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The Political Economy of Conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire: Foreign Economic Intervention and the Spatial Distribution of Violent Conflict

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In Partial Fulfillment of the
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Abstract

Between 1989 and 2011, the three neighboring West African countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire each experienced at least one major civil conflict; and the combined devastation of the conflicts claimed over a million lives, generated millions of refugees, and crippled infrastructure in ways that continue to impact the development of the sub-region today. The occurrence of conflict in the three countries and the fact that they share borders has raised questions about whether the conflicts were caused by domestic factors or were the result of transborder processes of conflict diffusion. This paper will assess the causes of conflict through a political economy lens, paying particular attention to foreign economic intervention in the colonial and post-colonial period and focusing specifically on the impacts of structural adjustment programs on processes of conflict and conflict diffusion. Based on the findings of this paper, conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire can be attributed to two factors. The first of these is the establishment and institutionalization of unequal and exclusive economic and political structures during the colonial period, and the second is the magnification and exacerbation of these inequalities that occurred as a result of neo-colonial economic intervention in the form of structural adjustment programs. Importantly, the findings of this paper also suggest that conflict spillover was not a primary cause of conflict in the case of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire.

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Introduction

Conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa

In the decades following the Second World War, Africa saw a wave of decolonization and the establishment of independent states across the continent. However, domestic and global optimism about the economic and political progress of these newly independent countries was quickly tempered by a rise of violent conflict in the post-colonial period. Beginning with anti-colonial violence in 1946, the incidence of large-scale conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa skyrocketed, and over 40 percent of the region's countries were involved in a conflict at the peak of the violence in 1993 (Marshall, 2005). After 1993, conflict trends decreased somewhat, but they remained significantly higher than the rest of the world throughout the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s. In 1996 alone, war-related deaths in Africa accounted for more than half of all war-related deaths in the world, with 14 out of 53 African countries experiencing a conflict in that one-year period (Annan, 1998). While civil war was spread widely throughout the continent during this period, conflict in post-colonial Sub-Saharan Africa also demonstrated a particular pattern of regional conflict clustering in which civil war was concentrated in neighboring states in Southern Africa, the Great Lakes Region, the Horn of Africa, and West Africa (Marshall, 2005).

In West Africa specifically, the three neighboring countries of Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire experienced large-scale violent conflicts in the post-colonial period. Between 1989 and 2011, all three countries experienced at least one civil conflict; and the resulting death toll of these conflicts amounted to over one million deaths. While they shared somewhat similar experiences with domestic instability and violent conflict, a closer look at Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire reveals that each of the three countries had more differences than similarities with regard to economic and political conditions, both in the colonial and post-colonial periods. Each country was dominated by a different colonial power, had a unique history and experience with ethnic and regional tensions, and had varying levels of success with domestic economic development and integration into the global economy in the latter half of the 20th century. Given the divergent development trajectories of the three countries, a puzzle emerges surrounding the occurrence and persistence of violence in the region. Two related questions arise: (1) Why did conflict develop in three neighboring countries with different economic and political histories and circumstances at around the same time; and (2) were the civil wars isolated occurrences of conflict caused primarily by domestic conditions or instances of conflict spillover across national borders?

Attempts to answer such questions about the proliferation and regionalization of conflict have been prominent across various academic disciplines in recent years, and there is a wealth of literature on the causes of conflict and conflict diffusion in the region. The majority of scholarship on conflict and its spatial distribution in Sub-Saharan Africa has presented three main causes for its occurrence: (1) colonial legacy and its impact on the ability of newly independent African states to develop and maintain strong economic and political institutions, (2) ethnic and tribal tensions rooted in historical enmity and exacerbated by the colonial drawing of arbitrary borders, and (3) the presence of valuable natural resources that facilitate competition over wealth and power. However, despite relative consensus on the primary underlying causes of conflict, there has been intense disagreement over the concept of conflict spillover, which is the spread of civil war across international borders that causes an eruption of civil conflict in neighboring countries. This debate has centered on whether the phenomenon truly exists or is simply thought to be occurring as a result of clustering of conflict in neighboring countries with similar domestic characteristics.

Despite disagreement over conflict spillover, conflict theories involving colonialism, ethnic tensions, and natural resources have provided useful lenses through which to understand and analyze conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. However, there are a number of areas in which this literature falls short. One of the most important of these that it has failed to draw sufficient connections between the separate explanations for conflict and their interactions in creating the ideal conditions for instability and violence, instead relying on one explanation for each individual occurrence of conflict. In the case of Liberia and Sierra Leone, theories on conflict have largely relied on explanations involving the existence of a resource curse; and in Côte d'Ivoire, conflict has largely been viewed through the lens of ethnic and religious tensions. However, these explanations are somewhat simplistic and provide only a partial picture of the causes and mechanisms through which violence erupted and progressed in the three countries. Perhaps more importantly, however, the literature on conflict in the three countries has largely failed to account for the role of foreign actors in facilitating conflict through the evolution and continuation of unequal power relationships following colonialism, paying insufficient attention to the intersections between domestic development and global economic and political processes.

Specifically, research on conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire has understudied the impact of colonial and post-colonial foreign involvement on processes of state formation, economic development, and long-term stability; and it is these processes that I will analyze through my research. Though foreign involvement in the region has taken many forms that include political, cultural, and economic domination, I have chosen to focus on the economic dimension of foreign intervention through examining the role of International Monetary Fund

(IMF) and World Bank structural adjustment programs in promoting conflict in each of the three countries. I will argue that, in the case of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, colonial/pseudo-colonial economic intervention both constrained and shaped domestic state formation, facilitating the institutionalization of unequal and exclusive economic structures in the post-colonial period. I will further argue that it was the consequent reinforcement and magnification of these systems of exclusion through the imposition of structural adjustment programs by neo-colonial powers that served as the true catalyst for the eruption of violent conflict. Lastly, I will analyze the possible role of spillover effects, arguing that it is in fact similar domestic conditions and not transborder diffusion that explain the clustering of the three conflicts in the sub-region.

Uneven Development in a Global Capitalist System

The impact of development processes on stability and conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire is intricately tied to the history of development in the global South and the ways in which that development was constrained and shaped by hegemonic Western powers. Prominent theories on development in the global South have presented underdevelopment as a consequence of historical processes of capitalist development and exploitation. Rodney (1982) posits that the underdevelopment of Africa was a deliberate process facilitated by European powers who benefitted from the raw materials and cheap labor obtained through colonial or semi-colonial relationships with African countries. Through these relationships, Western states used the labor of African states to produce raw materials for Northern manufactured goods, deliberately designing a system that allowed for a continually widening gap in prosperity and development between the two regions (Rodney, 1982). Dependency theorists such as Wallerstein (1974) and Frank (1967) argue that this system of unequal economic exchange continued after the decolonization of the global South and was characterized by the consolidation of economic prosperity and power in the global North. Within this system, economic advances in the Western world took place at the expense of the developing world, further widening the gap in economic and political power and preventing the development of diverse and stable economies in the global South (Wallerstein, 1974).

The above form of Western domination and exploitation was transformed with the oil crises of the 1970s and the global North's simultaneous shift away from manufacturing in favor of the development of finance and technology markets. With this shift, the global North became less dependent, and therefore less interested, in the extraction of physical resources from the global South (Duffield, 2001). This prompted a significant change in the North's approach to the development of the global capitalist system. Relieved of their previous reliance on southern goods, Western powers, who formed the backbone of the global economy, increasingly viewed the global South as economically irrelevant, prompting them to isolate the economies of the South through decreased investment and increasingly high barriers to entry in exclusive global markets (Castells, 1996; Duffield, 2001). In describing the extent of the developing world's isolation and the consequences of that isolation on their development, Castells (1996) states: "The architecture of the global economy features an asymmetrically interdependent world… increasingly polarized along an axis of opposition between productive, information-rich, affluent areas, and impoverished areas economically devalued and socially excluded" (p. 145). Given the prevailing view of developing economies as having limited potential and value, development in the global South was increasingly dependent upon the willingness of the global North to provide development assistance through the provision of development aid and loans (Duffield, 2001). Under this system, the governments of developing countries were increasingly limited in their ability to introduce domestically designed development programs, and the underdevelopment of much of the developing world continued unabated.

One of the most salient developments of this particular period of global economic development was the introduction of conditional structural adjustment loan programs in the global South beginning in the early 1980s. Modeled on neoliberal market structures and implemented by international financial institutions that were controlled by hegemonic Western powers, these loan programs were presented to the developing world as the only solution to the economic challenges they faced. Though marketed as the key to promoting economic growth through the liberalization and restructuring of developing economies in order to effectively integrate them into the global economic system and provide improved living standards and economic conditions, structural adjustment had significant consequences in the majority of countries in which it was introduced. The most common 'side effects' observed in the initial adjustment period included large increases in the prices of essential goods, decreases in export revenue, and decreases in government spending on public goods such as education and healthcare (Riddell, 1992). Compounding the unpleasant shocks associated with the adjustment period, structural adjustment largely failed to deliver the promised economic growth, and much of the developing world continued to experience dire economic conditions throughout the following two decades. In addition, the loans that accompanied structural adjustment agreements contributed to rapid increases in foreign debt that further undermined the financial stability of already struggling economies throughout much of the developing world.

Development and Conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire

It was within the above global system that Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire developed in the colonial and post-colonial periods; and it was also as members of this system that the three countries descended into conflict. As previously mentioned, there have been a number of explanations for conflicts such as the ones that occurred in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, the most popular of which include colonialism, ethnic tensions, and natural resources. In the case of these three countries, it is clear that colonialism, resources, and even ethnic tensions to a certain extent, played a role in destabilizing the countries and facilitating the spread of violent conflict. However, theories that rely solely on these explanations lack one vital component, which is a connection to the global context in which these variables shaped and directed the trajectories of the countries in the pre-conflict years. In order to account for this global context, examination of conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire must recognize and explore the continuation and evolution of colonial and capitalist modes of power in the region in the pre-war period. In these countries, the role of foreign economic intervention did not end with the end of colonialism, but became embedded in the structures and institutions of the state and economy in the post-colonial period. Through this process, foreign intervention that occurred during the colonial period continued to impact and constrain the ability of the countries' domestic governments to pursue successful means of economic and political development. However, it was not just the vestiges of foreign economic intervention in the state and economic sphere that made instability and violence possible. Instead, it was the exacerbation of these problematic legacies of colonialism through neo-colonial economic intervention in the form of structural adjustment that made the occurrence of conflict possible in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire.

Paper Organization

In the next chapter, I will briefly summarize the literature on conflict and conflict diffusion, as well as outlining the methodology used in my research. In Chapter 2, I will provide a qualitative analysis of each of the three case study countries' experiences with development and conflict through individual country profiles that include the colonial, post-colonial, and conflict periods, paying particular attention to the domestic-global interactions occurring during each of these time periods. In Chapter 3, I will provide an overview of structural adjustment in each of the three case study countries, and I will measure the impact of SAPs on economic structures and conditions in the three countries. In Chapter 4, I will explore the possibility of conflict diffusion across borders in the three conflicts to determine whether they were individual conflicts caused by similar domestic experiences or instances of violence being transmitted across borders. I will then conclude with a chapter summarizing my findings and their implications for future studies on conflict and conflict diffusion.

Chapter 1

Literature Review and Methodology

1.1 Literature on Conflict and Conflict Spillover

Conflict "Spillover" or Conflict Clustering?

There is a large body of literature on conflict and its spatial distribution in the post-colonial world. Within this literature, there is a robust debate about whether conflicts tend to cluster in space as a consequence of shared regional economic and political characteristics or are clustered in space as the result of a process of conflict diffusion in which violent conflict is transmitted across national borders into neighboring countries. In assessing the prevalence of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa in the post-Colonial period, Collier (2003) argues that low levels of economic development are the single most important indicator in determining whether a country is likely to experience civil war. While he does acknowledge that civil conflict has some spillover effects, Collier (2003) maintains that domestic conflict due to low economic development is the primary explanation for the high incidence of conflict observed in Sub-Saharan Africa, arguing that the occurrence of conflict in one country does not significantly impact the likelihood of conflict in neighboring countries.

The types of underdevelopment that Collier (2003) finds are most likely to contribute to instability and conflict include low levels of income and wealth, poverty, low rates of domestic economic growth, and a lack of economic diversification and dependence on primary export commodities (Collier, 2003). According to Collier and Hoeffler (2004), these forms of economic underdevelopment facilitate conflict through their direct impact on the opportunity costs of participating in violent conflict; and countries with low earnings and limited opportunities for economic advancement through alternative means have a higher risk of experiencing civil conflict. Collier's claims about the impact of economic underdevelopment on the incidence of civil conflict were supported by Fearon and Laitin (2003), who argue that poverty and slow rates of economic growth create the ideal conditions for rebel recruitment and make conflict possible through their crippling impacts on the financial and bureaucratic capabilities of developing states. They tie these processes to the rise of insurgency, or guerrilla warfare specifically, arguing that this type of warfare is incentivized in countries with weak states, large populations, and economic issues such as unemployment and lack of economic opportunity (Fearon & Laitin, 2003).

In contrast to the relatively direct relationships between development and conflict posited by the above authors, Hegre and Nome (2010) suggest that underdevelopment and conflict are tied to the relationship between democracy and conflict; and they argue that underdevelopment creates a greater risk of conflict in countries with lower levels of democracy. They tie this finding to the opportunity costs and abilities of domestic governments to prevent conflict, arguing that the opportunity costs of participating in violent conflict are lower in autocratic regimes in which the state does not have the ability to control and enforce peace. The relationship between development, governance, and conflict is supported by authors such as Hegre et al. (2001), who claim that there is little evidence of conflict contagion from neighboring states, attributing conflict clustering to domestic factors such as economic conditions and regime types. Through a quantitative analysis, they find that levels of development, regime changes, and regime types are the primary determinants of civil conflict, arguing that conflict diffusion explains very few of the civil conflicts that have been observed in the post-colonial period (Hegre et al., 2001).

While theories that rely on explanations of conflict clustering and not diffusion enjoy a significant amount of support among scholars, there is also a wide body of quantitative and qualitative research that suggests the existence of neighborhood effects and conflict diffusion across international borders. In a statistical analysis of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, Carmignani and Kler (2014) find that, when controlled for similar regional characteristics such as poverty and regime type, Sub-Saharan African states are three times more likely to experience a civil conflict if they share a border with a country experiencing conflict than states in the rest of the world. The quantitative analysis found that, in Sub-Saharan Africa specifically, sharing a border with a state involved in a civil conflict increases the likelihood of conflict by at least one percent (Carmignani & Kler, 2014). This suggests that, at least in the case of Sub-Saharan Africa, conflict clustering cannot be entirely explained by domestic conditions.

State Failure

One of the prominent explanations for conflict diffusion in the post-Colonial world focuses on the internal capacity of states and their ability to prevent conflict from erupting within their borders. Braithwaite (2010) uses a quantitative analysis of civil conflict to assess the relationship between state capacity and conflict contagion, arguing that the likelihood of conflict diffusion across an international border is tied to the neighboring state’s economic and political capacity to prevent the physical and ideological spread of conflict. Braithwaite’s (2010) definition of state capacity includes “(1) sovereign integrity; (2) financial resources; (3) skilled and loyal officials; (4) administrative and military control; and (5) authority and institutional mechanisms to employ resources,” and he argues that the weaker each of these elements is in a given state, the more likely it is that the state will be unable to maintain peace in the face of regional conflict (p. 314).

Similarly, Iqbal and Starr (2008) argue that state failure, defined as the collapse of central state authority, is one of the main causes of conflict diffusion across borders; and they attribute the relationship between the two variables to several interrelated processes. First, they argue that the outbreak of conflict in neighboring countries often exacerbates existing instability in failed or failing states, increasingly the likelihood that violent conflict will erupt. Second, they argue that failing states are often unable to stop the geographical spread of conflict from neighboring countries due to a lack of physical control over the entirety of the state's territory. Perhaps most importantly, Iqbal and Starr (2008) find that the impact of state failure on conflict diffusion is not limited to states that share borders, and that it is a regional phenomenon through which conflict spreads throughout a region.

Colonial Legacy

While there is a significant amount of support for theories of conflict diffusion that focus on domestic variables, many scholars have also criticized the lack of attention paid to international processes in such theories. One explanation of conflict that attempts to take account of international processes focuses on the lingering impacts of colonialism on contemporary African states. Rodney (1982) argues that underdevelopment in Africa is the direct result of an exploitative capitalist system in which Western powers benefit from African underdevelopment. He then goes on to tie the underdevelopment of the region during the colonial period to a problematic political environment and the growth of tribalism in the post-colonial period, arguing that this directly caused a number of conflicts that occurred in Africa following de-colonization (Rodney, 1982). While he does not explicitly tie Europe's underdevelopment of Africa to the phenomenon of conflict diffusion across borders, Rodney's analysis does suggest that colonialism in Africa impacted national and transnational political dynamics in ways that are not limited by international borders.

The consequences of colonialism on conflict in sub-Saharan Africa are further explored by Achankeng (2013), who argues that the inherently violent and undemocratic nature of politics and power relations in the colonial period has become embedded in the post-colonial African state, providing the context for the majority of inter-state and intra-state conflicts in the post-colonial period. She suggests that colonialism was legitimized through the Western world's monopoly on violence, and that their control of colonies in the global South was only made possible through the use of divisive strategies that took advantage of existing class, ethnic, and religious cleavages. According to Achankeng (2013), the complete absence of non-coercive governance experienced during the colonial period was not addressed during decolonization, leaving newly independent African leaders to pursue state building with the same coercive strategies of their former colonial powers. Wong (2012) further argues that the post-colonial African state structure is virtually indistinguishable from its preceding colonial state structure, claiming that the post-colonial African state continues to engage in an exploitative core-periphery relationship with Western powers at the expense of domestic political and economic development. He argues that the combination of these global power structures and domestic tensions along ethnic, tribal, and socioeconomic lines make the neo-colonial African state particularly vulnerable to conflict. Most importantly, the regional nature of neo-colonial economic and political ties via resource trade and cross-border political and ethnic interests causes conflicts to spill across borders, creating regional conflict systems (Wong, 2012).

Transnational Ties and Refugee Flows

Perhaps the most prominent explanation for conflict diffusion in Africa is transnational ethnic ties. Carmignani and Kler (2016) argue that the high level of ethnic partitioning caused by the arbitrary drawing of boundaries in Sub-Saharan Africa makes the diffusion of ethnic conflict across borders much more likely in this region than the rest of the world, highlighting that ethnic partitioning in Sub-Saharan Africa is 53 percent compared to the rest of the world's average of 17 percent (p. 111). Some of the possible mechanisms through which ethnic ties across borders increase the likelihood of conflict diffusion are the potential for conflict in one country to make similar ethnic groups in neighboring countries more aware of their own marginalization, as well as its potential to raise expectations and fears of ethnic conflict within bordering countries (Kuran, 1998). In addition, ethnic conflict in neighboring countries can change perceptions about the plausibility of using violence to change existing power dynamics, leading ethnic groups to believe that they will be able to achieve similar ends through similar forms of violence (Lake & Rothchild).

In addition, beliefs about the salience of ethnicity in politics and social life can also shift in problematic ways when groups in bordering countries observe the conflict dynamics of ethnic groups in neighboring countries (Lake & Rothchild, 1998). In particular, ethnic conflict in neighboring countries may result in shifting beliefs about the ability of political safeguards to maintain existing "ethnic contracts," leading to increased motivation to use violence on the part of the majority and greater fear of being targeting on the part of the minority group, both of which may lead to the choice to participate in violence (Lake & Rothchild, 1998). Further, authors such Forsberg (2008) argue that mobilization by ethnic groups on one side of the border may actually alter the physical capacity of the same ethnic group in a neighboring country in ways that permit and facilitate the outbreak of ethnic conflict. Buhaug and Gleditsch (2008) support the findings of the above authors, adding that transnational ethnic and tribal ties tend to make the diffusion of certain kinds of conflict more likely. Specifically, they argue that transnational ties increase the likelihood of separatist conflict in neighboring countries more than the likelihood of conflicts centered on control of the government (Buhaug & Gleditsch, 2008).

Another explanation for conflict diffusion that is often tied to transnational ethnic ties is refugee flows. Salehyan and Gleditsch (2006) argue that international refugee migration often transports conflict across borders through two related processes. The first of these processes is the expansion of social networks from the refugees' countries of origin to the host state through continued ties to the homeland, which extends the geographic bounds of the conflict beyond the country of origin. This expansion of social networks and conflict is often exacerbated by the forging of new social networks between refugee populations and local populations who share similar ethnic or political ties. The second process through which refugees are thought to facilitate conflict diffusion into neighboring countries is the experience of negative externalities associated with their arrival, such as economic decline, the spread of infectious disease, and shifting ethnic demographics of receiving areas (Salehyan & Gleditsch, 2006).

Refugees may also facilitate conflict diffusion across borders in cases of refugee militarization. Ansorg (2014) asserts that militarized refugees often bring conflict into the host country by using refugee camps as bases from which to attack the country of origin, as well as utilizing humanitarian aid to fund military campaigns. She suggests that this often leads to violent reactions from the government of the country of origin and the host government, both of which view the armed refugee groups as a threat to national security. In addition, she claims that militarized refugees may contribute to an escalation of violence in the region in which they are operating by raising security concerns and increasing militancy among the local population (Ansorg, 2014).

Adding to the above theories on refugees and conflict diffusion, Fisk (2014) finds that the manner in which refugees are settled in host states impacts the likelihood that they will contribute to conflict spillover. She argues that refugee crises in which refugees are self-settled rather than being placed in refugee camps are less likely to result in conflict diffusion into the host state, attributing this finding to a decrease in the negative economic and social impacts of refugee inflows when they are dispersed among the local population (Fisk, 2014). In this case, the conflict-inducing nature of refugees is attributed primarily to the negative externalities caused for host populations, rather than the expansion of social, political, and economic networks from the country of origin to the host country.

Natural Resources and Transnational Economies

Another explanation for conflict diffusion focuses on transnational economic networks. Ansorg (2014) argues that relatively weak state structures in Sub-Saharan Africa facilitate the establishment of regional economic networks by non-state actors, which leads to regional funding of armed violence and its extension into neighboring countries. She claims that neighboring territories often become transit sites or markets for valuable resources that are a source of conflict in the producing country, suggesting that conflict diffusion occurs when the government of origin or neighboring government engages in conflict with armed groups in response to illegal cross-border trade. An alternate dynamic that may occur to induce conflict is the support of these networks and groups by neighboring governments, who have an economic and political interest in supporting the activity of armed groups in control of regional resources (Ansorg, 2014).

Balestri and Maggioni (2014) also assess the role of natural resources in conflict diffusion, using an analysis of West Africa to assess the impact of diamonds, gold, and other resources on conflict in the region. They find that resource economies driven by gold and diamonds played an instrumental role in conflicts in neighboring countries throughout West Africa between 1989 and 2006, arguing that the existence of porous borders between Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte D'Ivore, and Gineau allowed for the establishment of economic networks through which easily exploited resources facilitated the spread of weapons, combatants, and conflict across borders (Balestri & Maggioni, 2014). Harpviken (2010) also uses West Africa as a case study of natural resources and regional conflict, paying particular attention to the role of the state in instigating and supporting transnational violence. He argues that government officials often deliberately support armed groups in their own states and in neighboring states in order to maintain control of illegal natural resource markets, contributing to the spread of conflict throughout the region. In addition, Harpevin (2010) suggests that governments may also become involved in conflicts in neighboring countries in order to distract their own populations from the failures and corruption of the state. According to Harpevin (2010), these actions on the part of governments combine with the destablizing cross-border flow of weapons, goods, and political ideologies to create the conditions for regional conflict systems.

Structural Adjustment

One of the least explored explanations for conflict and conflict diffusion focuses on the role of international economic policies in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly structural adjustment programs and loans from supranational economic organizations. While its direct relationship to conflict and its spatial distribution has been understudied, there is a wide body of literature on the overall impacts of structural adjustment for African politics and economics. Riddell (1992) provides a comprehensive analysis of the implications of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) structural adjustment policies in Sub-Saharan Africa, arguing that they negatively alter the lives of individuals, as well as reshaping the economic and political landscape of states in detrimental ways. According to Riddell (1992), structural adjustment results in a decreased standard of living, increased rural-urban divides, exacerbated poverty, and underdevelopment. Perhaps most importantly, however, he argues that structural adjustment programs weaken the state apparatus by causing a loss of power and removing the state from involvement in development processes, which renders the state unable to provide services such as education and employment. Bangura (2007) further studies the impact of IMF structural adjustment programs on domestic governments, arguing that their structure pushes African states toward increasingly authoritarian policies and undermines democratic development. Beckman (1989) also argues that structural adjustment leads to authoritarian governments, further claiming that the necessity for authoritarianism in structural adjustment makes African governments undertaking it inherently unstable in the long run.

