, Peace-keeping and Multinational Operations Study 6 (Oslo: Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, 1995), p. 44.

21 Adibe and Potgieter, *Managing Arms in Peace Processes*.

22 Ibid., p. 76.

23 Walter Clarke, 'Failed Visions and Uncertain Mandates in Somalia', in Clarke and Herbst (eds), *Learning from Somalia*, pp. 3–19, p. 15. See also Ann Fitz-Gerald, 'Understanding Local Dynamics in Civil Wars', *Civil Wars*, 3, 1 (2000), pp. 1–16; Daniel Byman, 'Forever Enemies? The Manipulation of Ethnic Identities to End Ethnic Civil Wars', *Security Studies*, 9, 3 (2000), pp. 149–90.

24 In the case of the war in Mozambique, Wilson describes how the religious beliefs of the rebels were used to produce counter-beliefs to neutralise their impact. Witch doctors could devise more powerful instruments to override the magic powers of the war leaders: K.B. Wilson, 'Cults of Violence and Counter-violence in Mozambique', *Journal of Southern African Studies*, 18, 3 (1992), pp. 527–82. See also Stephen Ellis and Gerrie ter Haar, 'Religion and Politics in Sub-Saharan Africa', *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 2 (1998), pp. 175–201. They argue that 'In countries where the state apparatus has been eroded to an alarming degree ... religious movements in the long term may offer not just a basis for legitimising power, but even a means of restructuring some sort of apparatus which will fulfil the functions of govern-ment' (p. 201).

25 Naomi Chazan, Robert Mortimer, John Ravenhill and Donald Rothchild, *Politics and Society in Contemporary Africa* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1992), pp. 168–70.

26 Michael Maren, *The Road to Hell: The Ravaging Effects of Foreign Aid and International Charity* (New York: Free Press, 1997); Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, pp. 121–22.

27 Mohamed Sahnoun, *Somalia: The Missed Opportunities* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace, 1994).

28 Kaldor, *New and Old Wars*, p. 123.

29 Hussein M. Adam and Richard Ford (eds), *Mending Rips in the Sky: Options for Somali Communities in the 21st Century* (Lawrenceville, N.J.: Red Sea, 1997).

30 Herbst, *States and Power in Africa*, p. 177.

31 Heuser, *Reading Clausewitz*, p. 192.

32 The United Nations organisation was originally envisaged to have command over military force. This has never been realised in practice. Suggestions have been made to remedy this and to set up forces that could respond quickly to conflict. Since the end of the Cold War, Denmark, Canada and the Netherlands in particular have developed plans in that direction. See, for example, D.A. Leurdijk (ed.), *A UN Rapid Deployment Brigade* (The Hague: Netherlands Institute for International Relations, 1995).

33 Wesley, *Casualties of the New World Order*.

34 For a similar conclusion, see Patrick M. Regan, *Civil Wars and Foreign Powers: Outside Intervention in Intrastate Conflict* (Ann Arbor, Mich.: University of

Michigan Press, 2000), p. 142. See also I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989); Barry M. Blechman, 'The Intervention Dilemma', *Washington Quarterly*, 18, 3 (1995), pp. 63–73. For a criticism, see Marieke Kleiboer, 'Ripeness of Conflict: A Fruitful Notion?', *Journal of Peace Research*, 31, 1 (1994), pp. 109–16.

35 This is of course linked to the mandate the forces were sent to carry out, which will be discussed later in the chapter.

36 For the ECOWAS intervention strategy, see also Emmanuel Kwesi Aning, 'Eliciting Compliance from Warlords: The ECOWAS Experience in Liberia 1990–1992', *Review of African Political Economy*, 81, 26 (1999), pp. 335–48; 'Funmi Olonisakin, *Reinventing Peacekeeping in Africa: Conceptual and Legal Issues in ECOMOG Operations* (Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2000).

37 Military intervention is strongly linked to the exacerbation of conflict: Lincoln P. Bloomfield and Amelia Leiss, *Controlling Small Wars: A Strategy for the 1970s* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 34; Regan, 'Conditions of Successful Third-Party Intervention'; Jeffrey Milstein, *Dynamics of the Vietnam War: A Quantitative Analysis and Predictive Computer Simulation* (Columbus, Ohio: Ohio State University Press, 1974).

38 Lincoln P. Bloomfield and Amelia Leiss, *Controlling Small Wars: A Strategy for the 1970s* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1969), p. 34.

39 Snow, *Uncivil Wars*, p. 88. See also Clarke, 'Failed Visions and Uncertain Mandates in Somalia', p. 3.

40 Jeffrey Herbst, 'Western and African Peacekeepers; Motives and Opportunities', in Harbeson and Rothchild (eds), *Africa in World Politics*, pp. 308–23.

41 Human Rights Watch, *Somalia Faces the Future: Human Rights in a Fragmented Society* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1995), p. 74.

42 Alex de Waal, *Famine Crimes: Politics and the Disaster Relief Industry* (Oxford: James Currey, 1997), p. 169.

43 Some efforts have been made in international law to deal with combatants in civil conflicts: 'The Geneva Conventions of 1949 tried to legalize the status of the partisans in internal conflicts, but the lawyers could not agree on what constitutes a state of war and the question whether insurgents could possibly be bound by a convention which they had not themselves signed': Walter Laqueur, *Guerrilla Warfare: A Historical and Critical Study* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction, 1998), p. 391. See also Tom Farer, 'Shaping Agendas in Civil Wars: Can International Criminal Law Help?', in Mats Berdal and David Malone, *Greed and Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 2000), pp. 205–32, p. 214; Hilaire McCoubrey and Nigel D. White, *International Organisations and Civil Wars* (Aldershot, UK: Dartmouth, 1995); James N. Rosenau, *International Aspects of Civil Strife* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1964).

44 There are questions marks, however, over this supposed deterrent effect. An example is the escalation of the conflict in Kosovo in 1999, which erupted after the institution of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia.

45 The treaty to set up the International Criminal Court was signed in Rome in 1998 and came into effect on 1 July 2002.

46 In this respect, the conclusion of a Democracy Charter by the OECD states in Warsaw in June 2000 should be treated with some scepticism. The charter states that democracy is a basic human right and calls for its promotion. With the exception of France, few states have shown reservations.

47 Wesley, *Casualties of the New World Order*, p. 126.

48 Ibid., p. 130.

49 Michael O'Hanlon, *Saving Lives with Force: Military Criteria for Humanitarian Intervention* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1997), p. 12.
50 Cited in Blaufarb, *The Counterinsurgency Era*, p. 301.
51 Ibid., p. 46.
52 Examples of the lists of considerations for interventions that are inward-looking in the case of the United States: *Managing Conflict in the Post-Cold War World: The Role of Intervention*, Report of the Aspen Institute Conference, 2–6 August 1995, Aspen, Colo.: (Washington, D.C.: Aspen Institute, 1996); Richard N. Haass, *Intervention: The Use of American Military Force in the Post-Cold War World* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment, 1994). For a comparison of these factors, see A.B. Fetherston, *Towards a Theory of United Nations Peacekeeping* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1994), pp. 40–42.
53 Douglas Rimmer, 'The Effects of Conflict II: Economic Effects', in Oliver Furley (ed.), *Conflict in Africa* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1995), p. 307.

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