With regard to West Africa specifically, authors such as Meagher (2003) have tied the impacts of structural adjustment in the region to shifting patterns in transborder trade and the growth of the region's informal economy. Meagher (2003) argues that structural adjustment had a number of macro level consequences on fiscal and monetary disparities between countries, as well as creating large price disparities for goods across the sub region. These trends resulted in an increased incentive to use informal transborder trade to gain access to foreign exchange and commodity markets with higher prices for goods. In addition to these structural impacts, Meagher (2003) also suggests that the micro level impacts on employment and standard of living that accompanied structural adjustment encouraged increased participation in transborder trade, both as a means to generate income and a way to cut consumer costs. Importantly, though she does not directly tie the growth of the informal economy to conflict, Meagher (2003) does tie structural adjustment and the shift toward informal trade that it causes to processes of state collapse and loss of control, arguing that structural adjustment is designed to dismantle the state and removes the ability of developing governments to provide an economic alternative to transborder markets. Given the above arguments about the role of transnational resource economies in the conflicts of West Africa, this link between structural adjustment, state failure, and informal economy also suggests a possible link between structural adjustment and conflict diffusion across borders.

While the above authors clearly outline a number of relationships between structural adjustment and political economy conditions in Sub-Saharan Africa, they do not directly link these outcomes to conflict in the region. However, Ndulo (2003) does extend his analysis of structural adjustment processes to make a connection between adjustment and conflict, arguing that structural adjustment programs exacerbate poverty and rural-urban divides, as well as depriving governments of the resources necessary to develop strong and democratic political institutions. When this occurs, governments and populations become vulnerable to domestic conflict and conflict diffusion due to the lack of checks and balances on governments throughout the region, as well as the increased political and economic incentives for participation in conflicts in neighboring countries (Ndulo, 2003).

Adekanye (1995) also argues that international economic interventions increase the likelihood of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa, tying their impacts to the growth of ethnopolitical struggles across the continent. He argues that the growing debt of African states, internationally imposed structural adjustment programs, and the economic crises that often accompany such economic policies often lead to violent struggle over the distribution of power and wealth. He further claims that structural adjustment programs in particular have a number of internal contradictions that undermine their practical success and facilitate conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa through the exacerbation of existing ethnic divides and ethnicallly driven political processes. With this argument, Adekanye (1995) suggests that many of the African conflicts that have been characterized as ethnic and political struggles are in reality a manifestation of resistance against structural adjustment and its implications for African economies and political relationships (Adekanye, 1995).

In exploring the impact of structural adjustment on ethnic conflict in particular, Storey (1999) uses an analysis of ethnic conflict and genocide in Rwanda to assess the conditions under which economic restructuring can lead to ethnic violence, arguing that the case of Rwanda suggests that structural adjustment programs designed to favor one area of the economy over another can exacerbate ethnic tensions in economies in which the division of labor occurs along ethnic lines. For example, in the case of Rwanda, societal perceptions that one of the two major ethnic groups was concentrated in the public sector and the other major ethnic group concentrated in the private sector increased ethnic tensions when structural adjustment resulted in the favoring of the private sector over the public sector (Storey, 1999). However, Storey (1999) also found that the impacts of structural adjustment in the agricultural sector, which did not have an ethnic division of labor, also increased ethnic tensions by creating additional competition for already scarce land through the commercialization of agriculture. While these findings on structural adjustment and conflict are limited to one country, they suggest that structural adjustment’s economic consequences may be an underlying factor in ethnic conflict.

Gaps in the Literature

While the existing bodies of literature on conflict and conflict diffusion are extensive, there are a number of problematic tendencies and gaps in theories explaining its prevalence and persistence in Sub-Saharan Africa. First, there is a reliance on explanations involving transnational ethnic ties, which results from a focus on the Great Lakes region in the majority of studies. While the Great Lakes is an important case study of the dynamics of conflict diffusion, the region has a number of unique characteristics that do not apply to the rest of Sub-Saharan Africa, the most important of which are a particular colonial history and experience of ethnic tensions. Given this fact, studies including the Great Lakes tend to conclude that those particular dynamics explain conflict diffusion throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, despite their lack of applicability to the other sub-regions. Further, the literature that does examine cases other than the Great Lakes overwhelmingly focuses on individual explanations in each particular case of conflict, such as natural resource economies and state failure. While these variables may in fact contribute to conflict, individual explanations often pay insufficent attention to the overarching intersections between constellations of global power and domestic economic and political dynamics, failing to capture the importance of global and regional processes in conflict development and diffusion. This results in a lack of theoretical framing of the issue and an overreliance on region-specific explanations.

1.2 Methodology

Case Studies

Informed by the above bodies of literature on conflict and conflict diffusion, this thesis will explore the processes of conflict development and its possible transborder diffusion in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire through a political economy lens. The choice of West

Africa as a region, and the above three countries in particular, was deliberate; and the case studies are designed to avoid several biases common in studies of Sub-Saharan African conflicts. First, the cases were selected to avoid the overreliance on ethnic tensions that often results from studies on the Great Lakes region. Though the West Africa region has a complex history of ethnic tensions, the dynamics at play in ethnic interactions and struggles in West Africa in the colonial and post-colonial periods were significantly different from those experienced in the Great Lakes region, providing alternative case studies in which ethnic tensions may have been present without becoming a driving factor in the conflicts. In addition, the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire were contemporary to those in the Great Lakes Region but have been understudied in comparison, providing an ideal location to reconsider questions of conflict and conflict diffusion.

The choice of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire also addresses the possibility of bias related to specific colonial powers by providing varying experiences with colonialism and neo-colonialism under the British and the French, as well as a unique experience of pseudo-colonialism under the United States in the case of Liberia. By analyzing countries with unique colonial legacies, I will be able to more easily isolate the varying impacts of those experiences on conflict and its distribution. The variation in colonial experiences also means that the three countries experienced different pressures leading up to the introduction of structural adjustment programs, as well as diverse experiences with types of adjustment policies and degrees of implementation in the adjustment period. This will allow for an exploration of the degree to which adjustment impacts conflict based upon the nature of the adjustment policies and the level of implementation of those policies.

Data Collection

The analysis of conflict in the three countries is based on a combination of historical data, ethnographic accounts, and political economy indicators. First, I provide an in-depth qualitative analysis of the historical processes of development in each of the countries using historical texts and scholarship on the region. This historical data will be focused on three distinct periods: (1) the colonial period, (2) the post-colonial, state-building period leading up to the onset of conflict, and (3) the conflict period(s) themselves. I will focus primarily on the first two periods in analyzing potential causes of conflict, only providing a brief outline of the conflict periods in order to ascertain whether the conflicts themselves shared similar characteristics and whether developments in one conflict impacted developments in the others. For each of the three periods, I will focus primarily on political and economic development, paying particular attention to the intersections between domestic and international power dynamics. However, in order to provide sufficient context for an analysis of the political economy contributors to conflict, I will also provide some assessment of social aspects of life and how they were impacted during the distinct periods of development.

Having provided the historical context for the development of the three countries as colonial and then independent states, I conduct an analysis of structural adjustment in the three countries and its impact on development and stability. This assessment contains analysis of changes in living standards measured by income levels, education, health, and various other socioeconomic indicators. I also measure the impact of structural adjustment on debt levels for the three countries, assessing how these levels impacted economic conditions and political stability. The political economy indicators are supplemented by qualitative analysis of changes to social and political experiences and structures that occurred in the post-adjustment period in order to determine whether foreign economic intervention in the form of structural adjustment programs was a causal factor in the outbreak of civil conflict. Lastly, I use measures of formal and informal trade to assess whether the negative impacts of structural adjustment were transmitted across borders through shifting trade patterns, attempting to answer the question of whether conflict diffusion or domestic conditions were the primary cause of conflict in the sub-region.

Limitations

In conducting this research, I faced a number of limitations, one of the most important of which was a lack of complete and accurate data on the case study countries. Due to a lack of state capacity in all three countries in the immediate post-colonial period, the statistical offices of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire did not consistently track and publish statistics on basic development indicators such as poverty rates, primary school enrollment, and unemployment for the time periods I will be studying. While organizations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) have filled some of the data gap with estimates and figures gathered by international NGOs and financial institutions, including themselves, there remain significant gaps in these indicators from independence in the 1960s to the latter half of the 1990s. The area with the largest information gap is poverty, and there is no comprehensive set of poverty data for any of the three countries in the decades following structural adjustment and leading up to the outbreak of conflict. Due to these data constraints, I have chosen to use proxy indicators such as GDP per capita and primary school enrollment to measure changes in standard of living caused by structural adjustment programs. I also include indicators on poverty and health, where available, though they were not gathered or measured in a consistent manner, thus making direct comparison difficult.

In addition to a lack of domestic data, there is also a gap in available data on transborder relationships, both formal and informal. IMF datasets do provide some intermittent statistics on levels of formal trade between the three countries, but the statistics have a large margin of error and are missing for many of the years during which structural adjustment occurred. However, I will utilize the statistics that are available to determine whether there are any possible patterns, addressing the additional information needed to arrive at a definitive conclusion on shifts in formal trade. For Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire specifically, there is also very little measurable data on informal networks between the three countries; and this is a significant barrier to a definitive assessment of whether informal trade between the three countries served as a mechanism through which conflict was spread. However, there are some available statistics on the overall size of the three countries' shadow economies, and I will utilize these to determine whether there is any possible relationship between structural adjustment, informal trade, and conflict spillover.

Another important limitation in my research is the number of possible variables that may have contributed to the occurrence and spread of conflict and the fact that the scope of this project does not allow for a comprehensive exploration of all of those variables. As stated above, I have narrowed my focus to the political economy in the form of foreign economic intervention; and the primary reason for this is that it will allow me to address many of the variables outlined in the literature review such as colonial legacy, domestic underdevelopment, natural resource economies, and structural adjustment. However, there remain a number of factors that will not be addressed in a comprehensive manner due to the limited scope of this research. One of those is the role of refugees and transnational kinship networks in the occurrence of conflict and conflict diffusion in the three countries. The choice to exclude these variables was based on several factors. First, there is a limited amount of available data on numbers of refugees and transnational kinship networks in all three cases. Second, international political economy explanations focusing on global power dynamics have been understudied in comparison to explanations focusing on refugees. For these reasons, I will not conduct a comprehensive analysis of data on those variables.

In addition to the above limitations, the exploration of structural adjustment as a causal variable in conflict and conflict diffusion presents two important limitations. First, the complex and varied nature of structural adjustment programs limits my ability to argue that structural adjustment as a whole is a primary cause of conflict. As previously stated, structural adjustment varies by country and can mean significantly different things in different countries. Given the diversity of experiences with policies and implementation, it is difficult to determine whether the programs as a whole drive conflict, or whether there are particular aspects of the programs that contribute to instability and violence. Though this is a significant limitation, I will attempt to address it by examining the differences and similarities in policies and implementation in the three separate countries in detail in order to isolate the particular policies and processes that have the potential to contribute to conflict. In addition, there is the issue of the counterfactual and what would have happened had structural adjustment not been introduced. Given the absence of comparable cases in the region in which structural adjustment was not implemented, it is not possible to prove definitively that structural adjustment is the primary cause of conflict in the three countries. It is, however, be possible to determine whether structural adjustment impacts domestic and regional processes in ways that have the potential to contribute to conflict; and this will be the focus of my argument.

1.3 Concluding Remarks

The literature review on conflict and conflict diffusion outlines several key findings and debates regarding the incidence of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. First, the literature highlights disagreements over whether conflict clustering in neighboring countries is primarily attributable to similar domestic conditions or a function of conflict diffusing across borders. The literature review also highlights the wide variety of explanations for conflict that include factors such as colonialism, state failure and underdevelopment. In studies on West Africa specifically, the most common explanations for conflict involve natural resource economies and their impact on flows of illegally produced valuable resources, weapons, and combatants. In addition, the literature review highlights findings on the negative impacts of structural adjustment and how they contribute to the growth of transborder economic networks blamed for conflict in West Africa. In the following chapter, I will set the stage for the exploration of these possible mechanisms through which conflict occurred in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire through qualitative historical profiles of the three countries.

Chapter 2

Colonialism, State-building, and Conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire

This chapter is comprised of historical profiles of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire that are designed to provide context for the conflicts analysis of the countries' colonial and post-colonial histories leading up to the outbreak of conflict. The historical analysis for each country includes two main components. The first component is a timeline of events beginning with the colonial period and ending with a brief summary of the conflicts themselves; and the second component is an analysis of key factors that contributed to the immediate outbreak of conflict in each country. I organize the countries in order of the occurrence of conflict, beginning with Liberia, following with Sierra Leone, and ending with Côte d'Ivoire. At the end of the chapter, I briefly summarize the findings on the three countries, highlighting the similarities across cases and discussing their relevance for my argument on the political economy causes of conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire.

The profiles of the three countries demonstrate several important historical trends. First, the country profiles suggest that the historical development of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire was significantly impacted by the focus of Western colonial powers on lucrative industries such as mining and commercial agriculture during the colonial period of economic defelopment. The historical analysis further demonstrates that colonial experiences shaped group dynamics based on regional, ethnic, and socioeconomic differences that were necessitated and encouraged by the economic dynamics at play under the colonial powers. Importantly, qualitative analysis of the three countries suggests that these developments of the colonial period combined to create unequal post-colonial states, where economic and political opportunity was limited to certain segments of the population. Finally, the sections detailing the factors contributing to the outbreak of conflcit suggest that the above processes resulted in the marginalization of a significant proportion of the population, particularly youth, who were a driving force behind the violent conflicts.

2.1 Conflict in Liberia

Introduction

Given its history as a country that was not formally colonized by a Western power but shared a formative, and unequal, relationship with the United States, Liberia is an interesting case study of foreign intervention in the colonial and post-colonial periods. Analysis of its historical development highlights several key factors regarding its experiences with instability and violent conflict. In the case of Liberia, the early period of 'independence' was characterized by the solidification of settler-hinterland divisions along socioeconomic lines, which was facilitated by external political pressures and particular economic relationships at the domestic and global levels. These divisions were expanded along regional and ethnic lines as the country further developed as a peripheral capitalist economy and were then highlighted by the economic challenges of the 1970s and 1980s. By this point, inequalities between groups were deeply rooted and institutionalized; and marginalized groups such as Liberia's youth saw conflict as an avenue through which to address their exclusion from economic and political opportunities.

American 'Colonialism' and State Formation

The territory of contemporary Liberia was first settled in 1822, with the arrival of freed slaves from the United States, Barbados, and the Congo and the creation of a settlement in the future capital of Monrovia (Harris, 2012). These settlers, who became known as Americo-Liberians, inhabited only the coastline of the country for nearly a century following their arrival, and interactions between the settlement and hinterland territories occupied by indigenous groups were limited. This pattern was not significantly altered when the Americo-Liberian government declared independence in 1847, and the newly independent state of Liberia maintained its disinterest in the indigenous population in favor of coastal development for almost forty years. However, following the 1884-85 Berlin Conference, the purpose of which was to regulate European colonization and trade in Africa, Liberia's settler leadership was compelled to attempt the subjugation of the indigenous African community and the territory they occupied (Harris, 2012). The necessity for these actions on the part of the Liberian government was fueled by increasingly aggressive attempts by the British and the French to acquire territories in Liberia's hinterlands with the justification that the government was not effectively occupying those areas; and the resulting 19th and 20th century settlement-hinterland relations would play a large role in shaping the political landscape of Liberia in the years leading up to the country's two civil wars (Akpan, 1973).

The Americo-Liberian quest for control over indigenous Liberians was characterized by institutionalized attitudes and policies of settler superiority. This is evidenced by the inclusion of statements of the role of the settlers in the "enlightenment of the benighted continent' in the 1847 constitution, as well as persistent portrayals of Americo-Liberians as pinnacles of enlightenment, progress, and democracy in artwork and statues throughout the settlement. By the early 1900s, the combination of pressure from external colonial powers and prevailing attitudes about the role of Americo-Liberians in the development of Liberia had resulted in paternalistic attempts to 'civilize' the indigenous populations and bring them into the nation-state of Liberia. One method through which this was attempted was the conferral of citizenship on all potential Liberians and the extension of central government control over the hinterland during the first decade of the

1900s (Harris, 2012). However, increasingly aggressive threats from Britain, France, and coastal indigenous populations soon resulted in a shift in policy on the part of the Liberian government, and coercion rapidly replaced persuasive and paternalistic approaches to relations with indigenous communities. Within this system, it became increasingly difficult for indigenous Liberians to obtain wealth or political power. This was in part due to restrictive policies on citizenship, which only allowed citizenship and the rights that accompanied it to be given to Liberians who could prove that they were ‘civilized’ through exchanging traditional religious practices for Christianity, adopting an Americo-Liberian “lifestyle,” and owning land (Harris, 2012).

While settlement-hinterland relations were primarily characterized by coercion and domination, the Americo-Liberian approach to Liberia’s hinterland populations also involved a significant amount of cooperation from indigenous rulers in a system of indirect rule. This system of rule was solidified under President Barclay in the early 1900s and was predicated on two main modes of control. The first of these was a provincial administrative system through which the settler government was able to achieve control and sovereignty over the interior through the reorganization of indigenous communities into clans and the installation of clan chiefs in positions of political and administrative power. The central government then assigned clan chiefs the responsibilities of maintaining order in their clan territories, collecting taxes for the central government, and recruiting labor for public projects (Munive, 2011).

In addition to these changes, larger existing chiefdoms in the hinterland were transformed into districts, and each district was assigned a commissioner responsible for performing both executive and judicial functions for the territory under his control. Through these administrative and political changes, the settler leadership provided an incentive for indigenous elite to carry out its interests in the interior, while simultaneously transforming the hinterland into a source of wealth and revenue for political leaders in the capital. The political transformation also provided the opportunity for local leaders to establish economic and political hierarchies based on systems of patronage and privilege, a process that resulted in continually widening gaps in political and economic power among indigenous populations, as well as competition between ethnic groups over political favor from the central government (Munive, 2011).

The second component to the central government's control of the hinterlands was the establishment of the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) as a military force to support and enforce the newly established political and administrative systems in the hinterlands (Munive, 2011). Prior to the establishment of the LFF, Liberia's territory was protected by a militia that was confined to a forty-mile coastal area called the "constitutional zone"; and it was used during the nineteenth century to defend the Americo-Liberian settlement against indigenous groups, expand the authority of the Liberian state, and prevent slave traders from operating within the borders of Liberia. Importantly, the Liberian militia was not comprised of full-time soldiers, but was made up of male colonists who became combatants only in times of danger or crisis. This arrangement was a conscious decision made to reflect the Liberian constitution, which prevented the creation of a standing army with the justification that standing armies in peacetime posed a threat to liberty and political stability (Nevin, 2011).

While reservations about the dangers of standing armies remained prominent throughout the nineteenth century, increasingly contentious relations with foreign powers and persistent loss of territory to Britain and France placed pressure on the Liberian state to extend its power and military presence throughout its claimed territory. With the original establishment of the Republic of Liberia, the settler colony had claimed territories "northeast from the Atlantic littoral all the way to the headwaters of the Niger River" (Nevin, 2011, p. 279). However, colonial armies of the British and French gradually established control of much of this claimed territory through the signing of treaties with local indigenous chiefs, claiming that it was necessary to create secure borders that allowed for the control of tribes in conflict with one another in the interior. This justification became an institutionalized policy with the Liberian-French Treaty of 1907, which allowed the French to place their own forces on Liberian territory in the event that the central government could not adequately police borders through a frontier force. This development left the Liberian government with little choice but to establish a standing army, and the Liberian legislature passed a Joint Resolution for the creation of the LFF in 1908, allocating $60,000 dollars for the creation and maintenance of frontier garrisons (Nevin, 2011).

While the original purpose of the LFF was to maintain border security and central government control over the interior, it soon became a vehicle through which the central government created divisions and rivalries among ethnic and tribal lines. As with the administrative system of indirect rule, the LFF was organized in a hierarchy based on ethnicity. Americo-Liberian men were placed in officer positions, while members of ethnic groups deemed most likely to be "loyal" to the central government were recruited for enlisted positions. Despite being placed in positions inferior to those of Americo-Liberians, indigenous LFF soldiers and the tribes that allowed military garrisons in their districts benefitted both economically and politically, gaining superior positions to other tribes and districts. In addition, as the LFF became larger and more powerful, indigenous groups increasingly chose to align themselves with LFF conquests in order to further their own objectives with regard to acquisition of territory and resources. Through this process, traditional tribal warfare was magnified to an unprecedented level and the rivalries caused by the introduction of the indirect administrative system of rule exacerbated (Nevin, 2011).

In addition to the increased regional tensions that accompanied the central government's activities in the hinterland, settler-indigenous relations were further complicated by the legacy of slavery and its de facto continuation through a system of forced labor in the 20th century. During this time, indigenous populations were conscripted for labor both within and outside of Liberia in a system that was only slightly different from the traditional forms of slavery that had existed in the country prior to the 1900s. The use of forced labor internally was justified by the central government's need for manual labor in public works and the construction of infrastructure such as bridges and roads; and the responsibility of supplying that labor fell to the newly established paramount chiefs through an official system of government requests and labor quotas (Munive, 2011). Beginning in 1912, two forms of exported labor also became common. The first of these was the use of laborers as stevedores on steamers up and down the coast of West Africa, and the second was the shipping of contracted indigenous laborers from Liberia to plantations and mines in English, German, Portuguese, and Spanish colonies in neighboring countries. The central government relied largely on the LFF to recruit labor to be exported; and under this system, cooperating chiefs, soldiers, and central government officials accumulated large amounts of wealth (Akingbade, 1997).

Another occurrence that shaped the economic and political development of early Liberia was the introduction of the rubber industry and the foreign ties that accompanied its expansion. The rubber industry in Liberia boomed beginning in 1926 when the government invited the US-based Firestone company to establish a presence in the country in exchange for economic favors (Lindberg, 2014). This economic exchange took the form of a loan to the Liberian government from a Firestone subsidiary in the amount of $5 million dollars. In return, the government granted Firestone Company "the right to lease up to one million acres of rubber growing land for ninety-nine years [with] a 2.5 percent revenue tax [to] to be paid on the value of all products shipped after the first six years" (Chalk, 1967, p. 31). However, low rubber prices resulted in a lack of production by Firestone for seven years following the agreement and the Liberian government found it impossible to repay the loan without the expected revenue of the rubber export tax, causing a loan crisis in 1933. While this was resolved without violence between the United States and Liberia, the consequence of the loan was long-term economic dependence on the United States and a loss of control over one of the country's most valuable resources (Chalk, 1967).

Pre-War Political Landscape (1971-1980)

Despite internal and external political tensions during its development, Liberia experienced relative political stability from the time of independence until the early 1970s. During this time, the government was dominated by a single political party, the True Whig Party (TWP). Comprised of Americo-Liberian settlers and their descendants, the TWP was founded in 1869 and was predicated on Western ideals of Christianity and capitalist markets. As a result of the unequal power dynamics between the settler population and indigenous populations, the party faced little competition in national politics until the death of President William Tubman in 1971. Also a member of the TWP, Tubman's successor, William Tolbert, attempted to diffuse increasing tensions caused by economic and political disparities between regions and ethnic groups through halfhearted reforms in government and education. When he took office, Tolbert expressed a desire to "dismantle his predecessor's patronage network… [and establish] for himself a base of support consisting of a broad coalition of the newly emergent groups in

Liberian society who would most benefit… including educated young professionals and students, entrepreneurs, educated rural dwellers, and the professional military" (Pham, 2004, pp. 74-75).

However, while he showed some inclination to expand economic and political opportunities beyond Americo-Liberian groups, Tolbert's continuation of the government's historically autocratic approach in the face of these limited reforms resulted in increasingly widespread opposition to the government in both the capital and the interior. In addition, the benefits promised to the groups Tolbert was attempting to incorporate into the state structure were slow enough in coming to fruition that those groups were not fully committed to supporting his regime for most of the 1970s. However, the changes made by his administration were enough to alienate the Americo-Liberian elite who had traditionally formed the core of the political and economic structure of the country. The combination of these two factors significantly weakened Tolbert and resulted in a general lack of support for his leadership throughout the decade (Pham, 2004). This opposition was further fueled by Tolbert's blatant exploitation of the country's resources for his own personal gain and the gain of his inner circle of political elites (Waugh, 2011). The extreme extent of Tolbert's exploitative rule is evidenced by the fact that, during his presidency, inequality increased steadily increased until 4 percent of the population, most of which was Americo-Liberian, owned over 60 percent of the country's total wealth (Harris, 2012).

Tolbert's failure to address issues of inequality and political domination resulted in the development of a number of opposition groups throughout the 1970s. One of the first of these was the Pan-Africanist Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA), which was a left-wing party founded by native Liberian, Togba-Nah Tipoteh, at the University of Liberia in 1973. Over the next seven years, groups such as the All People's Freedom Alliance and the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL) were also created by dissident members of the population; and the PAL became the official opposition party to the TWP in 1978. There were also a number of student organizations that developed during this time, including the Student Unification Party for Free and Fair Elections (SUP) and the Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY). At the same time, a significant proportion of Liberia's population continued to show support for the government; and Americo-Liberian students formed the All Student Alliance Party (ASAP) with the purpose of lobbying for the continuation of Americo-Liberian domination (Waugh, 2011).

During this period of political proliferation, Tolbert's attempts to maintain power against the opposition were further compromised by the country's problematic economic situation. During his decade of rule, the country experienced the negative impacts of a downturn in primary commodity prices and global oil crises, both of which highlighted the country's detrimental reliance on exports for economic growth and stability. Tensions over economic issues continued to grow, and in April of 1979 there were riots over a 50 percent increase in the subsidized price of rice, necessitating a military intervention of contracted Guinean troops to maintain Tolbert's control. In response to the growing instability, Tolbert ordered the arrest and detention of several opposition group leaders, who were subsequently charged with treason. However, this failed to quell opposition to his government; and in April of 1980, junior military officer Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe seized power in a military coup, killing President Tolbert and thirteen high ranking officers of the TWP (Harris, 2012).

Initially, Doe justified the coup with claims of his intentions to spearhead a "Liberian Revolution" through which the living conditions and political rights of all Liberians would be enhanced. He then appointed indigenous opposition members to ministerial positions in his new cabinet. Among these leaders were Togba Nah Tipoteh and Charles Taylor, who had returned from schooling in the United States and military training in Libya to take up arms against the Liberian government. However, despite this promising beginning, Doe quickly turned to authoritarian tactics in an attempt to maintain complete political and economic power, beginning a systematic campaign against dissident Liberians. During his first several years in office, he killed and exiled important leaders of political parties and ethnic groups that he viewed as a threat, eventually removing the majority of indigenous representatives from his cabinet and replacing them with members of his native Krahn tribe. Doe's tactics drew international condemnation in 1984, when he announced his intention to run in the 1985 general elections as a member of the National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL); and in 1985, the only surviving member of the original fourteen coup participants, Thomas Quiwonkpa, made an unsuccessful attempt to remove him from power. In response, Doe ordered the deaths of over 3000 people from Quiwonkpa's home region, sparking anger and protests from Liberian civilians. The coup also resulted in Charles Taylor's flight to the United States, where he subsequently escaped while awaiting extradition to Liberia for corruption charges in 1985 (Sesay, 2009).

In addition to his problematic authoritarian tendencies, Doe also failed to deliver on promises to reverse the economic decline that was occurring in the country at the time of his ascent to power. Within five months of taking office, Doe had entered into the first of a series of devastating structural adjustment lending programs with the IMF in an attempt to combat the combination of economic stagnation and growing foreign debt that had characterized the Liberian economy throughout the 1970s. However, these programs caused economic shocks throughout the economy and added to the already strenuous burden of repayment faced by the government, exacerbating the economic situation in the country (Kieh, 2009a). It was within this context of worsening economic and political conditions that Taylor returned to West Africa; and in 1989, he and his NPFL troops launched an attack on Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire (Sesay, 2003). The NPFL's presence in Côte d'Ivoire was ignored by the government, who viewed Tylor as a potential ally in a region that was increasingly dominated by the former British colony of Nigeria in both the political and economic spheres (Huband, 1998).

Civil Conflicts (1989-1997 and 1999-2003)

Given the lack of success of the 1985 coup attempt, Doe initially dismissed the NPFL threat to his government. Instead of using the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to remove Taylor's forces from the territory, Doe chose to deploy the AFL to target members of the civilian population in the NPFL rebels' home of Nimba Country in retaliation for the attacks. However, this strategy ended up further alienating indigenous populations and causing the Gio and Mano ethnic groups to join the NPFL's cause. With their participation, the NPFL began to target civilians of the Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups with the justification that they were supporters of the Doe regime and that the AFL was comprised of mostly members of the Krahn ethnic group. Within six months of the invasion, the conflict had reached the capital of Monrovia and Taylor had gained control of over 90 percent of Liberia's territory (Sesay, 1996).

By this time in the conflict, the relatively clear division between the NPFL and AFL had become blurred by a proliferation and splintering of armed groups, often along regional and ethnic lines. One of the first instances of this splintering occurred in July of 1991, when a group of rebel fighters broke away from the NPFL to create Prince Johnson's Independent NPFL (Call, 2010). As the conflict became more complex, the damage and loss of life in Monrovia continued to increase, prompting the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to stage a peacekeeping intervention in August of 1990 (Mgbeoji, 2003). This initially took the form of the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), whose mandate was centralized in the capital city and restricted to maintaining peace, reinstating a system of law and order, and ensuring compliance with a ceasefire. However, the refusal of the NPFL and other groups to recognize the legitimacy of any form of external intervention made it impossible for ECOWAS troops to enforce a ceasefire, and they were quickly drawn into military engagement with rebel troops in the capital (Edu-Afful & Aning, 2015). The ECOWAS mission in Liberia was effectively controlled by Nigeria, creating increased hostility on the part of Côte d'Ivoire and prompting them to allow the flow of weapons from Burkina Faso to Liberia through the northern part of the country (Huband, 1998).

The ineffectual nature of ECOWAS peacekeeping efforts was further highlighted in September of 1990, when Prince Johnson's Independent NPFL successfully captured, tortured, and murdered President Doe in Monrovia (Call, 2010; Sesay, 1996). Over the next several years, a number of other armed groups emerged to take part in the conflict, one of the more powerful of which was the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO). Comprised of Krahn and Mandingo elements, as well as refugees from Sierra Leone, ULIMO was founded in 1991 with the aim of removing Taylor from Liberia. To achieve this, ULIMO fighters joined the ECOMOG troops to retake strategic areas of Monrovia from the NPFL (Adeleke, 1995). The ULIMO splintered along ethnic lines in 1993, with Krahn and Mandingo ethnic groups creating separate movements under leaders of their respective ethnic groups (Call, 2010).

Though peace talks began in the early months of the conflict, the successful implementation of a ceasefire agreement was not achieved until 1996. Between 1990 and 1996, there were at least 11 peace agreements made and broken by the multiple parties to the conflict, and ECOWAS played a significant role in each round of negotiations. However, despite its mandate to facilitate peace, the Nigerian-led ECOWAS force repeatedly stalled the process by refusing to incorporate Taylor and his forces in the peace process. After several failed accords, the Nigerian government finally yielded to pressure from Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Burkina Faso to incorporate Charles Taylor in the peace process, gaining the cooperation of the NPFL. In 1996, the Abuja II accord established a framework to end the conflict, and Taylor's election as president in 1997 signaled the official end of the war (Call, 2010).

Despite hopes for sustained peace, Taylor's return to old modes of political elitism and exploitation in the years following the accord resulted in a resurgence of political opposition and an increasingly unstable political system by 1999 (Dunn, 2011). Tensions were exacerbated by Taylor's repressive response to criticism of the government, and Liberian dissidents both within and outside of the country began to demand his removal from power. Another key component to Taylor's unsuccessful leadership was his continuing involvement with Sierra Leone's rebel group, the RUF. During his time in power, he supported their military efforts in Sierra Leone by providing logistical support, weapons, and a route through which the rebels could export diamonds in order to fund their military campaign (Silberfein, 2004).

Events came to a head in April of 1999, when a militia called the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) launched armed attacks from neighboring Guinea and proceeded to gain control of most of the countryside. As the conflict continued, regional tensions caused by Taylor's interference in the politics of Sierra Leone and Guinea resulted in both countries providing support for anti-Taylor forces, prolonging the conflict and allowing LURD to gain a significant amount of territory over a two-year period. However, in 2002, LURD suffered important defeats in several towns and experienced internal divisions that weakened their hold on the countryside (Call, 2010). In March of 2003, a group of rebels broke off to create the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) and proceeded to launch attacks into Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire (Kieh, 2009b). Later that year, Taylor was indicted for war crimes by Sierra Leone's Special Court, resulting in his resignation from power and flight to Nigeria. Within two weeks of his departure, a peace accord was signed between the two rebel groups and a transitional government instated, effectively ending the second civil war (Call, 2010).

Factors Contributing to Immediate Outbreak of Conflict

Several related issues stand out in the conflicts in Liberia. One of the most important of these was Liberia's position as a peripheral capitalist state in the global political economy of the 19th and 20th centuries. Peripheral capitalist states are defined as states that serve the economic needs of core metropolis states through an exploitative international division of labor; and Liberia's role in this system was that of a producer and exporter of "raw materials such as rubber and iron ore that [were] used to promote socio-economic development in the metropolis" (Kieh, 2009a, p. 75). This role had several consequences for the economic and political development of the country leading up to the first civil war. First, it ensured the perpetual economic underdevelopment of the country by facilitating the funneling of the countries' resources to wealthy Western states and generating an influx of foreign corporations interested in benefitting from the countries' industries. It also had the effect of creating a political environment that enabled elite members of the Liberian government to accumulate personal wealth through corrupt practices and patron-client relations with the Liberian population and foreign actors (Kieh, 2009a).

While Liberia's peripheral status in the global capitalist system was a major component to the prevailing political climate of corruption and elitism, the state's domestic political structure also contributed to an exclusive political system through which only elite members of society could exercise power. This was largely due to the hegemonic power given to the president through the 1847 constitution and subsequent legislation. One of the most important institutional developments was the 1904 Barclay Plan, which allowed the president to act autonomously to control the administration of the interior and its indigenous populations. The state also established the military under the authority of the president, failing to institute any checks on the executive's use of military force against the population. Further legislation in the 1930s gave the president the power to suspend constitutional rights in emergency situations, effectively allowing the president to commit illegal acts against citizens suspected of opposing the government. Through this series of institutional developments, the possibility of political inclusion and opposition was severely restricted, paving the way for numerous abuses of power by the government (Kieh, 2012).

Another factor that contributed to Liberia's instability was the country's economic relationships with international financial institutions and Western donors. Beginning in the pre-independence period, the Liberian government amassed crippling debts to the United States and other European states, a pattern that continued unabated throughout the 19^{th} and 20^{th} centuries. The country's external debts grew again when it began to engage in business arrangements with foreign corporations such as Firestone, granting them rights to some of their most profitable industries in exchange for large loans. Following World War II, international finance institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF joined the growing list of creditors to Liberia; and in 1980 and 1984, the IMF instituted heavy-handed structural adjustment programs in the country. The combination of the government's astronomical loan payments and the negative economic impacts of the IMF's structural adjustment programs resulted in countrywide economic hardships such as decreased wages, increased unemployment and a lack of access to public services throughout the 1980s (Kieh, 2009a).

While the components and consequences of structural adjustment in the Liberian conflict will be addressed in full detail in the following chapter, it is important to note the importance of Doe’s response, or lack of adequate response, to the economic shocks and declines that accompanied the programs. There is evidence to suggest that, despite issues such as decreased wages, increased unemployment, and lack of access to education and health care services, Doe and his fellow politicians continued to fund increasingly extravagant lifestyles for themselves and a small class of elite at the expense of the majority of the Liberian population, who were provided with little government support to ease the negative impacts that accompanied the initial adjustment period. This is evidenced by the fact that, between 1980 and 1983, the years immediately following the introduction of the first SAP, Doe increased civil service salaries by 100 percent, while the salaries of the rest of the population were decreasing (Pham, 2004).

One of the groups most impacted by the economic and political climate of pre-war Liberia were rural youth, and they went on to play key roles in both the first and second conflict. In the case of the first civil war, the majority of youth combatants were voluntarily recruited, and there is evidence to suggest that their participation was driven by the desire to remove an urban elite from power and receive access to education and better economic opportunities. With the end of the first conflict and the brief period of peace, young ex-combatants found themselves in positions with little social and economic mobility once again, and these youths were the driving force behind the attacks that began the second civil war (Utas, 2003). The proportion of youth combatants in the Second Liberian Civil War was significantly higher than that of the first, with child soldiers constituting only 29 percent of all combatants in the first conflict and 53 percent of all combatants in the second conflict (Achvarina & Reich, 2006).

The socioeconomic challenges faced by Liberian youth in the pre-conflict period were rooted in historical processes of labor sector development that reached as far back as early independence. With the country's independence, the government began to engage in efforts to become urban and modern members of the global capitalist system, and urban centers along the coast sprang up as locations for trade, production, commerce, and shipping. All of these sectors required manual labor, driving an influx of young males into coastal areas and establishing a system of wage labor in the country (Utas, 2010). However, at the same time that this new, Western system of wage labor was being established, traditional systems of informality and patrimony persisted, and youth were used as the backbone of a labor force designed to consolidate wealth and power in the hands of the Americo-Liberian elite and the tribal chiefs who had decided to cooperate with them in order to strengthen their own positions in the hinterland (Utas, 2010). As the state and economy continued to develop, youth were also incorporated into the national military, and later, into the plantation economy in order to provide the labor necessary for large-scale resource extraction. This pattern continued throughout the first century following independence, with youth increasingly concentrated in resource extraction and military work (Munive, 2011; Utas, 2010). Importantly, beginning in the late 1960s, the Liberian government began to focus on the recruitment of a very specific demographic for military careers, targeting an increasingly large population of unemployed and semiliterate urban youth (Sawyer, 2005). This led to a rapid increase in the number of youth with little socioeconomic mobility and easy access to arms.

With the economic decline of the 1970s, Liberian youth who had previously relied on work in shipping yards, plantations, and other unskilled industries found themselves increasingly unable to find employment and to generate the income necessary to support themselves. In describing the precarious economic status of Liberian youth in the 1970s, Utas (2010) states: "[y]oung men [that] had earlier been able to rely on the income generation of a few years' work on plantations—or similar forms of employment—in order to establish themselves in their home villages by investing their saved income… in a farm, a house, wife (or wives) and family… [found it] increasingly difficult to obtain funds and the benefits that followed… and were thus forced… to survive on underpaid contracts in towns and plantations" (p. 116). The circumstances of youth were not improved under Samuel Doe's leadership after the 1980 coup, and his administration expanded the plantation economy and use of contracted, often unpaid, labor (Lindberg, 2014).

It was these combined processes that led to a significant population of politically, socially, and economically marginalized youth in both urban and rural areas of Liberia in the pre-conflict period. There is evidence to suggest that these youth were recruited for war through similar patrimonial networks that were historically used to recruit them for menial labor jobs on plantations and in similar industries; and there is equal evidence to suggest that their receptiveness to recruitment was largely a consequence of their belief that war would make it possible to achieve a level of mobility that was impossible under the existing structure (Munive, 2010). Essentially, marginalized youth with few alternative options perceived conflict as an opportunity to become the powerful and wealthy players in the Liberian political and economic structure, making them ideal candidates for participation in conflict.

Conclusion

An examination of the historical trajectory of development and conflict in Liberia highlights a number of problematic processes. First, analysis of development in the immediate post-independence period illustrates the existence of unequal and contentious relationships between Americo-Liberians and indigenous populations that developed as a result of the government's attempts to subjugate indigenous populations. Importantly, the analysis also suggests that, though Liberia was not technically the colony of a Western power, the interference of Western powers in the sovereign territory of Liberia was a driving factor in the creation of these settler-indigenous divisions. This was evidenced by the military attempts of the French and the British to claim Liberian territory. It was also evidenced by the economic intervention of the United States in the rubber industry and the corresponding impact of the rubber industry on the development of unequal labor structures. Perhaps most importantly, the historical profile of Liberia suggests that these inequalities were institutionalized and expanded across a growing number of groups as the country continued to develop and be influenced by its status as a site for Western resource extraction in the 20th century.

2.2 Conflict in Sierra Leone

Introduction

Like Liberia, analysis of Sierra Leone reveals a number of interesting patterns of development and conflict. In the case of Sierra Leone, the historical profile suggests a particular trajectory of state and economic development that was shaped by colonial interests in the extraction of valuable resources. It also reveals key social divisions along regional and tribal lines that can be directly tied to the above processes of development. Perhaps more importantly, analysis of Sierra Leone's post-independence period highlights the existence of institutionalized inequalities that were exacerbated by the corrupt patron-client tendencies of the central government, which relied almost exclusively on informal and coercive modes of control over the population. Lastly, examination of Sierra Leone in the two decades immediately prior to the conflict suggests a pattern of underdevelopment and increasingly limited opportunities in education and employment for large segments of the population, particularly the country's youth.

British Colonialism

Sierra Leone was a British colony that first came under European control with the establishment of the city of Freetown in the late 1700s (Harris, 2012). In the following years, groups of former slaves from Britain, the United States, Jamaica, and Nigeria established settlements in Freetown. This population eventually developed a Creole, or Krio, identity based on Western education, religion, and economy, as well as a number of traditional African influences passed down from the original settlers. The distinct Krio identity led to a separation between the Krio population of Freetown and the indigenous Sierra Leonean population, which was magnified by the unequal treatment they received from the British Colonial administration (Harris, 2012). The Krio were disproportionately benefitted by their relationship with the British, gaining extensive education and prestigious economic and political positions in Sierra Leone. During this time period, the British used a relatively hands-off approach to governing, allowing the Krio population a significant amount of freedom in trade and governance (Harris, 2012).

However, following the 1884-85 Berlin Conference, Britain shifted toward establishing complete control over the territory and trade of Sierra Leone (Harris, 2012). In 1896, the territory outside of Freetown was established as a British protectorate, creating further division between the populations of the Freetown colony and hinterland protectorate. Importantly, the increased interest of the British in Sierra Leone undermined the superior economic and political position obtained by the Krio throughout the previous century, with housing, trade, and professional positions increasingly taken by European settlers (Harris, 2012). While the Krio did manage to maintain some of their economic dominance during this period, they rapidly lost political power to the indigenous Africans of the protectorate. The Krio were further undermined when the British began a process of integration of the colony and protectorate in 1921. In the years leading up to decolonization, divides between the colony and protectorate continued to characterize Sierra Leone's politics, with British colonial administrators deliberately fostering competition and tension between the two groups (Harris, 2012).

Contentious relationships between the colony and protectorate were exacerbated by the slave trade and its legacy in the region throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. Though Freetown was created by the British to demonstrate to the rest of the world that the "African Diaspora could be re-settled in Africa and effectively transfer ideals of free trade, civilization, and Christianity to indigenous communities," the colony was characterized by exploitative labor relationships both internationally and domestically (Whyte, 2015, p. 232). One way this occurred was through apprenticeship programs designed to "civilize" newly freed slaves through indentured labor for established Freetown settlers. Later, settlers began to import labor from the protectorate in the form of indentured servants and children referred to as "wards." These forms of exploitative labor were combined with the use of slavery in the protectorate throughout the 19th century and until its legal abolishment in 1928 (Whyte, 2015). Following the legal end of slavery, both the colonial administration and tribal elites circumvented the prohibition through systems of communal labor that took advantage of former slaves and the poor through unpaid work in the name of development (Whyte, 2015).

Another notable occurrence of the colonial period was the discovery of diamonds, gold, and other valuable resources by the British. In 1926, a geological survey from Britain revealed the presence of significant amounts of iron, gold, platinum, chromite and rutile (D'Angelo, 2016). Encouraged by this discovery, Britain extended its geographic exploration of the area; and in 1930, the first diamond deposits were located in the country (D'Angelo, 2016). In the following years, international interest in the area skyrocketed as resource producers became aware of Sierra Leone's potential for resource extraction. In 1933, "the Consolidated African Selection Trust (C.A.S.T.), a company created… in the early nineteen twenties to extract diamonds at Akwatia in the Gold Coast" was granted a monopoly on diamond production by the government of Sierra Leone, beginning the process through which Sierra Leone's natural resource economy would become "integrated into the complex global commercial network monopolized by De Beers" (D'Angelo, 2016, p. 140). This process was completed in 1934, when the "Sierra Leone Selection Trust (SLST), a subsidiary of the De Beers group – a South-Africa-based business conglomerate, was granted a 99-year diamond trade monopoly" in the country (Wong, 2012, p. 84).

The discovery and subsequent importance of the diamond trade in rural Sierra Leone further contributed to shifting power relationships between the Krio and indigenous populations. In order to most efficiently access and utilize resource deposits in Sierra Leone, the British colonial administration allowed significant power to tribal chiefs, granting them relative autonomy in matters such as "migration, land tenure and re-settlement, and the authority to pacify the local population" (Wong, 2012, p. 84). Tribal chiefs also had increasingly intimate relationships with mining companies, which viewed cooperation with groups in the protectorate as a way of ensuring stability in the diamond market. These dynamics contributed to the formal inclusion of tribal chiefs in the state bureaucracy in 1953, an occurrence that further tilted the balance of power in their favor (Wong, 2012). While the power of tribal elites grew during this period, there is evidence to suggest that their influence often led to heightened inequality in the protectorate, where a continuing lack of education and the labor structures described above prevented the majority of the population from achieving upward mobility (Harris, 2012).

However, while it did allow for the incorporation of traditional indigenous leaders into the fabric of the colonial state, the discovery and subsequent mining of diamonds, gold, iron ore, and rutile in Sierra Leone also had important impacts on land ownership and use practices in ways that undermined traditional customs and, in the long term, eroded the base of power that had traditionally supported community hierarchies and tribal chiefs in the hinterlands. In the precolonial and initial colonial period, Sierra Leone used a "centuries old customary West African landlord-stranger, or *tutorat-tuteur*, land management institution" that was characterized by the use of local power associations to determine who was permitted to occupy land and how that land was to be used by those to whom it was allocated (Akiqumi, 2014, p. 774). Under this system, a reciprocal relationship existed in which landlords were given trading rights and a portion of the 'strangers' profits in exchange for the use of the land; and local tribal chiefs were tasked with protecting that land and ensuring land use that would contribute to the long-term success of the community with which it was associated (Akiquimi, 2014).

In 1927, one year after the discovery of diamonds by the British, the colonial government of Sierra Leone drafted the Protectorate Land Ordinance of 1927 in order to modify these traditional forms of land management to be more favorable to a large-scale resource extraction industry. The ordinance reformulated the landlord-stranger relationship by making 'strangers' who were employed in industry exempt from their customary obligations to tribal leaders (Akiquimi, 2014). By doing so, the colonial government weakened the ability of communities into which mining was expanding to regulate and manage the people using the land and the ways in which they were using it. In 1933, the Provinces Land Ordinance repealed the 1927 ordinance and replaced it with a more specific exemption that stated that non-natives employed in industry were not obligated to adhere to the traditional landlord-stranger management system. While this legislation appeared to be a step toward regaining the traditional power relationships between Sierra Leoneans despite the expansion of mining, its actual impact was to allow for the expansion of foreign economic interests into the country's mining industry at the expense of host communities. The primary actors in the mining industry quickly became multinational corporations, who brought in expatriate engineers, wage laborers, and geologists who quickly became the socioeconomic elite in mining regions, while land-holding subsistence farmers and traditional stranger-farmers were pushed to the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder (Akiquimi, 2014).

Decolonization

Despite tensions over political and economic power, the twentieth century in Sierra Leone was generally peaceful and the transition to independence relatively smooth. The process of decolonization began in 1951 with the drafting of a constitution and framework for independence in response to growing pressure from the populations in both the colony and the protectorate (Coleman, 2015). In the same year, the predominantly protectorate based Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) was formed and went on to win elections against Krio dominated parties throughout the 1950s (Harris, 2012). While these elections represented the official end to Krio ambitions of continued domination, they did not represent the end of political division along socioeconomic lines, and politics in the 1950s were increasingly characterized by tribal chief domination in the political arena (Harris, 2012).

Colonialism ended with the official creation of the independent state of Sierra Leone in April of 1961, at which point Sir Milton Margai of the SLPP was elected the first prime minister with strong backing from tribal chiefs (Chauveau & Richards, 2008). By the time of independence, almost two centuries of problematic colonial policy and development had resulted in huge economic and political gaps, as well as strong patron-client political tendencies. Independence brought few meaningful structural changes, and these problems translated to the creation of a "developmentally unbalanced state… presided over by a politically and economically overcentralized, institutionally weak, somewhat patronizing and numerically restricted regime in which the SLPP leaders had been steeped" (Harris, 2012, p. 44). This underdevelopment of the state interacted with existing social tensions in a way that created instability in the post-colonial period and contributed to the outbreak of the conflict.

Post-Independence Sierra Leone

Despite its democratic beginnings, the post-colonial state in Sierra Leone was characterized by instability, military coups, and authoritarian regimes throughout the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. In the initial period following independence, Milton Margai attempted to institute a liberal democratic regime (Wong, 2012). However, following his death in 1964 and the election of his brother, Albert Margai, the country took a turn away from multi-party democracy and moved toward becoming an authoritarian regime (Wong, 2012). The SLPP was voted out of power in 1967 following increased discontent with the regime, and Siaka Stevens of the All People's Congress (APC) was elected (Coleman, 2015). However, following the announcement, Stevens and Margai were placed under house arrest by the commander of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMP), David Lansana, who then attempted to seize control of the government (Coleman, 2015). A group of senior military officers blocked Lansana's move for power, suspended the constitution, and created the National Reformation Council (NRC). The NRC was then overthrown by mid-ranking military officials of the Anti-

Corruption Revolutionary Movement (ACRM) in April of 1968, which led to the establishment of a state of emergency and suspension of constitutional rights (Coleman, 2015).

Following the government takeover by the ACRM, Stevens was invited to return from exile in Guinea, and he quickly returned and established a national coalition government (Zack-Williams, 1999). By 1971, Stevens' government had become a de facto one-party regime, with Stevens and his deputy, Ernest Bai Koroma, using violence and political manipulation to maintain power (Zack-Williams, 1999). Stevens ruled Sierra Leone for seventeen years, passing the leadership role to his Army Force Commander, Joseph Momoh, in 1985. When Momoh came to power, the population of Sierra Leone demonstrated a relatively strong belief in his ability to resolve the country's declining economic and political situation; and Momoh immediately announced several grand plans for a revolution that would lead to increased prosperity and security (Vidler, 1993). In an attempt to separate himself from the failures of his predecessor, Momoh instituted a "New Order Regime" in 1986, imposing a number of economic reforms that devastated the already struggling economy (Zack-Williams, 1999). One of the most damaging components of Momoh's new economic regime was the introduction of structural adjustment programs designed to allow for the incorporation of the country into the global economy through encouraging free markets and privatization of the country's industries. While the role of these structural adjustment programs in the instability and conflict will be addressed at length in the following chapter, it is important to note that they led to significant political and economic upheaval at a time when the populace was seeking increased stability with the new regime (Vidler, 1993).

Momoh's economic failures were made worse by his lack of power in Congress, which included a significant number of corrupt opponents who viewed the leader as having been imposed by Stevens and posing a threat to their existing positions as the country's elite. These opponents, many of whom had been part of the "old guard" under Stevens' rule, had a vested interest in resisting Momoh's attempted economic overhauls, which included efforts to curtail corruption, smuggling, and irresponsible fiscal management (Vidler, 1993). Given their involvement in these activities for their own financial gain, many members of Congress were unwilling to allow Momoh to allocate the resources necessary to tackle these problems, rendering his efforts ineffective. Over the first three years of his presidency, Momoh's contentious relationships with his fellow political elite continued to prevent progress; and problems such as limited electricity, frequent communications breakdowns, and crumbling infrastructure were characteristic of his lack of success (Vidler, 1993). The final blow to his presidency came when Momoh ordered the execution of opposition leader Francis Minah, resulting the loss of support of a large group of Sierra Leone's population, who felt that he was attempting to strip the Southern Provinces of their political influence (Zack-Williams, 1999).

During this time period, opposition to the government and its numerous economic and political failures arose in the form of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The foundations of what would become the RUF were laid in Freetown during the 1980s, when a group of discontent students and unemployed youth came together in opposition of the government through a Pan-Africanist platform (Day, 2015). Initially, opposition to Stevens' government and the economic and political climate of the country was led by students involved in Fourah Bay College's (FBC) Mass Awareness and Participation (MAP) union, which was a loose coalition of a Green Book study group that supported Libyan president, Muammar Gaddafi's political ideology; the socialist club; the gardeners' club; and members of the Pan-African Union (PANAFU) (Abdullah, 1998). In 1982, Abdul Gbla became the first MAP student union president to visit Libya. A few short years later, the new president of the student union, Alie Kabba, would visit Libya and go on to establish the link that led to the eventual military training of RUF founders and combatants in the country. Following his return from his initial visit to Libya, Kabba and three other students from FBC were expelled on charges of maintaining connections with Libyan mercenaries and were then accepted to Legon University in Ghana. From Ghana, they continued to develop relationships with the Libyan government and received monetary support to sponsor several more Sierra Leonean students in Ghana. They also developed close ties with political dissidents from other Sub-Saharan African countries, including Charles Taylor of Liberia and Kukoi Samba Sanyang of Gambia. Through these connections, Kabba was encouraged to recruit Sierra Leonean youth willing to undertake military training in order to initiate a violent revolution to take power in Sierra Leone (Abdulllah, 1998).

In 1987, Kabba spearheaded a call for recruits from Accra, Ghana, and the PANAFU congress in Freetown organized a vote to determine whether the organization would support and participate in military training in Libya with the purpose of organizing a violent revolution in Sierra Leone. In the end, the majority of the organization voted against the move into Libya, and the minority in favor of the action were eventually expelled from the organization. Among the minority in favor of the relationship with Libya were Foday Sankoh, Abu Kanu, and Rashid Mansaray, all three of whom would become the top leadership and backbone of the RUF four years later (Abdullah, 1998). In 1987, the three men traveled with a number of recruits from Freetown and the hinterland to attend training in Libya at Gaddafi's "rebel school" in Benghazi, Libya, where they made connections with Liberian opposition leader Charles Taylor (Day, 2015). They were followed by another group, made up almost entirely of high school students from Sierra Leone the following year (Abdullah, 1998).

When Sankoh and his fellow revolutionaries returned to Sierra Leone in 1988, they chose to move the organization, which had still not been officially consolidated into the RUF, out of the capital of Freetown and into the hinterland. Having left the country's urban center, they then began to travel throughout the rural areas of the country in an attempt to garner further support for their political and military objectives. It was during this period that the future RUF and Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) established concrete ties. By the mid 1989, Sankoh's group had made a deal with Taylor in which they promised to support his military efforts in Liberia in exchange for being provided a base in Liberia from which to launch their own military struggle in Sierra Leone once Taylor had successful gained controlled of the country (Abdullah, 1998). In 1989, while Momoh struggled to maintain power and stabilize the country, Taylor initiated his plan to take control of Liberia, triggering the eruption of civil war in the country. At this point, leaders of the RUF began to recruit fighters from Sierra Leonean populations in Liberia, as well as in Sierra Leone itself (Zack-Williams, 1999). Between 1989 and 1991, the political situation continued to deteriorate in Sierra Leone, leading to the outbreak of the conflict in March of 1991.

Civil Conflict: 1991-2002

The Sierra Leone civil war began on March 23, 1991, when RUF troops under Sankoh invaded eastern Sierra Leone with the support of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) (Day, 2015). Following the invasion, Taylor continued to provide the agreed upon military support to the RUF though the provision of training facilities, practical training of RUF soldiers in guerrilla warfare tactics, and the provision of combatants and weapons from Liberia and neighboring Burkina Faso (Silberfein, 2004). During the first year of the war, the RUF took control of territory in eastern and southern Sierra Leone, also gaining control over large deposits of alluvial diamonds (Gberie, 2005). In April of 1992, the Sierra Leone Army's (SLA) failure to defeat the RUF contributed to a military coup in which Valentine Strasser and a group of other young officers took control of the government and established the National Provincial Ruling Council (NPRC) (Coleman, 2015). The new government suspended the 1991 constitution and took a hardline stance on dealing with the rebel insurgency (Coleman, 2015).

Initially, the NPRC was relatively successful at quelling the conflict, and by December of 1993, NPRC troops had recaptured most of the territory gained by the RUF (Gberie, 2005). This included Pendembu, the rebel's headquarters, the loss of which caused the RUF to admit defeat and retreat into forest areas on the border. However, in early 1994, the conflict escalated again and the rebels recaptured the areas they had controlled previously, moving on to gain additional territory (Gberie, 2005). In 1995, the RUF staged its first attempt to capture Freetown with arms purchased through illegal diamond trade, and it was only driven back after the government hired the support of Executive Outcomes (EO), a South African mercenary company (Coleman, 2015). EO was supported by troops from Guinea and Nigeria, who provided support and carried out raids against rebels in the Eastern and Southern provinces (Gberie, 2005).

During this same time period, Stasser's government responded to domestic and international pressure by agreeing to remove political restrictions and allow democratic elections (Coleman, 2015). However, Strasser then attempted to stay in power by portraying himself as a civilian candidate rather than a military leader, resulting in him being overthrown by his deputy, Julius Maada Bio, in 1996 (Gberie, 2005). Despite attempts by the RUF to prevent the elections from moving forward, Bio proceeded with the process, and Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was democratically elected at the head of the SLPP in March of 1996. Kabbah engaged in peace talks with the RUF leadership, and a peace accord was signed by Kabbah and Sankoh in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire in November of 1996 (Gberie, 2005). However, the stipulations of the peace accord were never put into effect, and the peace process was stalled by the arrest of Sankoh for arms trade in Nigeria in 1997 (Coleman, 2015).

Shortly after the breakdown of the peace accords, army major Johnny Paul Koroma overthrew Kabbah in a military coup, and established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) (Coleman, 2015). Koroma invited Sankoh and the RUF into the new government, and the two forces merged in 1997, creating the AFRC/RUF. This move caused international condemnation, sanctions, and armed resistance from ECOWAS intervention forces. In February of 1998, ECOWAS troops defeated the AFRC/RUF in Freetown and drove them back into their strongholds in the rural areas; and in March of 1998, Kabbah's government was reinstated (Coleman, 2015). However, in December of 1998, AFRC/RUF troops invaded and captured the diamond rich district of Kono and used the proceeds from diamond sales to finance another attack on Freetown in January of 1999. During this period, violence reached an unprecedented level, and ECOWAS forces found themselves unable to defeat the rebel forces or protect civilian populations (Coleman, 2015).

In July of 1999, a peace agreement was signed in Lomé, Togo, making Sankoh vice president in exchange for blanket immunity for all war crimes committed during the conflict (Coleman, 2015). However, Sankoh severed ties with the AFRC shortly after signing and the fighting continued. In late 1999, a United Nations peacekeeping force (UNAMSIL) replaced ECOWAS; and in May of 2000, Sankoh was captured and removed from his leadership position in the RUF (Coleman, 2015). In November of 2000, the RUF signed a cease-fire agreement allowing UNAMSIL to secure the areas under RUF control and begin a process of disarmament. Throughout 2001, the United Nations utilized the largest peacekeeping force in the world to secure the country and facilitate political negotiations between the parties; and in January of 2002, Kabbah announced the official end of the war (Coleman, 2015).

Factors Contributing to Immediate Outbreak of Conflict

A number of interrelated processes contributed to the instability and conflict in Sierra Leone, many of which were related to the political and economic structures of the state in the post-colonial period. Two of the most problematic aspects of the state structure in post-conflict Sierra Leone were corruption and the existence of patron-client relationships. This problem became particularly pervasive during Stevens' leadership, during which time he established a large-scale "shadow economy" through which he controlled the diamond market and other valuable economic networks (Zack-Williams, 1999). During this period, Stevens and the ministers in his government acquired economic assets and wealth far beyond those afforded by the offices they held. This is evidence by the fact that Stevens acquired properties, 23 vehicles, and cash in amounts far above his salary during his time in office (Potter & Thompson, 1997).

When government expenditures in excess of revenue made it impossible for Stevens to maintain a shadow economy, he appealed to international finance institutions for assistance, beginning a disastrous structural adjustment program that caused massive unemployment, inflation, and poverty (Zack-Williams, 1999). These problems were then exacerbated by the introduction of more structural adjustment programs under Momoh that further impacted already struggling populations in both rural and urban areas. During this same time period, agricultural output was also plummeting as a result of inefficient pricing policies that resulted in farmers being forced to decrease their agricultural production due to negative profits and often, a complete lack of payment for their products (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations). The lack of financial stability that accompanied agricultural work during this period created an uncertain environment for investment in crop production and pushed large numbers of Sierra Leoneans out of their traditional forms of work and into low-paying, undesirable jobs with diamond mining companies (Zack-Williams, 1999).

In addition to the above economic and political conditions, there were a number of other inequalities that contributed to tensions in Sierra Leone. One area of inequality that was particularly problematic was the education system. During the 1980s, economic decline and a lack of prioritization of education by the government resulted in decreased spending on education and the de facto privatization of education services, tilting a traditionally unequal school system even further in the direction of elite exclusivity (Zack-Williams, 1999). Further, there continued to be a gap in education availability between rural and urban areas, resulting in large populations of uneducated rural youth (Zack-Williams, 1999). The problem of education was further exacerbated by the inability of those who completed tertiary education to find employment. The lack of employment opportunity available to university graduates was largely a byproduct of the economic downturn and its impacts on public sector job creation. Prior to the economic crises, the government was the primary employer of labor in the country, particularly with regard to skilled jobs for educated members of the middle and elite classes (Abdullah, 1998).

When the state responded to continuing economic decline by decreasing the number of state employees on its payroll and neglecting to hire additional employees for public positions, university graduates were particularly vulnerable to unemployment. Compounding the problem of unemployment caused by the shrinking of state employment was the simultaneous downsizing of the private sector that was also occurring in response to economic decline (Abdullah, 1998). This resulted in large numbers of educated and unemployed youth being forced into ghettos that had formerly been reserved for uneducated groups (Lahai, 2015). It was in these ghettos that these educated and unemployed youth became part of the informal sector; and it was also these educated youth with few employment opportunities who provided some of the first recruits for military training in Libya. This is evidenced by the fact that, of the approximately thirty-five Sierra Leonean men who went to Libya for military training between 1987 and 1988, only three were engaged in any form of formal employment, despite the fact that at least two thirds had at least some university education (Abdullah, 1998).

Another form of inequality that contributed to the conflict was the disproportionate amount of power obtained by rural tribal chiefs in the pre-war period. This was largely driven by the actions of the state, which often withdrew economic support from areas it viewed as being in opposition to the government, leaving entire areas to be ruled through traditional governance systems (Chauveau & Richards, 2008). This policy of punishing local leaders who refused to cooperate with the central government became particularly prevalent under Stevens, whose approach to tribal leaders shifted in accordance with changes in the economic circumstances of the country. Upon his initial ascent to power, the bulk of Stevens' political support was located in the relatively diamond-free northern region of the country; and his initial approach was to expand his base of power through investing in employment opportunities and education in rural areas. With the economic crises of the 1970s and the introduction of structural adjustment, his ability to invest in public services was compromised, and he increasingly relied on his ability to install chiefs that were sympathetic to his regime in the hinterlands in order to maintain control of the territory. However, chiefs in Sierra Leone were elected for life; and in cases in which he was forced to deal with a hostile tribal leader, Stevens' policy was to deny these areas access to state resources (Chauveau & Richards, 2008).

One area that was consistently denied state resources and participation in state politics was the Kailahun District in the eastern province of the country, which served as a base for groups in opposition to the government throughout the 1970s and 1980s. When violent suppression failed to subdue this opposition, Stevens responded by cancelling infrastructure projects, refusing to pay teachers' salaries, and neglecting to provide basic services such as the maintenance of local roads. This policy had a number of negative outcomes related to inequality. First, it left the youth in these rural areas completely without access to education and other services. Perhaps more importantly, it cut off revenue sources for tribal elites in those areas, forcing them to rely on traditional power structures through which they coerced labor and money from the youth populations of their territories. One way that youth were manipulated by tribal elders was through traditional rules on marriage, which required young men to obtain permission for marriage from community elders. Tribal leaders utilized this norm as a way of obtaining labor and money from men who wished to marry, bringing court cases against those who married without their approval (Chauveau & Richards, 2008).

When combined with economic decline and a general lack of quality living conditions, the highly unequal nature of Sierra Leone's political and economic structures was a direct contributor to the recruitment of youth into the RUF. There is evidence to suggest that the bulk of the early RUF was made up of youth who were negatively impacted by the economic conditions of the country, many of whom were unable to obtain employment or education (Zack-Williams, 1999). The blatant corruption and elite-driven business practices of the state also provided a selling point for leaders of the RUF and other opposition groups hoping to attract young combatants (Zack-Williams, 1999). Rural youth from provinces that had been cut off from the state were also disproportionately represented among the RUF, and many combatants claimed that their decision to join in the violence was largely driven by the incentive of money and their frustration with being unable to afford marriage through traditional forms of employment (Chauveau & Richards, 2008).

Conclusion

Historical examination reveals that the pre-conflict development of Sierra Leone was characterized by a number of problematic patterns that contributed to instability and conflict. First, the analysis suggests that colonial development of extractive industries led to a particular experience of economic development that was characterized by the representation of the interests of foreign corporations and the state's elite at the expense of more equitable development for the general population. It also suggests that the post-colonial state inherited particular tensions along regional and tribal lines that were largely a result of those processes of unequal economic consolidation under the British. Importantly, the case of Sierra Leone clearly illustrates the marginalization of rural communities and youth, whose precarious position in society was further damaged by the economic decline of the 1970s and 1980s and the consequent economic shocks that accompanied economic structural adjustment.

2.3 Conflict in Côte d'Ivoire

Introduction

While the relationship between France and Côte d'Ivoire was significantly different from the relationships between the other countries and their respective colonial or 'pseudo-colonial' powers, colonialism was also a key factor in the development of Côte d'Ivoire's economy in both the colonial and post-colonial periods. This is evidenced by their focus and dependence on agricultural cash crops such as coffee and cocoa, which remained the primary drivers of economic growth following independence. Importantly, like the other two countries, historical analysis also suggests that the particular economic composition and trajectory established during the colonial period contributed to particular divisions along regional, ethnic, and socioeconomic lines in the post-colonial period. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire these divisions were fueled by large-scale migration from within and outside of the country, as well as targeted economic development in the coffee and cocoa areas of the South at the expense of development in other regions. One area in which Côte d'Ivoire was different from Liberia and Sierra Leone was its experiences with economic prosperity and decline, and Côte d'Ivoire experienced levels of growth and stability not observed in the other two countries through the 1970s. However, Côte d'Ivoire later exhibited similar symptoms of economic decline and significant proportions of the population appear to have been impacted by the initial economic decline and the subsequent decline that followed with structural adjustment programs.

French Colonialism

The territory of modern Côte d'Ivoire was first recognized as the sovereign territory of France following an 1889 convention with Great Britain. However, at the time of the convention, the limits of the territory were not decided upon, leaving questions as to where the international borders would be drawn. France began the process of delimiting those borders when they sought to draw a border with Liberia in 1892. They then engaged in negotiations to draw an eastern border with the British-occupied Gold Coast between 1893 and 1898. Between 1895 and 1904, the French announced a series of decrees that resulted in the inclusion of Côte d'Ivoire in a larger territorial unit known as French West Africa; and several decades later, in 1947, they were successful in establishing northern boundaries with Mali and the Upper Volta. It was at this point that the official territory of the country known as Côte d'Ivoire was established (Tice, 1974).

While bilateral agreements between colonial powers were effective in the legal creation of the state of Côte d'Ivoire, the area was home to a variety of different ethnic groups with no conception of a single unified state at the time of its creation. In 1947, over sixty ethnic groups lived within the boundaries of the newly established colonial state, many of which had languages and cultures completely unique from those surrounding them. While there were existing relationships between various ethnic groups that were based on historical rivalries and economic interests, the majority of the population in the territory viewed themselves as primarily members of the ethnic group to which they belonged rather than members of a larger political entity in the form of a state, colonial or otherwise (Keita, 2013).

In contrast to the British approach of indirect rule in its West African colonies, France applied a more direct method of colonialism in Côte d'Ivoire through a centralized state bureaucracy that displaced traditional political and economic hierarchies. This method of direct rule was characterized by the French government's use of local chiefs as "mouthpiece[s] for the new administration, [and] not as functioning sovereigns with their own base of authority" (Maclean, 2002, p. 69). Through this process, chiefs lost the power traditionally accorded to them, instead becoming representations of French sovereignty over the population of Côte d'Ivoire. While this policy of central control resulted in the provision of certain social services such as education and health care, it also had the effect of creating a political and social framework predicated on European institutions and ideals, leaving little room for traditional norms around family, community, and social roles. Further, the centralized government considered ideal by the colonial French became increasingly hegemonic as all other forms of political power were undermined by its activities and operations (Maclean, 2002).

While the above structure of rule was used relatively consistently by the French, there were a number of developments that led to shifts in colonial policy in Côte d'Ivoire, one of the most important of which was World War II. Prior to the outbreak of the war in 1939, the French economy experienced a period of prosperity and economic growth, much of which was attributed to production growth in its colonies. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, principal crops such as coffee, cocoa, and wood contributed largely to the economic growth of France between 1936 and 1937, with the economy of the colony growing from 34.79 million French Francs in 1936 to 78.88 million French Francs in 1937. However, with the onset of World War II, Côte d'Ivoire quickly experienced difficulties exporting its products, effectively halting the economy. This was particularly problematic in the case of Côte d'Ivoire because the colonial administration had established the colony as a site of extraction for resources, resulting in a complete absence of facilities to refine the products domestically. With no way to export or refine their agricultural products, the economy of Côte d'Ivoire plummeted as the conflict wore on (Keita, 2013).

The problematic impacts of the economic crisis in Côte d'Ivoire were worsened by the response of the German-allied Vichy government that took power in France early in the conflict. The Vichy government, which adhered to Nazi racial theories and prejudices, promoted increasingly repressive policies in the economic sphere in order to maintain control over the Ivorian population. Some of these policies included intensification of coercive labor recruitment practices and production quotas designed to ensure the supply of food to armed forces at the expense of local laborers who were already suffering from a sharp decline in imports from Europe. In addition to these harsh practices, the Vichy government enforced a policy of forced military conscription in Côte d'Ivoire, forcing Ivorians into service while simultaneously preventing them from expressing any form of Ivorian nationalism. The openly racist and undemocratic nature of Vichy politics in Côte d'Ivoire stimulated opposition from local Ivorian populations, particularly elite intellectuals (Roberts & Handloff, 1991).

In addition to the economic impacts of the war, Côte d'Ivoire's direct participation in combat in World War II also altered expectations about the colonizer-colonized relationship in the post-war period. During the conflict, Ivorians supported the Free French government in liberating French territories by fighting with the allied forces, which forced Charles De Gaulle's government to negotiate with the elite of Côte d'Ivoire for the first time in the colony's history. While France's position in the war necessitated a shift in the relationship between France and its African colonies, negotiations in the 1940s were centered on ideas of greater political participation for the indigenous populations of Côte d'Ivoire and not on notions of total independence for the country. This was evidenced by the 1944 Conference of Brazzaville, during which the French agreed to allow the participation of elite Ivorians in running the French colonial state in Côte d'Ivoire (Roberts & Handloff, 1991). However, while the inclusion of the elite class in the political sphere was a victory for the colonized state, the main beneficiaries of the shift in French policy were wealthy agrarian elites, and the general population did not experience significant changes in their relationships with the state (Keita, 2013).

Another aspect of colonial rule that had long term implications for the region was the state's approach to labor in the country's resource economies, particularly the cocoa industry. As the sector grew and began to provide a large percentage of the economy's GDP, France began to promote large-scale migration from the poorer northern regions of the colony in order to recruit labor for cocoa production in the south. At the same time, the colonial administration was engaged in land grabs of any land that was believed to be of value to the state, undermining traditional landholding practices of indigenous populations. The combination of these two processes resulted in increased tensions between the colonial administration and indigenous Ivorians, as well as new tensions between ethnic groups forced together by their shared employment in agricultural industries. Importantly, the system of labor and land exploitation employed by the French during their colonial rule was carried into the post-colonial period, and elite Ivorians took advantage of the arrangement to perpetuate inequality and elitism in the agricultural industry (Mitchell, 2011).

Decolonization

Begun during the Second World War, the independence movement in Côte d'Ivoire had two distinct periods characterized by unique attitudes and approaches to the colonial power and decolonization process. The first decade of the movement from 1940 to 1951 was led by agrarian planters and characterized by revolutionary attitudes and demands for radical structural reforms by the independent African Agricultural Labour Union (SAA) (N'Guessan, 2015). Their efforts resulted in France establishing national elections in Côte d'Ivoire in October of 1945, the purpose of which was to select two delegates for the French Constituent Assembly in Paris. The outcome of the election was the selection of a French citizen residing in Côte d'Ivoire as the first delegate and the election of Felix Houpouet-Boigny as the second delegate through the votes of a restricted African electorate. When the Assembly met in Paris, 63 African delegates from the colonies pressed for reforms in the colonial structure and were supported by French communist and socialist delegates. In response to their demands, the French agreed to the abolishment of the forced labor system in Côte d'Ivoire in 1945. They also passed a number of decrees allowing freedom of speech, association and assembly for residents of the colonies; providing funds for economic and social development; and granting citizenship to all inhabitants of French colonies. However, while these reforms were extensive, the French government was deliberately vague in its definition of citizenship for the populations in the colonies, preventing Ivorians from exercising a number of civil rights (Roberts & Handloff, 1991).

One of the consequences of the 1945-46 reforms was the opportunity for the development of African political parties, and a number of parties were formed in Côte d'Ivoire in the following years. One of the first and most influential of these parties was the Democratic Party of Côte d'Ivoire (PDCI) which was created from Houphouet-Boigny's SAA in 1946 and soon became the dominant party in the country. During this time, the PDCI initiated the second period of the decolonization movement, which was characterized by increasingly close ties between the French government and Ivorian political elite (Roberts & Handloff, 1991). One of the most important factors in this shift was the PDCI's decision to break away from the French Communist Party (P.C.F.) with whom they had been closely aligned. The split was a result of the Ivorian elite's increasing allegiance to the governmental French majority in order to preserve their dominant position in the socioeconomic hierarchy of colonial Côte d'Ivoire (Keita, 2013). While many Ivorians viewed the PDCI's shifting approach as supporting continued French dominance over Africa, the less radical approach gradually led to increasingly autonomous rule for the country. In 1956, the Overseas Reform Act transferred a significant number of powers from the central government in Paris to elected territorial governments in West Africa; and in 1958, the French granted Côte d'Ivoire the status of an autonomous republic within the French community. On August 7, 1960, Côte d'Ivoire became an independent republic (Milhomme, 2005).

Post-Independence Côte d'Ivoire

Following independence, Houphouet-Boigny became the first head of state, presiding over the process of drafting the constitution and establishing the country's political institutions. Initially, it was the desire of Houphouet-Boigny and other PDCI members to "establish a strong and stable government based on democratic principles… [through] a presidential system based on the separation of powers between the executive and legislative branches of government and an independent judiciary" (Roberts & Handloff, 1991, p. 24). However, concerns about national unity and the danger of political dissent resulted in the ruling party opting for single-party rule with the PDCI as the sole party. In addition, the newly established government deliberately chose not to restructure the majority of colonial institutions in the economic sphere, continuing policies of plantation development and large-scale labor migration. Perhaps most importantly, Houphouet-Boigny's government maintained strong economic and political ties with France in the years following independence, allowing French consultants a large degree of influence in politics and signing several agreements on defense and economic cooperation with France (N'Guessan, 2015).

The initial years following independence were marked by economic growth and political stability, and the country experienced an economic boom between 1960 and 1978 that was largely attributable to increases in agricultural production and government expenditure (Klaas, 2008). As in the colonial period, the agricultural sector continued to develop around the production of cocoa and coffee; and cocoa remained the country's primary agricultural commodity in the post-independence period, resulting in Côte d'Ivoire becoming the world's primary cocoa producer when its share of global production rose to 40 percent of the global market (Crook, 1990). The growth observed in the cocoa industry was the result of government spending to subsidize the industry, which allowed the percentage of the workforce employed by the state to increase to approximately 40 percent and GDP growth to skyrocket over the 18-year period (Crook, 1989).

Despite the promising economic start of Côte d'Ivoire, the country experienced economic hardship when global cocoa prices decreased in 1978. While the price change was relatively small, the country's dependence on the cocoa industry resulted in a rapid descent into economic crisis that forced the Ivorian government to turn to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for economic assistance. IMF assistance took the form of a structural adjustment agreement (SAP) that required a number of drastic changes to the structure of Côte d'Ivoire's economy, one of the most damaging of which was "extensive cuts in 'inefficient' allocations of resources, such as social spending" (Klaas, 2008, p. 113). While social services such as education and healthcare virtually disappeared, the IMF insisted on higher investment in the cocoa industry, making the economy increasingly vulnerable to global price fluctuations. As a result, cocoa production in Côte d'Ivoire increased to 39.8 percent of the country's GDP over the next decade while cocoa prices decreased to approximately a third of their late 1970s prices by the early 1990s (Klaas, 2008). This process left the Ivorian government with little choice but to accrue additional debt to keep the economy afloat, resulting in external debts that were equal to several hundred times the national GDP by 1990 (Klaas, 2008).

Another important aspect of Houphouet-Boigny's presidency was the government's liberal approach to immigration. In contrast to leaders in neighboring countries such as Ghana, Houphouet-Boigny advocated for open immigration policies and equal treatment for non-Ivorian West Africans from neighboring Francophone countries. During his time in office, immigration skyrocketed as migrants sought better economic opportunities and political stability in Côte d'Ivoire. Houphouet-Boigny's government encouraged this process by appointing immigrants to high-level positions in the government. However, while Houphouet-Boigny's strong belief in a Pan-Africanist vision was the catalyst for his immigration policies, his views were not shared by the majority of Ivorian elites, and resentment against immigrants and non-Ivorians increased steadily in the latter years of his presidency (Mimiko, 2006). In addition to these tensions, the Ivorian population became increasingly vocal in their opposition to the authoritarian, one-party state, prompting Houphouet-Boigny to agree to multiparty elections for the first time in the country's history in 1990. During these elections, the PDCI defeated the Front Populaire Ivoirien (FPI) which was led by Laurent Gbagbo. Houphouet-Boigny died in 1993, and was succeeded by his political protégé, Henri Bédié. However, Bédié failed to gain the support of the PDCI, beginning a political struggle that would continue until the outbreak of the conflict in 2002 (Bah, 2010).

Instability and Outbreak of Conflict (1993-2002)

The political struggle following the death of Houphouet-Boigny was characterized by a splinter within the PDCI and power struggles between the PDCI and the FPI. The split within the PDCI resulted in the formation of the Rassemblement des Républicains (RDR) which was led by Djéni Kobina and attempted to gain control of the country through the nomination of former Prime Minister Alassane Outtara as their presidential candidate in the 1995 elections. Bédié attempted to hold on to power and gain support by restricting the activities of opposition parties and introducing divisive ethnic politics to the election process through the doctrine of Ivoirité. One aspect of these ethnic politics was the introduction of a law that required all presidential candidates to prove that they and their parents were native Ivorians (Bah, 2010). This law was instrumental in winning the presidency for Bédié, as Outtara was ultimately excluded from candidacy due to accusations that he was in fact from Burkina Faso and not a true Ivorian (N'Guessan, 2015).

Bédié's presidency ended in 1999, when General Robert Guei took power in a military coup. Elections were scheduled for the next year, and Guei put himself forward as a candidate of the Union for Democracy and Peace in Côte d'Ivoire (UDPCI), using the Ivoirité law to attempt to exclude Ouattara from elections a second time. Guei's attempts to manipulate the elections became more apparent when a Supreme Court that he had appointed disqualified all major candidates of the opposition parties from the presidential election. By the latter stages of the election Guei had attempted to secure his presidency by claiming that the other candidates were engaging in electoral fraud, disbanding the electoral commission, and declaring himself the official winner of the race. This provoked large-scale protests by civilians and members of the military, who engaged in violent attacks on the presidential palace and other government buildings. As the violence spread, Guei was forced to leave the country, and Laurent Gbagbo took control of the government (Collett, 2006).

When Gbagbo took power, he refused to overturn the obviously fraudulent electoral process that had allowed him to take the presidency with Guei's flight, instead using "*ivoirité* to consolidate governmental power in the south at the expense of the northerners and Muslims, who he increasingly associated with foreigners" (Collett, 2006, p. 626). This caused the RDR and northern populations to oppose Gbagbo's FPI backed government with the justification that it was illegitimate, leading to further instability throughout 2000. In 2001, an electoral commission pressured Gbagbo to reinstate Ouattara's citizenship and Gbagbo agreed to municipal elections, which resulted in the transfer of a significant number of elected positions from the FPI to the RDR. These developments suggested a shift toward more democratic politics in Côte d'Ivoire, sparking optimism about peace prospects among the international community. However, these illusions were shattered when Guei led an unsuccessful coup attempt on September 19, 2002, providing an opportunity for northern opposition groups to seize control of large amounts of territory and triggering the start of the First Ivorian War (Collet, 2006).

Civil War: 2002-2009 and 2010-2011

Following the coup attempt, rebel forces under the command of Gillaume Soro of the Patriotic Movement of Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI) quickly gained control of the northern half of the country and demanded a power sharing arrangement with more equal terms. Gbagbo refused to engage in negotiations with the group, instead appealing to the French government to provide military aid under the terms of the defense accord signed between the two countries. The French, however, were slow to respond; and on September 29, 2002, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervened in the conflict with a peacekeeping force comprised of troops from Togo, Mali, Ghana, Nigeria, Niger, and Guinea-Bissau. ECOWAS facilitated the negotiation of a ceasefire agreement that was signed in October of 2002 but faced continuing opposition from the MPCI, who demanded a number of drastic reforms such as the revision of the constitution and new elections to replace Gbagbo (Charbonneau, 2012). The fighting broke out again in November when a new rebel group, the Ivorian Popular Movement of the Great West (MPIGO), which was comprised of mostly Liberian mercenaries and Sierra Leonean RUF troops, launched attacks on the border between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire (Charbonneau, 2012; Silberfein, 2004). At this point, the French intervened to halt their advance; and French and ECOWAS peacekeepers began a process of mediation that resulted in a second ceasefire agreement in May of 2003 (Charbonneau, 2012).

Despite the signing of the second ceasefire agreement, fighting continued until the signing of a more comprehensive peace agreement in March of 2007. Following the agreement, France, the United Nations, and ECOWAS oversaw the arrangements for a democratic election; and after a number of extensions were made to the initial transition plan, elections were held in October of 2010 (Adeyeri, 2015). The election period was characterized by the resurgence of tensions surrounding citizenship and ethnicity, with both parties resorting to violent tactics to secure votes and political support. When early counts showed that Ouattara would likely be the victor in the presidential election, Gbagbo's supporters responded by preventing the announcement of the election results and pressuring the Constitutional Council to cancel approximately 650,000 votes for Ouattara with the justification that there had been widespread vote fraud in the north of the country. The situation continued to deteriorate and Gbagbo's forces increasingly used violence against protestors, West African nationals, and northern Muslims in the capital. At the same time, violence between ethnic groups erupted in rural areas, quickly spreading throughout the country (Bellamy & Williams, 2011).

By December of 2010, the United Nations Security Council had concluded that Ouattara was the winner of the November elections, but Gbagbo refused to cede control of the government. This created a situation in which the internationally recognized government of Côte d'Ivoire was different from the de facto government controlling the country. In an attempt to force Gbagbo into compliance, international actors moved to restrict the government's access to funds and banking services, as well as imposing harsh economic sanctions on the government. Over the next several months, threats of military force by ECOWAS and attempts at peaceful negotiations by the United Nations failed to resolve the conflict, which became increasingly brutal as rebel groups and government forces committed numerous atrocities against civilian populations. In March of 2011, the Security Council passed a resolution authorizing the UN mission in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to use any means necessary to protect the civilian population, using the resolution to justify military bombardment of government military camps and weapons stores. These actions debilitated Gbagbo's forces and resulted in Ouattara's victory in April of 2011 (Bellamy & Williams, 2011).

Factors Contributing to Immediate Outbreak of Conflict

There were a number of factors that contributed to the instability and conflict in Côte d'Ivoire, most of which are related to economic conditions and political developments in the colonial and post-independence periods. One factor that was particularly relevant in the conflict was the existence of inequalities between regional and ethnic groups that were rooted in the colonial state structure and exacerbated by economic deterioration in the years leading up to the conflict. As previously mentioned, the agricultural industry in Côte d'Ivoire was a leading driver of migration into the southern region of the country during and after the colonial period, resulting in a system of economic gain for southern agrarian elites at the expense of migrant plantation workers and Ivorians in the northern and central regions of the country (Langer, 2005). This trend was exacerbated with the introduction of structural adjustment programs in the early 1980s, which were designed to increase the volume and value of coffee and cocoa production and further tilted the balance of income distribution toward rural landowners (Grootaert, 1995). This continued to be the case even when incomes of cocoa and coffee farmers were impacted by a decline in global prices for the two commodities, with the likelihood of poverty incidence much more likely among public service workers and plantation workers than among farmers during the period of economic decline in the 1980s (Grootaert & Kanbur 1995; Grootaert, 1997).

With the continuing economic crises of the 1980s, gaps between social, ethnic, and economic groups increased further as struggling southern economies were overwhelmed by the presence of excessive numbers of migrants from other areas of the country. This resulted in increased tensions between migrants and locals, as well as native Ivorians and foreign immigrants from neighboring countries, all of whom were competing for limited economic resources in an increasingly difficult economic environment. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, these tensions increasingly took on another dimension, as the migrants and immigrants were often Muslim and from different ethnic groups than the predominantly Christian groups in the south. When combined with the deliberate use of ethnic politics by elites vying for power, struggles over economic resources were a driving force in the conflict (Langer, 2005).

Another consequence of migration and economic shifts in the post-independence period was increased tensions over access to land and land rights that led to inequalities in wealth in the form of property ownership along class and ethnic lines. Beginning in the 1980s, economic decline resulted in a shift in policy on the rights of migrants and foreign immigrants with regard land acquisition and ownership; and by the late 1990s, the government had adopted laws preventing non-natives from gaining access to land in many parts of the country. This was upheld by local leaders, who relied upon Ivoirité notions to galvanize local populations into preventing migrants from settling on land in their villages and regions. As a result, migrants were often reduced to inferior socioeconomic positions when they arrived in the south, fostering resentment between ethnic groups and villages (Chauveau & Richards, 2008). With the onset of the conflict in 2002, rural communities became more aggressive in defending their control over the land surrounding their villages, and continuing disputes over the rights to these lands was a significant contributor to the resurgence of conflict in 2010 (Chauveau & Richards, 2008).

Also related to economic decline and problematic policy decisions was the negative trajectory of education and its consequences for youth mobilization in the years leading up to the conflict. As a result of economic decline, SAPs, and increasing economic inequality, access to education was severely restricted beginning in the 1980s. This is evidenced by the fact that, in 1997, the net enrollment rate for primary school was only 58.3 percent and illiteracy rates above 50 percent by 2000 (Sany, 2010). The lack of access to education observed in Côte d'Ivoire during these years had a number of significant impacts on the youth of the country, the most obvious of which was the concentration of large numbers of children who did not have the stability of school and the economic benefits offered by an education to provide a disincentive for participation in armed opposition. A large proportion of child soldiers in Côte d'Ivoire were not enrolled in school at the time they became involved in the conflict, citing an inability to pay school fees and a lack of accessibility of quality education as reasons for being out of school. The problems with the educational system were magnified by the first several years of conflict, contributing to larger numbers of uneducated youth who were susceptible to recruitment in the second conflict (Sany, 2010).

While lack of education was a major area through which youth were impacted and given the incentive to participate in the conflict, it was not the only area in which the economic and political upheaval of the pre-war period affected their opportunities and quality of life. In addition to lack of opportunity in the education sector, youth in Côte d'Ivoire faced a number of problematic constraints with regard to employment opportunities and economic stability in general. A study of demobilized youth in 2010 found that the majority of former combatants surveyed reported having been engaged in labor that provided only petty cash and an unstable source of income in the years leading up to the outbreak of the first conflict. Most of the rural youth reported being employed in agriculture on plantations growing coffee, cocoa, maize, or rice, with the majority suggesting that they did not receive regular payment for their work, instead being given occasional informal payments of items such as clothing and food (Chelpi-den, 2010). In contrast, youth from urban areas were often engaged in forms of apprentice work in the shops of tailors, mechanics, and other specialized merchants. The majority of them were not paid anything for their services and were unable to earn incomes of their own until after having completed the apprenticeship and starting businesses of their own (Chelpi-den, 2010).

Another challenge faced by youth in pre-war Côte d'Ivoire was the existence of unstable family and social networks and relationships that was largely a byproduct of the economic instability of the time period. Many of the former youth combatants interviewed reported that they had never lived with their nuclear families and that they had been subjected to numerous moves to the homes of extended family, friends, and acquaintances. The cause of these living arrangements was often reported to be the lack of opportunity in their home villages and cities, as well as their immediate families' lack of resources. Importantly, these youth reported the regular use of informal networks of friends, acquaintances, and extended family as a way to survive from day to day, and they suggested that they could not rely on the support of their close family to provide security or support (Chelpi-den, 2010). This situation is exemplified by the story of one ex-combatant, who describes being sent back and forth between his mother's home in the village and his aunt's home in town before being sent as an apprentice to an acquaintance of his mother's in town. This person later abandoned the child, who was reduced to pushing wheelbarrows around town for petty cash and sleeping at his cousin's house in town (Chelpi-den, 2010). Stories like the one above suggest that many youths in Côte d'Ivoire were in extremely precarious positions, both economically and socially in the pre-conflict years.

The above conditions led a significant population of Côte d'Ivoire's youth to believe that the previous generation had created a country in which the "normal routes" to stable lives and employment through education had been blocked, leaving them with the alternatives of poverty or the attainment of political and economic power through conflict (McGovern, 2011). However, while they blamed the older generation for their lack of alternatives to violence, these elders simultaneously played the role of patrons to younger Ivorians, providing them the means and opportunity to utilize political violence to achieve economic and social mobility. Interestingly, the above attitude was not limited to segments of the population at the very bottom of the socioeconomic and educational distribution, but was shared by large numbers of educated urban elites, whose attempts to use nontraditional pathways to success began in the University of Abidjan prior to the actual outbreak of conflict. It was here that two students, Charles Blé Goudé and Guillaume Soro, who would lead opposing youth militia groups in the first and second conflict provided a foreshadowing of the events to come when they took control of the student union and used their positions of authority to create a criminal network in which they extorted students for money for housing and other items (McGovern, 2011). Eventually, these nonviolent forms of coercion became violent, and the same youth that had spearheaded the coercion in the University became the leaders of the multiple parties to the conflict.

Conclusion

Côte d'Ivoire is a valuable addition to the analysis on conflict, as it represents a case where a country that experienced a relatively long period of stability and economic prosperity deteriorated into violent conflict. However, closer analysis reveals that the inequalities that contributed to the outbreak of conflict had roots in the colonial period, particularly in the labor and employment structures facilitated by the colonial and post-colonial interests in coffee and cocoa production. This economic focus created migration and regional pockets of wealth in rural areas of the South at the expense of other rural and urban populations. Importantly, the analysis also suggests that the economic decline of the 1980s and 1990s highlighted these inequalities in ways that they had not been highlighted during the period of relative prosperity, paving the way for group tensions and violence. As with the other countries, the marginalized population that appears to be one of the most significant in Côte d'Ivoire is the youth population, whose increasingly limited political and economic opportunities may have contributed to their willingness and desire to participate in violent opposition to the status quo.

2.4 Summary of Findings

The above profiles on the historical trajectories of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire reveal several shared characteristics across the three cases. The first of these is the existence of socioeconomic inequalities along class, regional, and ethnic lines; and in each of the three countries, these inequalities appear to be rooted in processes of colonial state and economic development and magnified by the development crises of the pre-war years. The second common factor is the presence of large numbers of youth with limited educational and economic opportunities, who appear to have viewed violent conflict as a means through which to attain economic and political mobility. The final, and perhaps most important characteristic across the three cases is economic decline and the introduction of conditional structural adjustment loans.

Overall, this chapter illustrates the importance of the colonial period in the formation of the economic and political structures of the three countries in the post-independence period, as well as demonstrating the ways through which these structures impacted the post-colonial trajectory of the countries leading up to the outbreak of conflict. Further, the chapter highlights important domestic characteristics such as economic decline, structural adjustment, and limited opportunities for mobility that were key components in the literature on conflict and conflict diffusion. The prominence of these factors in all three cases provides the basis for my argument regarding the relationship between colonial intervention, neo-colonial economic intervention through structural adjustment, and the outbreak of conflict. This chapter has provided support for the first part of my argument regarding the tendency of colonial intervention to facilitate the development of unequal economic structures that are then institutionalized and carried into post-colonial processes of development. In the following chapter, I will analyze structural adjustment programs in each of the three countries in order to provide support for the second part of my argument by illustrating the ways through which adjustment directly contributed to the exacerbation of existing inequalities in the three countries.

Chapter 3

Structural Adjustment and Conflict

This chapter examines the history and implications of structural adjustment in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire. In order to provide context for the experiences of the three countries, I begin with an overview of the structure and economic assumptions of structural adjustment programs, followed by a brief outline of their history in Sub-Saharan Africa. In these sections, I argue that structural adjustment in Sub-Saharan Africa was predicated on questionable Western assumptions regarding the superiority of neoliberal modes of economic growth and was effectively forced upon African government by Western powers with a vested interest in maintaining control over the economic structures of the region. These interventions were justified through Western powers' deliberate portrayal of African economies as inept and structurally deficient, which was achieved through a manipulation of facts about the relative importance of domestic policies and exogenous economic shocks in the failure of development in African economies in the decade prior to adjustment. I argue that these processes allowed for the expansion of neo-liberal control over the economies of African countries, constraining development and undermining the ability of domestic governments to generate stable and equal growth and development in the latter decades of the 20th century.

Following this general analysis of structural adjustment in Sub-Saharan Africa, I examine the impacts of structural adjustment in each of the three case study countries, beginning with a pre-structural adjustment profile. I then analyze changes in socioeconomic conditions from the introduction of the first program to the onset of civil conflict in each of the three countries. I argue that, across the three cases, the introduction of structural adjustment failed to deliver the economy recovery promised by international financial institutions, instead contributing to worsening socioeconomic conditions. In particular, I find that standard of living indictors such as GDP per capita and levels of primary school enrollment decreased markedly during the adjustment period and in the years prior to the onset of conflict. More importantly, I find that the effects of adjustment were not evenly distributed across populations, instead impacting certain groups based on the structure of the programs and the areas of the economy they favored. In the final section of the chapter, I summarize my findings on the socioeconomic consequences of structural adjustment and link them to the occurrence of conflict. I argue that, in the case of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, the uneven impacts of adjustment and the general economic decline they facilitated exacerbated existing tensions along regional, ethnic, and age cohort lines in ways that encouraged civil conflict.

3.1 Overview of Structural Adjustment

Structural adjustment became a vital component to global development in the 1980s with the introduction of World Bank and IMF lending and economic adjustment programs. The IMF was created in 1945 and began lending programs for developed European countries beginning in 1952. Its original lending programs were designed to provide short term economic stabilization for countries recovering from depression and the economic devastation caused by the Second World War. It was not until the late 1970s, when a protracted global crisis impacted developing economies in Latin America, Asia, and Africa that the IMF began the development of longer-term lending programs for these low-income countries (Reinhart & Trebesch, 2016). In the following years, the developing world's participation in structural adjustment grew rapidly, as the programs were one of the few avenues through which developing countries could access debt rescheduling and financing from other international finance organizations. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) formed the Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF) in March of 1986 to facilitate the expansion of structural adjustment in the developing world in cooperation with the World Bank (United Nations). Responding to the high demand for international loans from the IMF and the World Bank, the SAF was further developed into the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF) in September of 1987, accelerating the process through which the IMF and the World Bank became key players in the economies of the developing world in the latter decades of the 20th century (United Nations).

The SAF/ESAF was designed as a lending organization that provided financial assistance to developing countries under highly concessional circumstances that Western governments and international financial institutions believed would lead to high and sustained levels of economic development in the developing world. Under the SAF/ESAF, financial assistance was only given to countries that agreed to implement a three-year policy change program. This program consisted of three annual programs that varied by country but were based upon specific objectives for economic growth to be achieved through restructuring of the economy and macroeconomic policies. The annual objectives included in each individual program were accompanied by a set of annual policies and benchmarks to measure their success (IMF, 1986). Aside from the disbursement of funds, the IMF and the World Bank played a direct role in monitoring the timetable of each annual program through oversight by SAF/ESAF personnel (United Nations). The structural adjustment programs developed by the IMF and the World Bank were based upon neoliberal economic models of growth and the underlying economic assumptions that accompanied them. Rooted in outward-oriented, market-driven economic structures, neoliberal growth models assume that free market and pro-trade policies are the key to economic growth in the developing world.

Dominant, and primarily Western, opinions on the ideal conditions for economic growth in the post-WWII period were formalized with the term "Washington Consensus" in a 1989 paper for a conference on development economics in Latin America. The Washington Consensus included ten basic tenants for economic growth: (1) fiscal discipline, with an emphasis on the importance of a balanced budget; (2) the reordering of public expenditure priorities, which is generally characterized by cuts in government expenditures; (3) tax reform that combines a broad tax base with moderate marginal tax rates; (4) liberalization of interest rates; (5) competitive exchange rates; (6) trade liberalization; (7) liberalization of inward foreign direct investment; (8) privatization of industry; (9) deregulation with the aim of reducing barriers to entry and exit in markets; and (10) strong and institutionalized property rights systems (Williamson, 2004, p. 3).

Dominated by a small number of key, Western states, which shared a consensus on the optimal conditions for economic growth, international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank operated on the assumption that the economic problems observed in developing countries in the decades prior to the introduction of structural adjustment were largely the result of domestically-oriented development approaches that were characterized by high levels of government involvement and regulation of the economy (United Nations). In response, they advocated a transition from protectionist, inward-oriented economic structures to free market economies based upon high levels of trade and minimal regulation by domestic governments. The IMF and the World Bank asserted that these macroeconomic and structural changes would contribute to higher economic growth and external trade through reduced inflation, increased savings, and increasingly efficient resource allocation and government spending (United

Nations). It was with these assertions in mind that the lending institutions developed the conditions upon which their international loans to developing countries were contingent.

Though the conditions of loan programs varied slightly on a country-by-country basis, they shared a number of common characteristics and had a number of similar consequences for the economies in which they were introduced. One of the main conditions of IMF lending agreements was currency devaluation, which was encouraged based upon the assumption that local purchasing power in borrowing states was overvalued in relation to its actual international worth. As a consequence of the required devaluation of national currency, the value of local currency in terms of imported goods was reduced; exported goods became cheaper, reducing the value of the country's exports; and the cost of local essential goods such as industry inputs increased. In addition to currency devaluation, structural adjustment agreements required the effective removal of the government from the economic sphere through privatization and deregulation of key industries and the removal of government subsidies from developing industries. Related to the removal of the government from the economic sphere was a focus on a balanced fiscal budget through the reduction of government expenditures, often in the area of public goods provisions by the state. Lastly, IMF lending programs required borrowing governments to begin a process of trade liberalization that allowed for their integration into the international economy through increased exports, often of agricultural and other primary goods (Riddell, 1992).

Despite the apparent consensus reached by international financial institutions about the ability of SAPs to deliver economic success to developing countries, the 1980s and 1990s were characterized by continuing economic instability and decline in borrowing countries. From the initial implementation of conditional IMF programs, assessments of their success indicated a low rate of achievement on the majority of performance criteria objectives, suggesting that the conditions insisted upon by the IMF were not necessarily conducive to economic development as was claimed by dominant Western opinion. This is evidenced by the fact that, between 1980 and 1990, the cumulative success rate measured by all IMF program reviews was between one quarter and one half of all programs initiated during that time period (Best, 2014). Rather than raising questions about the effectiveness of the structural changes being imposed upon borrowers, the lack of success of the initial structural adjustment programs resulted in increasingly aggressive policies on the part of the IMF and the World Bank, and both institutions continually expanded their influence over borrowing countries' policies throughout the decade, transitioning from a focus on solely macroeconomic policy to include microeconomic issues such as prices, financial regulations and labor market policies in their loan conditions. At the same time, the IMF and the World Bank were becoming increasingly vocal about their belief in the universality of the neoliberal market policies underlying structural adjustment programs, dismissing growing concerns that domestic conditions and exogenous shocks were impeding their success in much of the developing world. This approach allowed international financial institutions to ignore domestic political constraints and treat them as unusual circumstances that did not need to be accounted for in the formulation of lending programs (Best, 2014).

In addition to the relative lack of success of SAPs in achieving the growth objectives outlined by the IMF and the World Bank, there is evidence to suggest that the conditional lending programs introduced in the 1980s and 1990s had a number of negative consequences for socioeconomic conditions in borrowing countries. One of the most important side effects of the structural changes implemented through SAPs was an increase in poverty and inequality in the developing world. Adjusting countries in Latin America and Africa not only failed to show improvements in poverty rates during the 1980s, but a significant number of countries for which data exists showed worsening poverty during the adjustment period. This has been attributed primarily to increases in underemployment, which was a side effect of reductions in demand caused by shifting trade terms and domestic prices. Similarly, there is evidence to suggest that, in countries in which SAPs did contribute to increased productivity and growth, the benefits of that growth were largely concentrated in the hands of a small, elite segment of the population, failing to contribute to higher incomes or job availability for the majority of the population (Stewart, 2016).

Throughout the latter half of the 1990s, the failure of SAPs to deliver the poverty reduction and stability promised by international financial institutions facilitated growing criticism in the developed and developing world, prompting the IMF and the World Bank to reassess their approach to international lending programs. As a result, the ESAF was restructured in the late 1990s; and in November of 1999, it became the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF), with the IMF voicing a desire to shift its objectives to include poverty reduction as a main focus for its work in developing countries. This was a significant change, as the ESAF had presented poverty reduction as an implicit by-product of economic adjustment rather than a core goal of the structural adjustment process. Under the PRGF, lending is still conditionally based upon the implementation of policy programs by the receiving countries. However, the programs differ from ESAF programs in that they allow receiving countries to participate in developing the policy change program and policies are evaluated on their ability to contribute to poverty reduction in the country in which they are being implemented (IMF, 2001).

The process of structural adjustment through the PRGF is facilitated through the creation of poverty reduction strategy papers by national authorities in borrowing countries in cooperation with various stakeholders such as donors and civil society. The borrowing country then works with the IMF and World Bank to incorporate the lenders' economic conditions into the poverty reduction plan they have created. However, while the PRGF's policies have differed somewhat from those of the two earlier facilities, structural adjustment programs of both the IMF and the World Bank maintain a number of economic requirements and objectives in their interactions with borrowing countries. Under this system, the structural conditions of the lending institutions are constrained to four areas that include fiscal management, tax reform, financial sector reform, and governance; and country-specific lending agreements have significantly fewer conditions than they did under the ESAF (IMF, 2001). However, while the PRGF's policies differ significantly from those of the ESAF, lending agreements have maintained the core economic tenants and objectives developed under the original SAF, forcing borrowing countries to pursue neoliberal economic growth trajectories, regardless of domestic political and economic conditions. In addition, changes to the lending structure have not taken into account the role of debt cycles in the future development of borrowing countries, many of whom have found it impossible to escape the debt that has accompanied decades of conditional lending with a relative lack of success in achieving greater economic stability.

3.2 Structural Adjustment in Africa

Pre-Structural Adjustment Development (1960-1980)

Many African countries demonstrated a significant amount of economic promise during the wave of African decolonization in the early 1960s. During this time, newly established African leaders implemented economic strategies that centered around industrialization and import-substitution. As a result, development processes were characterized by the state's prioritization of national development over foreign trade through the support of consumer goods production for the domestic market, a classic protectionist approach to economic development (Makki, 2015). Protectionist economic policies are characterized by the use of trade restrictions that discourage import dependence through the use of prohibitively high trade tariffs on imported goods and the use of import quotas, both of which have the effect of increasing the cost of foreign goods on the local market and making the price of domestically produced goods more attractive in comparison (Ng & Yeats, 1997). In addition to these measures, protectionist governments in many sub-Saharan African countries heavily subsidized domestic firms and industries that were not yet competitive on the global market (Makki, 2015).

In describing the general approach to development in Sub-Saharan Africa in the immediate post-colonial period, Makki (2015) states that African governments utilized “fiscal and monetary policies, tariff barriers, and preferential taxation… to get foreign investors to manufacture products domestically, and where they could… they established state-owned heavy industry” (p. 133). Behind these inward-oriented strategies was the belief that African economies would benefit from a reduction in their dependence on manufactured imports and increased development in sectors outside of agriculture and primary commodity production. In addition, at the time that these economic policies were being developed, the dominant sentiment throughout the continent was that the private sectors of African economies were dysfunctional and backward enough to warrant strong state participation in development. As a result, many African states took a socialist approach to development, assigning responsibility for all aspects of economic development to the government (Heidhues & Obare, 2011).

During the first decade of development, African states’ state-driven approach to economic development was relatively successful. Development during this period was characterized by rapidly increasing numbers of trained professionals; large-scale investments in power, roads, and communication networks; and significant advances in health and education (Heidhues & Obare, 2011). It was also characterized by considerable growth of African industry, with Africa's industrial sector as a whole increasing twice as fast as its overall GDP between 1965 and 1973 (Makki, 2015). Despite initial development success, beginning in the early 1970s, many African countries that had experienced high rates of growth began to experience economic slowdowns caused by a number of external and internal factors; and by the mid-1970s, Africa's economic performance was significantly lower than that of other regions of the developing world (Heidhues & Obare, 2011).

One of the main causes of the economic decline observed in Africa and much of the rest of the world in the 1970s was an oil crisis that began in 1973 and initiated a period of sharp increases in the global price of crude oil. The oil crisis was particularly damaging for oil importing countries in Africa, who faced huge imbalances in their oil imports as a percentage of total GDP throughout the decade. As a result, oil importing countries in Sub-Saharan Africa experienced an average negative rate of growth in gross national product per person of -0.4 percent per year between 1970 and 1980, a change of over 2 percent from the GNI per capita increase of 1.7 percent between 1960 and 1970 (Overseas Development Institute, 1982). Compounding the economic strain caused by rising oil prices was a decrease in the price of primary commodities during the same time period. While these price changes affected economies throughout the world, the relative dependence of African states on a narrow range of primary commodities resulted in plummeting export revenues for a number of countries (Overseas Development Institute, 1982).

In addition to the exogenous shocks caused by the oil crisis and global decrease in primary commodity prices, many African countries also faced a number of structural limitations that made development increasingly difficult throughout the decade. Principal among these issues was an inability to attract foreign capital outside of extractive industries as a result of limited institutional development, shortages of skilled labor, and weak infrastructure. In addition, African states faced increasing productivity differentials in the world market and a decline in the terms-of-trade for the primary products that contributed large amounts of their total GDP. In addition, the import substitution development processes followed by many African states were characterized by the protection of domestic industries from global competitors, which often resulted in the subsidization of inferior products that were more expensive than those of global competitors, preventing these industries from participating in a competitive global market (Makki, 2015). These structural issues were compounded by rampant corruption in African states, where leaders utilized the power allocated to the state in the economic sphere to extend existing patron-client networks that facilitated growing disparities in income and wealth distributions (Akude, 2009).

As a result of the aforementioned developments in the global economy and individual African states, the majority of African economies were characterized by decreased foreign investment and rapidly increasing government debt in the latter half of the 1970s. These problems were most severe for oil importing countries; and between 1973 and 1975, the current account deficit of sub-Saharan Africa's oil importing countries increased from 3.6 percent to 9.5 percent of total GDP. By 1980, the deficit was at 9.2 percent of GDP, which was double the average deficit for all developing regions in the world. A similar pattern occurred with regard to outstanding external debt, which increased by five times between 1970 and 1980; and the percentage of export earnings used for interest payments and loan repayment doubled during the same time period (Overseas Development Institute, 1982). The crippling debt of African states combined with continual decreases in exports, making it increasingly difficult for African governments to support the maintenance of infrastructure and industry. These troubling economic developments continued to worsen in the latter years of the 1970s, and by 1980, economic output in many African countries was declining (Overseas Development Institute, 1982).

Attempts to deal with Africa's economic crises were complicated by disagreements between African leaders and major international financial institutions, with African leaders overwhelmingly choosing to continue state-led economic approaches despite their lack of success (Heidhues & Obare, 2011). The failure of state-led, protectionist approaches was due to several factors, both exogenous and endogenous. First, the external shocks of the oil crises and declining primary commodity prices that had contributed to the initial economic decline in the early 1970s continued unabated throughout the 1970s and made it increasingly difficult for governments to obtain the revenue necessary to fund domestic industries, as well as lowering overall global demand for many of the commodities upon which these countries relied for revenue (Overseas Development Institute, 1982; Makki, 2015). In addition, the previously mentioned domestic structural limitations and conditions such as corruption, limited institutional development, and underdeveloped infrastructure made successful implementation of state-led development approaches increasingly difficult (Makki, 2015).

Despite these limitations, many African leaders remained convinced that a long-term commitment to state-led development was the best solution to the economic challenges faced by their individual countries, and they developed a set of policies based on these ideas. As a result of this collaboration, the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Regional Food Plan for Africa (AFPLAN) were drafted based upon the proposal of the development of a "bourgeois national state within the Third World with a capacity to make progress in solving the problems of underdevelopment… [through] the continuation of state driven development through ISI" (Heidhues & Obare, 2011, p. 56). However, rather than contributing to economic recovery, the LPA and the AFPLAN contributed to further economic decline in the majority of participating countries in the late 1970s and early 1980s. One of the main reasons for this was that the programs encouraged and made possible the continuation of inefficient public sector structures in which cash-strapped domestic governments were overwhelmed with the financial burden of supporting domestic industries that remained uncompetitive on the global market, while leaving them with few additional financial resources to develop the infrastructure necessary to diversify the economy further (Makki, 2015). In addition, leaders who chose to pursue the above policies faced the issues of increasing institutional inability to enact policy change, as well as IMF, World Bank, and Western donor disapproval (Heidhues & Obare, 2011).

In response to the inability of African states to successfully utilize the LPA and AFPLAN to reverse economic decline and the international community's lack of support for those policies, a second set of policies for economic recovery was proposed by the IMF and the World Bank through the World Bank's 1981 report *Towards Accelerated Development in Sub-Saharan Africa.* The report posited that the observed economic decline in Africa was largely the result of government failure and poor policy approaches, citing resource management problems, inappropriate levels of state intervention, corruption, and protectionist policies with regard to domestic production of goods. However, the report did not address the role of exogenous global economic conditions in the failure of African economies in the 1970s, nor did it account for the relative success experienced by these economies in the years prior to these global economic shifts. Instead, the report represented only the dominant Western opinions on the importance of neoliberal market structures in its recommendations for free trade and non-interventionist government policies; and it made these economic principles a precondition for the lending programs that would become known as Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) (Heidhues & Obare, 2011). This was a key component to the Western worlds' deliberate attempts to undermine state-centered development in Africa and promote adherence to the neo-liberal modes of development that so closely aligned with the economic interests of Western powers in the developing world. These political maneuvers were successful; and faced with insurmountable levels of debt, floundering domestic industries, and rampant poverty, many African states had no option but to turn to Western donors, often the former colonizers, and implement their SAPs through the World Bank and the IMF.

Traditional Structural Adjustment (1980-1999)

IMF and World Bank SAPs were first introduced in Africa in the early 1980s, and they were in effect in the region throughout the following two decades. Between 1980 and 1989, 36 Sub-Saharan African countries contracted 241 loans with the IMF and the World bank in the name of adjustment and stabilization. Out of these 36 countries, eleven received at least ten different loans during the ten-year period (Van De Walle, 2001). Though the loan amounts varied by country, the average loan size between 1980 and 1995 was $160 million dollars, a significant debt for countries experiencing severe economic crises (Dollar & Svensson, 2000). The programs were implemented by both the World Bank and the IMF, who worked together to enact macroeconomic and structural change in African economies. However, while both organizations were concerned with similar policy changes with regard to economic development, each of the two organizations developed conditions that were dependent on their development priorities. The IMF was largely concerned with setting macroeconomic development and policy agendas, and the World Bank was responsible for structural adjustment lending.

When combined, the approaches of both organizations were designed to mitigate what international financial institutions and Western donors believed to be Africa's key economic weaknesses. These perceived weaknesses were entirely related to domestic policy decisions during the previous decade; and principal among them were ineffective management of the public sector, price distortions caused by government intervention in the economy, and ineffective resource allocation through the subsidization of noncompetitive domestic industries (Heidhues & Obare, 2011). However, while there is evidence to suggest that these domestic factors did contribute to the economic issues experienced in the region, there is also an abundance of evidence to suggest that the previously described exogenous shocks and endogenous economic constraints of the time period were also instrumental in the failure of Africa's development progress in the 1970s. With their refusal to acknowledge the role of these global and domestic factors in their assessments of the challenges faced by African countries in the early 1980s, international financial institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank were able to portray African governments as economically incompetent, paving the way for universal acceptance of neoliberal market adjustments to replace all state-centered aspects of African economies. In this way, Western governments and the international financial institutions they controlled were able to continue patronizing neo-colonial models of development that allowed them cheap access to the resources of the developing world.

While the assertions of the IMF and the World Bank were largely accepted and the dominant conversations regarding SAPs were positive in the 1980s, there was significant criticism of the conditional aspect of the programs on the basis that they did not acknowledge or adequately address the institutional challenges faced by the countries in which they were being implemented. This criticism came from a variety of actors that included political leaders in both the global North and the global South, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) working in developing countries, and academics who were measuring the often catastrophic failures of these programs across Sub-Saharan Africa (Best, 2014). One of the primary causes of the backlash against the initial structural adjustment programs was the IMF and World Bank's dismissal of the importance of domestic political and economic contexts in the development of their programs, as well as the tendency of both organizations to present the complications that arose from these contexts as unusual and unforeseeable circumstances that had little relevance for the fundamental conditions of the country's lending agreement (Best, 2014). There were also criticisms about the lack of concern shown for the social aspects of development by international financial institutions and donors, which were accompanied by claims that structural adjustment programs were actually to blame for the exacerbation of issues such as poverty and inequality throughout Africa. These claims were primarily voiced by leaders, academics, and NGOs in the developing world. However, they were also supported by politicians in some developed countries such as the United States, as well as by a minority of internal critics working for the IMF and World Bank (Best, 2014).

While they were not particularly popular on a global scale, the criticisms of structural adjustment's impacts on poverty and inequality were supported by a pattern of decreased government capacity to address the social needs of their populations due to required cuts in government spending (Rutten, Leliveld, & Foeken, 2008). The shortcomings of SAPs in Africa were acknowledged by the World Bank in its 1989 report titled *Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth.* In the report, the World Bank acknowledged that, by 1989, expenditure on social services had plummeted, school enrollments were decreasing, nutrition worsening, and infant mortality remained troublingly high in numerous African countries in which SAPs had been implemented. The report stated that future development approaches needed to be "human-centered," presenting a "sustainable development strategy" that aimed to build institutional and social capacity, decrease poverty and increase health outcomes, and promote long-term financial and industrial growth (The World Bank, 1989). However, at the same time that they were asserting their commitment to human-centered, socially-oriented growth, the World Bank, representing its position and the position of the IMF, continued to emphasize market friendly, neoliberal economic approaches in its plans for future lending programs, arguing that these policies were not to blame for the failures of SAPs in the 1980s (Heidhues & Obare, 2011).

Instead, the World Bank argued that African governments had "made a dash for 'modernization,' copying, but not adapting, to Western models… the result [of which] was poorly designed public investments in industry; too little attention to peasant agriculture; too much intervention in areas in which the state lack managerial, technical, and entrepreneurial skills; and too little effort to foster grass-roots development" (The World Bank, 1989, p. 3). In doing so, the report attributed the blame for the social costs of adjustment to domestic government policy, rather than accepting them as a side effect of the adjustment policies themselves. With this position, the World Bank was able to acknowledge the failures of development under structural adjustment while refusing to acknowledge that the underlying economic assumptions of the adjustments themselves were inherently incompatible with human-centered development approaches. This attitude continued throughout the following decade, despite increasingly vocal insistence from African governments and economists that the neoliberal economic adjustments required for IMF and World Bank loans were continuing to contribute to suboptimal social outcomes in spite of the supposed change in focus and direction on the part of international financial institutions (Mkandawire & Soludo, 1999).

3.3 Structural Adjustment in Sierra Leone

Analysis of Sierra Leone's experience of adjustment highlights several important patterns. First, it reveals the problematic economic conditions and structures of the period immediately prior to the introduction of structural adjustment, suggesting that dependence on resource extraction, corruption, and an inefficient state combined with the exogenous economic shocks of the oil crises and declining primary commodity prices to create a dire economic situation by the introduction of structural adjustment at the end of the 1970s. More importantly, the analysis of socioeconomic indicators suggests that, rather than contributing to economic recovery, adjustment was followed by additional economic decline. The analysis also suggests that the impacts of adjustment were skewed in favor of certain populations due to the fact that programs were structured to promote macroeconomic growth through the removal of safety nets such as subsidies on basic commodities for the country's poor populations. Lastly, analysis of Sierra Leone reveals the importance of debt cycles and the ways through which the country was forced to continue to borrow in order to maintain the growing debt caused by structural adjustment loans.

Sierra Leone experienced significant economic growth in the first decade of independence, with the economy growing by an average of four percent per year between 1960 and 1969 (Davies, 2000). Most of this growth was driven by high growth in the mining and agriculture sectors of the economy, with the value added to GDP from industry increasing from $60.4 million in 1964 to $92 million in 1970 and the value added to GDP from agriculture increasing from $79.3 million in 1964 to $94.1 million in 1970 (World Bank, 2016). Mining was a particularly important component to economic growth during this period, and diamond mining was the backbone of the economy during the decade following independence. This is evidenced by the fact that, between 1960 and 1970 diamond production had increased from approximately 700,000 carats to approximately 2 million carats per year (Kargbo, 2011). In addition to diamond deposits, Sierra Leone was also home to vast deposits of gold and rutile, both of which contributed an increasingly large amount to the country's GDP between 1961 and 1970 (Kargbo, 2011). The agricultural sector was also a major focus of economic development in the 1960s, with the government of Sierra Leone focusing on the production of rice in order to achieve food self-sufficiency in the country. With this aim in mind, the government allocated over 50 percent of government expenditures on agriculture to rice production, initiating a series of rice production programs across the country and setting price controls on domestic rice products that were processed and distributed in urban centers through government controlled processes (Kargbo, 2011). However, while they encouraged the domestic production of rice, the government of Sierra Leone also continued to import rice to cover the shortfall in domestic production caused by the movement of farmers into mining throughout the decade (Kargbo, 2011).

Despite its initial economic successes, Sierra Leone's economic conditions in the 1970s and 1980s were impacted by a number of external factors. An oil-importing economy that depended on foreign oil for mining and other domestic uses, Sierra Leone was particularly vulnerable to the impacts of the 1973-74 oil crises. In addition, the country faced deteriorating terms of trade and 'soft' commodity and mineral markets in which the prices of key export commodities were decreasing and the number of global sellers far outpaced buyers (Luke & Riley, 1989). One industry that was particularly problematic for Sierra Leone's economic development was the diamond industry, upon which the majority of export GDP was dependent in the early 1970s. This dependence combined with a lack of government control over illicit diamond production and resulted in a sharp decline in legal diamond exports throughout the 1970s and 1980s (Harris, 2012).

The government's lack of control over diamond exports was due primarily to the political aspirations of Stevens, who used promises of open access to the country's diamonds to garner political support, initiating a period in which elites engaged in illegal diamond mining with impunity. Stevens also participated directly in illegal mining activity and allowed for the funneling of diamonds from the state-owned National Diamond Mining Company (NDMC) through illegal markets (Davies, 2000). As a result of these activities, reported diamond exports fell from two million carats to only 595 thousand carats between 1970 and 1980 (Harris, 2012). Compounding this problem was a decrease in the global price of diamonds, which further decreased the GDP gained from diamond production and exports. In addition to the direct consequences of the informal diamond economy and decreasing diamond prices on Sierra Leone's overall economic development, the failures of the diamond industry also resulted in a rapid decreased in foreign capital investment in diamond mining and other industries throughout the 1970s (Zack-Williams, 1999).

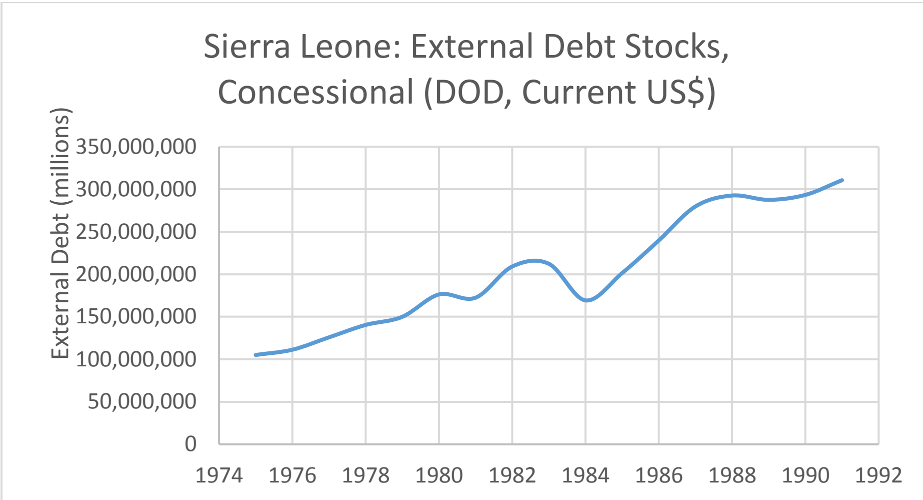
In addition to the above economic problems, Sierra Leone suffered from a number of internal policy constraints and approaches that impeded economic growth and exacerbated existing economic inequalities. Among these were a lack of adequate and effective government actions in balancing public expenditure, establishing competitive exchange rates, and promoting investment in industry (Luke & Riley, 1989). The lack of attention paid to these aspects of economic development can be directly tied to Stevens' corrupt approach to governance of the political and economic spheres, which was characterized by a "deliberate paring down of formal governmental institutions in favour of the construction of a 'shadow state,' an arena of illicit transactions where formerly the state would have had jurisdiction" (Harris, 2012, p. 56). This was largely due to the political climate of Sierra Leone at the time at which Stevens took office, which was characterized by a weak state that faced significant competition from rural chiefs and urban elite. Within Stevens' government, economic transactions were primarily based upon informal, patron-client relationships, with little attention paid to the restructuring of the economy for sustainable development in the future. Under this system, the allocation of economic resources and opportunities became privatized and politicized, with import-export licenses and access to foreign currency used as favors for political supporters (Harris, 2012). The state also utilized questionable economic policies to prevent uprisings of discontent citizens, importing rice and selling it at subsidized prices to urban populations, while the informal economy was overseeing the production and illegal exportation of homegrown rice crops in the countryside at the same time (Harris, 2012).

By the late 1970s, the government of Sierra Leone was struggling to maintain the existing system, and Stevens turned to IMF stabilization assistance to keep the economy afloat. While the original IMF loans obtained by Sierra Leone were not the full-fledged conditional structural adjustment programs that would be developed in the 1980s, they involved one-year balance of payments support that was contingent upon a number of similar policy conditionalities. These conditionalities included "public expenditure cuts, tighter financial discipline, reduction of imbalances on the external account, and depreciation of the currency" (Luke & Riley, 1989, p. 137). The IMF programs in Sierra Leone faced difficulties with implementation almost immediately, when the government demonstrated that it was both unable and unwilling to meet the agreed upon conditions put forward in the loan. The government was particularly resistant to changes with regard to "exchange rates, higher returns for agricultural producers, reduced subsidies for specific commodities (including rice, petroleum, and electricity), reforms in the structure of public expenditure, and the surrender of foreign-exchange earnings by exporters to the central bank" (Luke & Riley, 1989, p. 137). Their unwillingness, and inability, to comply with these conditions was due to the government's hesitance to undermine the regime's stability through the removal of patron-client relationships and subsidies that pacified the urban population. However, faced with an increasingly untenable economic situation, Stevens appeared to be "tak[ing] a 'stop-go' approach to economic reform…" in order to temporarily maintain his position in power (Luke & Riley, 1989, p. 137).

The problematic economic environment of the 1970s continued in the first several years of the 1980s, and by the time Stevens was replaced by Joseph Momoh in 1985, the country's economy was in shambles and socioeconomic indicators had reached alarmingly low levels. By 1986, Sierra Leone was one of the poorest countries in the world, with a GNP per capita of only $310, an average life expectance of only 41 years, and an infant mortality rate of 154 of every 1,000 live births (Luke & Riley, 1989). In response to these problems, Momoh entered into a long-term structural adjustment facility agreement with the IMF in 1986 as part of a domestically-developed Economic Recovery Programme. The agreement with the IMF provided that the organization would lend Sierra Leone SDR 40.53 million on the condition that they implement a number of macroeconomic conditionalities (Zack-Williams, 1999). The primary economic adjustments included reforms in the exchange rate system, strict controls on public expenditures, liberalized prices, and reduced external payment arrears (African Development Bank, 2005). However, the government again found itself unable to successfully implement the entirety of the agreement, while the adjustments they did make to exchange rates, public expenditure, and subsidies resulted in decreasing per capita income, high rates of unemployment, and widespread poverty (Davies, 2000). One consequence that was particularly rapid and problematic was an increase in prices for basic commodities in the immediate aftermath of currency devaluation. In the capital city of Freetown, the price of a bar of soap increased from .5 leone to 2 leone, the price of a gallon of kerosene from 9 leone to 23 leone, and the price of a chicken from 20 leone to 80 leone almost overnight (Riddell, 1992).

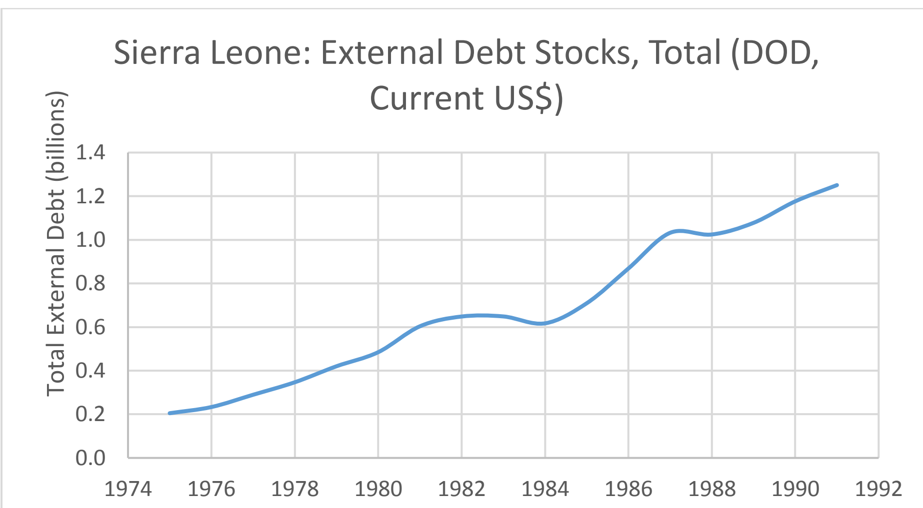
Faced with growing economic problems in the months following the introduction of the Economic Recovery Programme, Momoh declared a State of Economic Emergency in 1987, providing the government with extensive authority to address economic issues such as illicit commodity smuggling (Zack-Williams, 1999). In the following three years, his administration made a concerted effort to implement the conditions agreed upon with the IMF, entering another agreement that required the removal of all subsidies on basic commodities and large-scale public sector retrenchment in 1989 (Davies, 2000). Despite his efforts to comply with the conditions of the IMF and to curtail problematic economic practices, Momoh failed to comply with requirements regarding payment of arrears; and in 1990, the IMF repealed the lending agreement in response. Momoh's lack of compliance with the repayment agreement was not due to an unwillingness to repay the loans, but to the government's financial inability to pay them as a result of continuing economic decline and continually growing foreign debt. By this point in time, the country's concessional loan debt to international financial institutions had reached almost $300 million dollars (Figure 1), while the total external debt owed on concessional loans and all other forms of foreign lending amounted to almost $1.2 billion dollars (Figure 2).

Figure 1.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

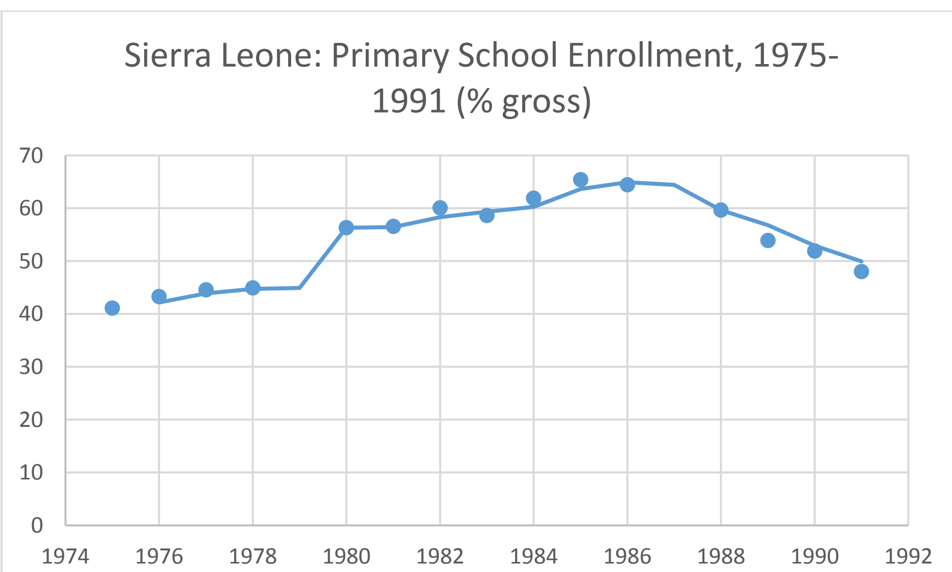
Figure 2.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

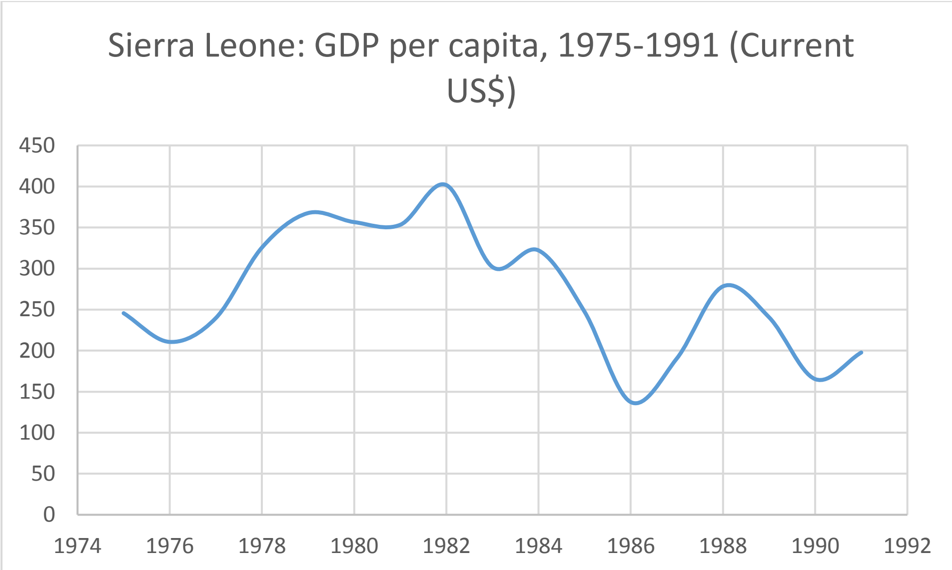
By the time the IMF repealed the lending agreement in 1990, economic indicators had worsened significantly and over 80 percent of the population was living below the poverty line of $1 per day (Davies, 2000). In addition to high rates of poverty, life expectancy at birth had decreased by over two years between 1985 and 1990 (United Nations Development Programme, 2013). Education was also impacted during this period, with primary school enrollment rates decreasing from 65.41 percent in 1985 to 51.91 percent in 1990 (Figure 3). Another indication that living standards were decreasing during the time period was the decrease in the country's GDP per capita, which fell from approximately $245 in 1975 to approximately $165 in 1990, a decrease of 32 percent (Figure 4). Having lost the financial support of the IMF, Momoh chose to continue the process of adjustment without the assistance of an international loan, eliminating any possibility for the loans to mitigate some of the worst side effects of the post-adjustment period (Zack-Williams, 1999). In the immediate aftermath of this decision, prices of basic commodities skyrocketed, and inflation had hugely detrimental effects on wages and savings. This is evidenced by the fact that the country experienced a percentage change in inflation of 110.95 in 1990, compared to a percentage change in inflation of 60.8 the year before (International Monetary Fund, 2015). Within a year of Momoh's pursuit of economic adjustment without the assistance of an international loan, the country deteriorated into violence, with economically marginalized groups leading the onslaught against the state.

Figure 3.



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics

Figure 4.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

Overall, an examination of structural adjustment in Sierra Leone suggests that the programs had measurable consequences for socioeconomic conditions through their negative impact on GDP per capita and education between 1980 and the outbreak of conflict in 1991. The effects are most apparent in GDP per capita, which declined sharply throughout most of the adjustment period. In addition, data on commodity prices suggests astronomical increases in the price of basic goods that include food items and basic household necessities, suggesting a particularly problematic economic outcome for poor Sierra Leoneans for whom basic commodities accounted for a significant proportion of total spending. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, Sierra Leone's experience with structural adjustment suggests a problematic relationship between adjustment lending and debt cycles. In the case of Sierra Leone, debt continued to rise even while the government struggled to meet the existing repayment requirements, contributing to a cycle of continually increasing debt and rising payments of arrears. In the immediate pre-conflict period, this cycle became untenable, which resulted in the loss of additional funds and left the government with little choice but to attempt adjustment without the necessary funds, increasing the extent of the economic shocks caused by adjustment.

3.4 Structural Adjustment in Liberia

Analysis of structural adjustment in Liberia highlights several important patterns in the years prior to the outbreak of conflict in 1989. First, the pre-adjustment profile suggests that the country was experienced significant economic decline and instability in the decade prior to adjustment. This appears to be a result of the combined impacts of (1) domestic policies favoring Liberian elites and foreign concession holders, and (2) exogenous shocks caused by the oil crises and declines in primary commodity prices on the global market. Second, analysis of structural adjustment in Liberia illustrates negative trends in income levels and education levels in the adjustment period. As with Sierra Leone, these consequences appear to have been unevenly experienced by various segments of the population. This was due to the fact that adjustment policies continued to favor foreign companies and economic elites, while targeting poor populations through cuts in social spending and unfavorable tax policies. Lastly, Liberia's experience during the adjustment period also suggests a problematic cycle of debt in which the government was increasingly unable to meet repayment requirements, while worsening economic conditions simultaneously encouraged further borrowing.

Liberia's economy performed remarkably well in the two decades preceding 1970, with economic growth skyrocketing between 1951 and 1961. At the peak of the growth, Liberia's economic performance outstripped that of every other country in the world except Japan, with an astounding annual growth rate of 15 percent between 1952 and 1957 (Gifford, 1993). During this time, gross domestic income and net tribal household incomes increased fourfold and the labor force increased threefold (Clower, et al., 1966). The discovery and extraction of iron ore that began in 1950 was the largest determinant of growth between 1950 and 1968; and by 1965, Liberia was one of the world's largest exporters of iron ore. While iron ore became increasingly important to economic growth during this time, the rubber industry in Liberia continued to employ significantly more labor than any other sector of the economy throughout the 1950s and the first half of the 1960s, with approximately two-fifths of the country's labor employed in rubber production (Clower et al., 1966).

In addition to the growth experienced by the mining industry in the 1950s and 1960s, Liberia's agricultural sector also experienced a significant amount of growth during the time period, with the value of output in the sector increasing from $68 million to $109 million between 1964 and 1972. However, while the 6 percent annual increase in agricultural output demonstrates a remarkable level of sector growth, that growth was restricted almost entirely to growth in rubber production and forestry, and there was little growth in the production of food crops or other cash crops during the time period. By 1975, traditional agriculture remained almost entirely outside of the country's monetized economy, despite the fact that approximately 50 percent of the total population was employed in traditional subsistence agriculture. As a result, the average income of traditional farmers was measured at approximately $70 per capita in 1972, which was significantly lower than the national per capita income of approximately $200 in the same year. In addition, the majority of rubber and forestry was controlled by foreign concessionaries, limiting the economic gains derived from those industries (World Bank, 1975).

Despite the promising growth of the 1950s and 1960s, Liberia's economic circumstances changed significantly beginning in the early 1970s, prompting the initiation of a lending relationship with international financial institutions. As an oil-importing country that was highly dependent upon exports of primary commodities such as rubber and iron ore for the majority of its GDP, the Liberian economy was significantly impacted by the global downturn in primary commodity prices and the oil crises of the 1970s (Harris, 2012). At the same time that the country was experiencing economic decline associated with external shocks, international economic investment in the country continued to be significant, with foreign firms engaged heavily in resource extraction in Liberia's key industries (Wong, 2012). This foreign involvement in Liberian industry did little to promote economic growth, as it occurred through concessional agreements that allowed foreign firms to export the majority of profit from the country's most lucrative industries to companies in the United States and Europe. While they were engaged in lucrative economic schemes in Liberia, the United States was also providing a significant amount of financial assistance to the government through development assistance and loans, which contributed to growing external debt. As a result of such loans, Liberia's foreign debt grew from $158 million to over $600 million between 1970 and 1979 (Pham, 2004).

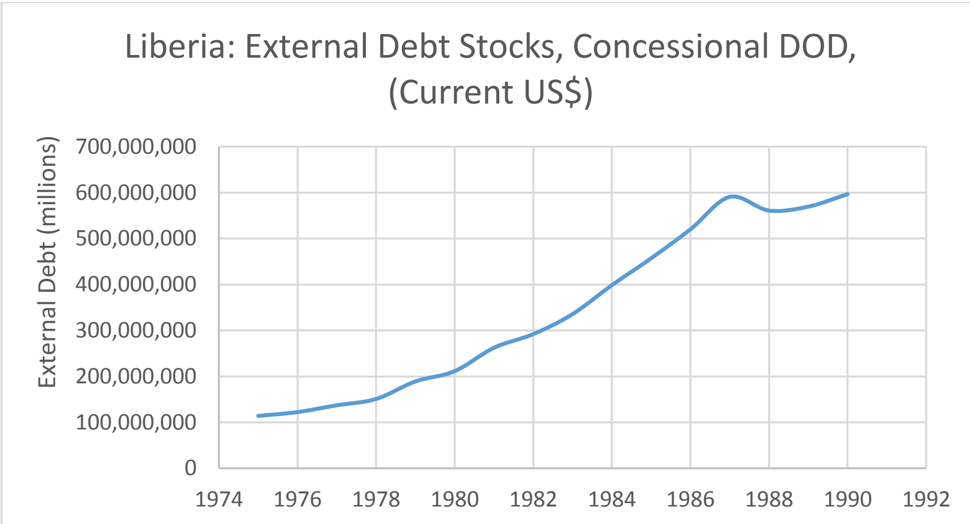
Unlike many other African economies in the post-colonial period, the Liberian government favored liberal capitalist economic policies in its development beginning in the 1800s. However, throughout the 1970s, the government of Liberia attempted to respond to disadvantageous economic circumstances, particularly excessive foreign involvement in Liberian industry, through a shift toward state-led, planned economic development that focused on industrialization and domestic self-sufficiency in food and other basic commodities. With these aims in mind, the government of Liberia increasingly turned to socialist-oriented countries such as the Republic of China and the Soviet Union for international ties, deemphasizing their relationships with capitalist countries in Europe and North America. The government also began the process of renegotiating concessions agreements with foreign companies in an attempt to reach a more equitable arrangement, creating tensions with these companies and the countries in which they were based (Hahn, 2014).

However, while tensions with the United States and other Western powers were high for much of the decade, the relationship between the United States and Liberia remained significant, and the United States continued to provide economic support ranging from $21 to $76 million dollars per year throughout the 1970s (USAID, 2016). In exchange for this support, the United States was able to use Liberia as a base from which to influence politics in the region, and by the early 1970s, the United States had established the largest US Embassy in Africa in the capital of Monrovia. In addition, the United States government established a security and intelligence presence through the establishment of the Voice of America's media relay system for Africa, a US intelligence and diplomatic communication station, and a global-range radio navigation system that was controlled by US citizens stationed in Monrovia (Hahn, 2014). The country also served as the command center for the C.I.A.'s Africa division and as a base from which the United States supported war efforts against socialist regimes in countries such as Angola and Mozambique (Wong, 2012). Interestingly, while they traded economic assistance for a stronger political foothold on the continent, the United States continued to engage in covert operations against President Tolbert's increasingly socialist-oriented government, supporting civil society groups such as the Progressive Alliance of Liberians (PAL), who went on to lead the 1979 protests known as the "Rice Riot," which resulted in the killing of protestors by government security forces and seriously weakened Tolbert's regime (Hahn, 2014).

In addition to the international dynamics at play in the Liberian economy throughout the 1970s, a number of domestic dynamics were responsible for accelerating the process of economic deterioration. One factor that was particularly damaging to the Liberian economy was the existence of patron-client networks, which facilitated the accumulation of the country's resources in the hands of the urban elite. Inequality and socioeconomic disparities, which had been present since the establishment of the republic of Liberia were exacerbated during these years; and by the mid-1970s, 4 percent of the population owned over 60 percent of the country's wealth (Harris, 2012). Extreme wealth concentration in the country was accompanied by ineffective government policies in the economic sphere that allowed the urban elite to maintain their wealth at the expense of the urban and rural poor. These policies included government chosen increases in the prices of basic necessities, as well as policies to protect industries that contributed to the accumulation of wealth in the hands of elite officials and newly established industrialists (Pham, 2004).

By the latter years of the 1970s, economic indicators had begun to reflect the problematic economic condition of Liberia, with high levels of unemployment and skyrocketing consumer prices suggesting that the economy was hovering on the brink of economic crisis (Radelet, 2007). In 1979, the government of Liberia further added to the country's financial strain when it hosted the sixteenth summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which cost the country an estimated $200 million (Pham, 2004). That same year, global oil prices jumped again, pushing the country further into economic decline. It was at this point in time that the Liberian government turned to the IMF and the World Bank for financial assistance for the first time. Beginning in 1980, the government of Liberia began to engage in stand-by lending agreements with the IMF to obtain economic support. Between 1980 and 1984, the country was approved for five IMF loans (Mills-Jones, 1988). This had the effect of increasing the country's total outstanding debt on concessional loans from approximately $211 million in 1980 to approximately $398 million in 1984 (Figure 5).

Figure 5.

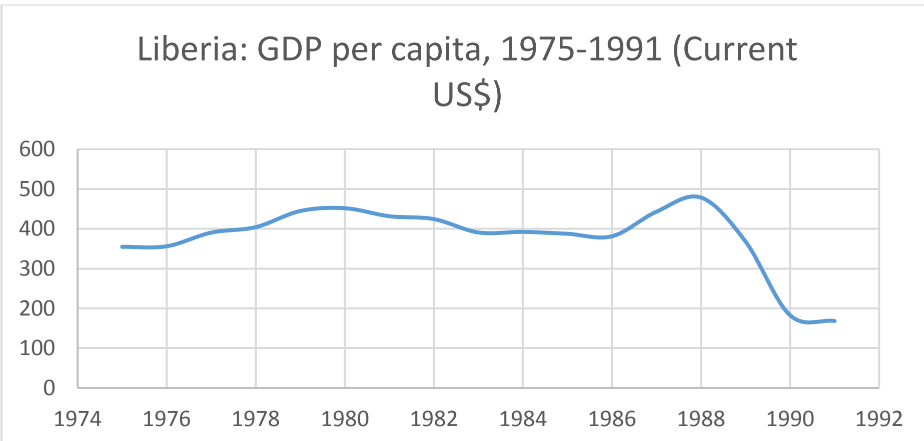


Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

The measures outlined in the IMF stand-by arrangements for Liberia were designed to stabilize the country's economy through currency devaluation, balanced government expenditures, and a complete overhaul of the taxation system. Despite assertions that these structural changes would contribute to economic growth, Liberia experienced a decline of over 18 percent in its real GDP in the five years following the introduction of the first agreement (Mills-Jones, 1988). Similarly, the adjustments failed to correct issues with budget balance; and Liberia's budget deficit was higher in 1985 than it had been at the introduction of the programs in 1980, increasing from 10 percent to 20 percent of GDP by 1985 (Claasen & Salin, 1991).

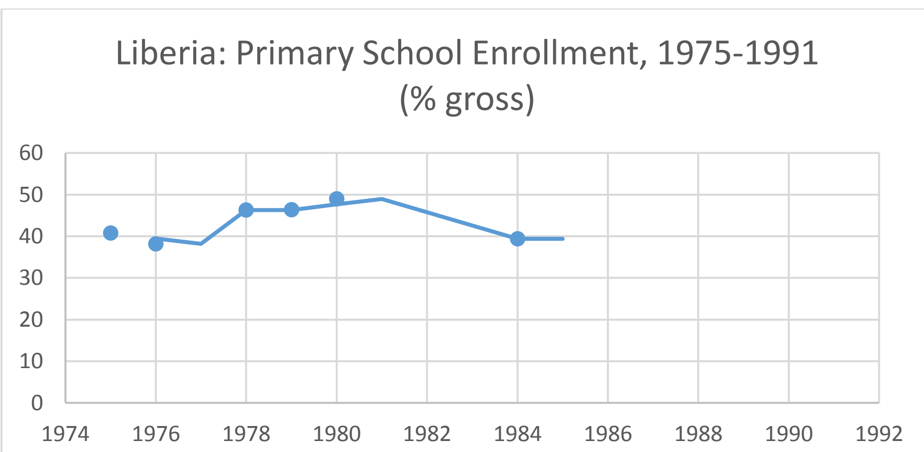
In addition to the lack of success of the adjustments with regard to economic stabilization, IMF conditions had a number of negative social consequences. Principal among these were the effects of the shift in tax policy, which targeted the incomes of Liberian citizens rather than adjusting tax policies for prominent foreign concession-holders. This had the impact of increasing economic hardships for Liberia's poor, while enabling the continuation of economically damaging foreign concession systems. This is evidenced by the fact that GDP per capita decreased from approximately $451 in 1980 to approximately $387 in 1985, a decrease of almost 15 percent (Figure 6). In addition, the measures imposed by the IMF required salary cuts for government employees, and salaries for state employees suffered cuts ranging from approximately 17 to 25 percent in January of 1983 (Mills-Jones, 1988). Adjustment also had negative impacts on education levels; and primary school enrollment decreased from 48.94 percent in 1980 to 39.39 percent in 1984 (Figure 7).

Figure 6.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

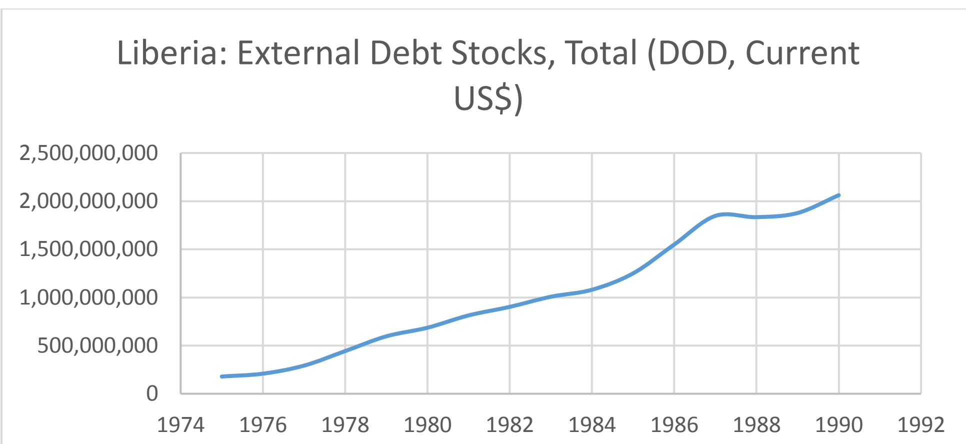
Figure 7.



Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics

During the years that the government was entering into adjustment agreements with the IMF, Liberia was also experiencing renewed economic closeness with the United States, which was characterized by continued US interests in Liberia. During the early years of the 1980s, the US government increased its foreign aid to Liberia; and over the first five years of the 1980s, they provided a total of $500 million to the government (Harris, 2012). However, while the amount of aid given to Liberia was high, the profits garnered by US corporations were much higher, totaling $1 billion in US trade, banking, and investment interests in 1980 alone (Harris, 2012). In 1986, Liberia was declared ineligible for continuing IMF assistance due to the accumulation of arrears, but a different program was approved the next year in 1987 (Claasen & Salin, 1991; Riddell, 1992).

Figure 8.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

By this time, Liberia's total outstanding debt was equal to approximately $1.8 million, which was over 170 percent of the country's total GDP (Claasen & Salin, 1991; Figure 8). Between 1987 and the outbreak of the conflict in 1989, problems of poverty, inequality and economic stagnation continued unabated (World Bank, 2008). During this two-year period of time, GDP per capita decreased again, resulting in a 1989 per capita GDP of only $367.9 (Figure

6). During this time, the country's debt continued to increase unabated, with the total concessional debt reaching approximately $569 million by 1989, an increase of over $350 million from 1980 (Figure 5). The country's total debt was also increasing, reaching almost $1.9 billion by 1989, compared to a total external debt of approximately $685 million in 1980 (Figure 8).

Overall, the above profile of structural adjustment in Liberia suggests measurable negative impacts on living standards and economic conditions between 1980 and the outbreak of conflict in 1989. The period was characterized by a general decline in GDP per capita and education. However, there are two things worth noting regarding the two indicators. First, with regard to GDP per capita, the largest drop in GDP occurred during the first year of the conflict between 1989 and 1990, rather than during the period of pre-conflict adjustment. Second, given the lack of data on primary school enrollment after 1984, it is difficult to determine whether education continued to be impacted by adjustment between 1985 and the outbreak of conflict in 1989. However, even with these factors, the data suggests a general downward trend in living standards in the pre-conflict period. Another important pattern revealed in this section is structural adjustment's exacerbation of inequalities through adjustment policies favoring foreign concession-holders and Liberian elites at the expense of the country's poorer populations. Lastly, concessional debt and total debt figures suggest that the country's accumulation of debt exceeded the government's ability to pay arrears, further impacting financial stability in the adjustment period.

3.5 Structural Adjustment in Côte d'Ivoire

In contrast to Sierra Leone and Liberia, the pre-adjustment profile of Côte dIvoire in the 1970s and early 1980s suggests that the country experienced an unusual period of economic decline in the pre-adjustment period that was in sharp opposition to its general trend of economic growth and development in the post-colonial period. Though some of this economic decline was a product of domestic economic structures, such as a reliance on cash crop exports, the primary cause of economic decline in the case of Côte d'Ivoire was exogenous shocks to commodity prices in the immediate pre-adjustment years. What is interesting about Côte d'Ivoire as a case study of structural adjustment is that, despite the above differences in pre-adjustment economic conditions, the country experienced similar declines in living standards as the other two countries in the post-adjustment period. In addition, adjustment in Côte d'Ivoire also appears to have had unequal impacts by favoring increased commercial agricultural production at the expense of urban populations and civil servants. Lastly, Côte d'Ivoire also experienced significant increases in external debt, though there is no clear indication that they were unable to meet the payment of arrears requirements like Liberia and Sierra Leone.

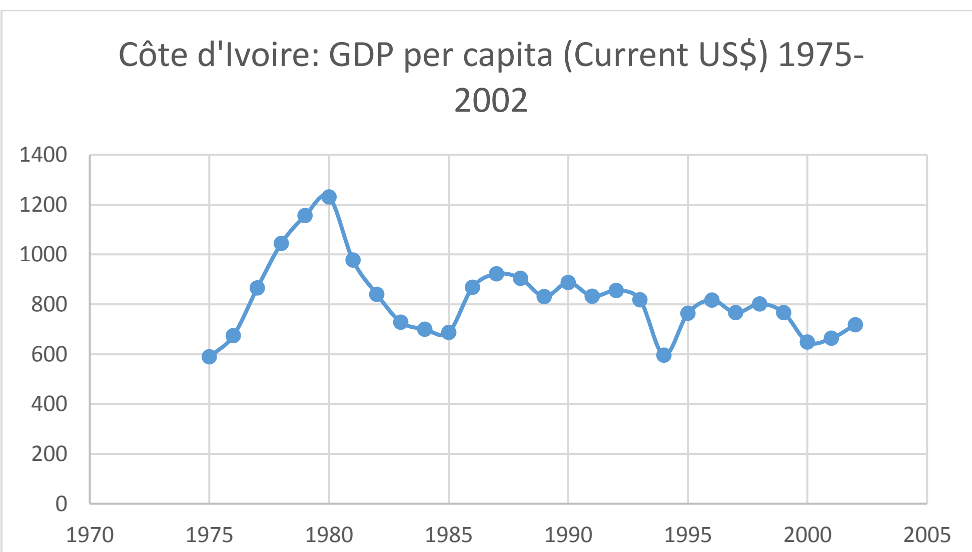
Unlike Sierra Leone and Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire's post-independence economic development was high and sustained throughout the first two decades after independence. This economic growth survived the oil crises and shifts in primary commodity prices in the 1970s, and the country experienced an average annual GDP growth of over seven percent between 1960 and 1980 (Grootaert, 1995). The ability of Côte d'Ivoire to avoid the economic decline occurring throughout much of the region was largely due to the country's economic profile and the role of coffee and cocoa production in its economic growth. In contrast to the declining price of commodities such as rubber and diamonds, coffee and cocoa prices experienced price increases at several points throughout the decade. When combined with the increase in production of these commodities that was occurring in Côte d'Ivoire and the decrease in the production of these commodities that was occurring in countries such as Brazil, Côte d'Ivoire was able to become an increasingly important international player in the cocoa and coffee industries (Ikpo, 2015).

In addition to economic growth, Côte d'Ivoire also experienced significant progress in the development of infrastructure and social services. During this time, relative economic prosperity made it possible for the government to invest heavily in economic and social development, and real government spending rose by about 60 percent throughout the 1970s. Significant amounts of this expenditure was allocated toward the development of health and education services, with a large number of health centers opened in rural and urban areas throughout the decade (Thomas, Lavy & Strauss, 1996). However, despite the promising growth experienced in the 1970s, Côte d'Ivoire continued to rely on coffee and cocoa for the majority of GDP, a pattern that had begun in the colonial period. In 1980, the country's dependence on these two commodities resulted in an abrupt halt to economic growth when global prices of coffee and cocoa plummeted (Grootaert, 1995).

In 1981, Côte d'Ivoire responded to the sudden economic downturn by entering into a structural adjustment program with the World Bank, beginning a period of reform that aimed to "restore fundamental macro-economic balances, and to correct major distortions in the incentive system" (Grootaert, 1995, p. 380). The initial structural adjustment agreement implemented through the World Bank was comprised of three main areas. These three areas included changes to public investment policy, agricultural reform, and a number of studies that were expected to obtain the information necessary to implement future reforms in industry, the public sector, and public expenditure. One of the most immediate changes required through the program was a sharp decrease in public investment, with a decrease of 9.5 percent between the late 1970s and 1981. With regard to agricultural policy, structural adjustment policies emphasized decreasing food imports and increasing agricultural exports. The program also introduced studies on the pricing of agricultural goods such as cotton, coffee, and cocoa, while abstaining from making any price changes to those commodities under the 1981 SAP (Grootaert & Kanbur, 1990).

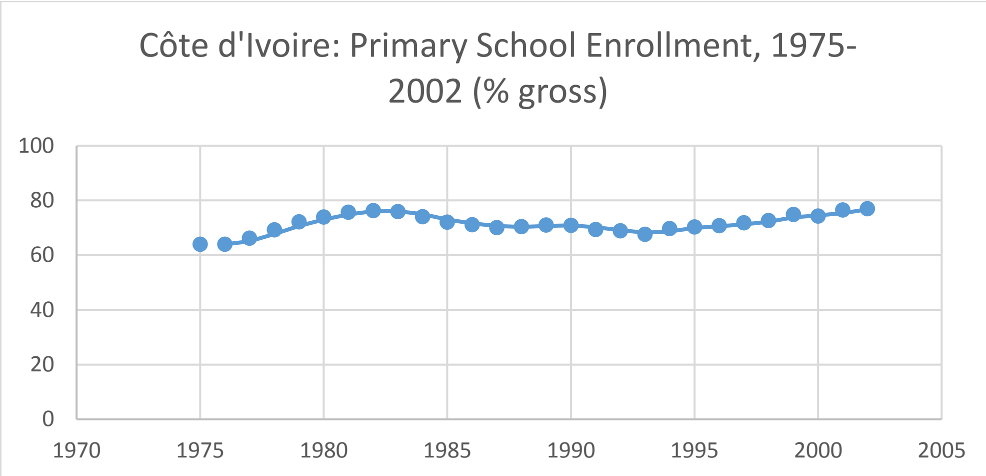
Despite the relatively conservative changes made during the initial structural adjustment period, poverty rates during the first four years of the 1980s were increased, with an annual rate of poverty growth of 4.96 to 5.59 percent between 1980 and 1984 (Kakwani, 1993). During this same time period, GDP per capita also decreased from $977 to $700, a decrease of almost 30 percent and the lowest level of per capita GDP the country had experienced since nearly a decade before in 1976 (Figure 9). However, unlike Liberia and Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire's education levels were not significantly impacted in the initial adjustment period, with primary school enrollment rates fluctuating over the four-year period and ending at 74.03 percent in 1985, a slight increase from the enrollment rate of 73.9 in 1980 (Figure 10).

Figure 9.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

Figure 10.



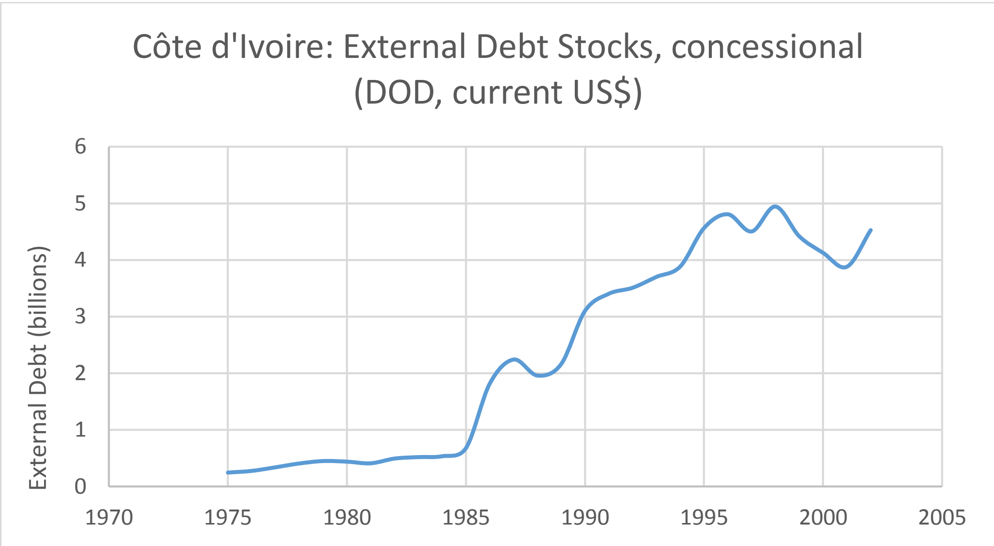
Source: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute for Statistics

While the enrollment rate in 1985 was slightly higher than that of 1980, the growth in enrollment in that period was significantly lower than the growth in enrollment of almost 10 percent between 1975 and 1980 (Figure 10). In addition to the impacts of the adjustment of living standards, the country also experienced a relatively small increase in its external debt owed on concessional loans. Between 1981 and 1983, the external debt stocks on concessional credit to Côte d'Ivoire increased from approximately $410 million to approximately $518 million, an increase of over 26 percent (Figure 11). The country's total external debt also rose slightly, from $8.14 billion in 1981 to $8.86 in 1983 (Figure 12).

In 1983, the World Bank extended a second conditional loan to Côte d'Ivoire, this one with more specific and radical adjustment policies than the 1981 agreement. The program implemented by the World Bank was comprised of five main components: "(a) public finance management with emphasis on rationalizing investment policy and on restructuring expenditures; (b) rehabilitation of the Parastatal sector; (c) agricultural policy; (d) industrial sector policy, with emphasis on expanding exports and (e) a new urban housing policy" (Grootaert & Kanbur, 1990,

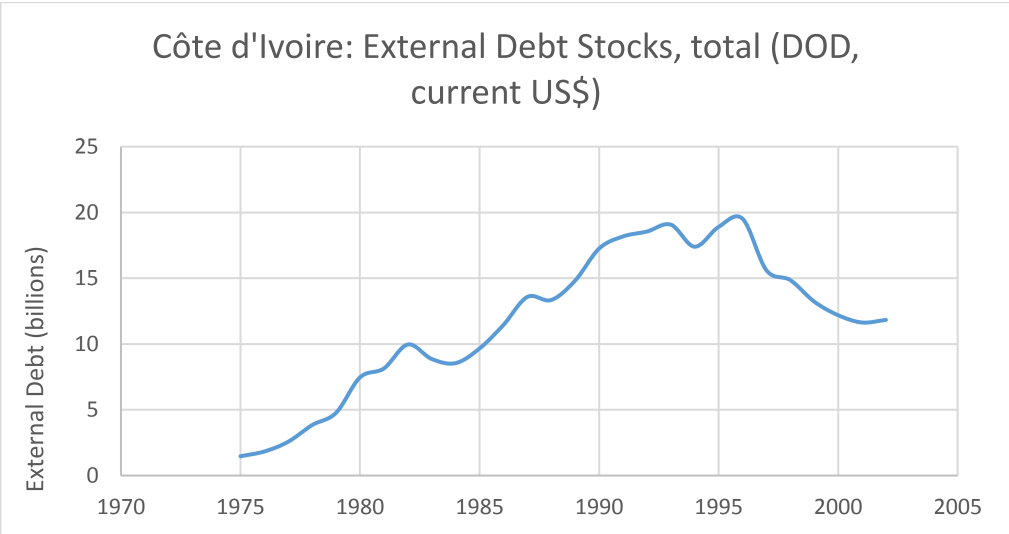
p. 7). The program's focus on agricultural reform was particularly important; and the conditions required the removal of subsidies on cotton and an increase in producer prices for cocoa and coffee for the 1983 to 1984 harvest season.

Figure 11.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

Figure 12.



Source: World Bank, World Development Indicators

These policy changes had a significant impact on the distribution of income in Côte d'Ivoire, providing economic benefits for rural agricultural producers (Grootaert, 1995). However, while the policy changes implemented through the World Bank program did fulfil the aim of increasing agricultural output, they were not successful in bringing increased economic prosperity to the country, and poverty rates continued to increase at the same pace as they had between 1980 and 1984 (Grootaert & Kanbur, 1990). In addition to the impacts of agricultural policies, attempts to reform state expenditure policies resulted in significant wage cuts in the parastatal sector and the freezing of civil service wages in 1984 (Grootaert, 1995). This further tilted the balance of the negative impacts of structural adjustment policies toward urban Ivorians and away from rural agricultural producers.

In 1985 and 1986, large harvests of primary agricultural commodities combined with an upswing in global coffee and cocoa prices to provide a period of economic growth in Côte d'Ivoire; and in 1985 and 1986 the country experienced growth rates of 4.9 percent and 3.4 percent respectively. In 1986, Côte d'Ivoire entered into a third structural adjustment program through the World Bank, bringing structural adjustment debt to a total of $650 million (Grootaert, 1995). The conditions of the 1986 agreement addressed similar issues as the 1983 agreement, but they were significantly more targeted and specific than the conditions of the previous two programs. This was particularly true with regard to agricultural reform, and the 1986 SAP set conditions designed to further shift the rural-urban terms of trade that had been addressed through price and subsidy changes in the 1983 agreement. Through this process, income was further shifted toward rural producers of export commodities such as coffee, cocoa, and cotton, while civil servants and other urban workers continued to experience decreases in their wages (Grootaert & Kanbur, 1990). This shift is evidenced by the fact that, between 1986 and 1988, the incidence of poor households in small urban areas increased from 2.3 percent to 31.7 percent, while the incidence of poor households in rural areas decreased from 57.4 percent to 51.2 percent during the same time period (Sahn, Dorosh, & Younger, 1997).

Despite the myriad of changes implemented under the 1986 SAP, 1987 marked a return to economic decline with another drop in the prices of coffee and cocoa, with real GDP growth plummeting from 3.4 percent in 1986 to -1.6 percent in 1987. When the economy continued to deteriorate, Côte d'Ivoire interrupted the adjustment effort, choosing not to go forward with additional structural and policy changes between 1987 and 1989. During this time period, socioeconomic conditions continued to worsen, and poverty incidence increased by 32 percent in 1988 alone. Near the end of 1989, the government of Côte d'Ivoire implemented a new economic reform program with the support of the World Bank and the IMF, beginning a second phase of structural adjustment that would continue throughout the 1990s (Grootaert, 1995). Between 1989 and 1993, the World Bank issued six structural adjustment loans to the country, and the IMF engaged in two stand-by loan arrangements in 1989 and 1991.

During this period, the primary objectives of the IMF and World Bank were the reduction of the government's budget deficit through reduced government expenditures, reduced capital expenditures, and tax increases; privatization of state enterprise; and general finance reform. Adjustment continued in 1994, when Côte d'Ivoire entered into a three year ESAF program through the IMF. The stated objectives of the ESAF agreement were the generation of budget surplus to be used to financing the country's debt, GDP growth of at least 5 percent by 1995, and the economic protection of vulnerable groups during the adjustment period. The IMF asserted that these objectives would be accomplished through "labor market deregulation, price decontrol, trade reform, reductions in civil service employment, and faster privatization" (Naiman &

Watkins, 1999). Unlike the earlier period of structural adjustment, which saw only a slight increase in external debt, the second phase of programs in Côte d'Ivoire contributed to skyrocketing debt between 1989 and 1996; and by 1996 the country's concessional debt had reached a staggering \$4.8 billion, an increase of over \$2 billion from the 1989 level of debt of \$2.16 billion (Figure 11). The country's total external debt also increased during this period, from \$14.82 billion in 1989 to \$19.52 billion in 1996 (Figure 12).

Despite promises of economic recovery on the part of the IMF and the World Bank, the second phase of structural adjustment also failed to deliver growth and address poverty. Between 1988 and 1995, the incidence and intensity of poverty doubled, with the percentage of the population earning less than one dollar per day increasing from 17.8 to 36.8 in a seven year period (Naiman & Watkins, 1999). GDP per capita was also affected, decreasing from \$830.8 in 1989 to \$763.7 in 1995 (Figure 9) Social service provision was also negatively impacted by the economic conditions of the adjustment period, with the education sector suffering the brunt of budget cuts by the government. Between 1990 and 1995, real per capita government spending on education decline by over 35 percent; and by 1995, the gross enrollment rate for secondary school was at only 31 percent, a decrease of 3 percent from the enrollment rate of 34 percent in 1986 (Naiman & Watkins, 1999). While the IMF and World Bank programs did not enjoy initial success in stimulating economic growth, the country appeared to be recovering beginning in 1995, and it sustained an average rate of GDP growth of approximately 6 percent between 1995 and 1998 (International Labor Rights Fund).

In 1998, citing their success in facilitating economic recovery, the IMF put forth a second ESAF agreement for the 1998-2000 period, including similar objectives to those of the 1994 program, while also putting forward a strategy for more expansive reforms for the private sector and fiscal policy (IMF, 1998). These optimistic plans for economic reform were complicated when global cocoa prices again plummeted in 1999, beginning a regression toward economic decline in the country. In 1999, the growth rate of Côte d'Ivoire's GDP declined from approximately 6 percent to just 1.6 percent; and the situation continued to worsen in the following year, with the economy experiencing decline in GDP of -2.4 percent in 2000 (International Labor Rights Fund). The economy recovered only slightly in 2001, reaching a GDP growth of 0.1 percent; and at the outbreak of the conflict in 2002, growth was expected to reach a maximum of 3 percent by the end of the year (OECD, 2003).

Examination of Côte d'Ivoire's experience with structural adjustment highlights several key factors related to the relationships between adjustment, economic conditions, and conflict. First, analysis of socioeconomic indicators demonstrates that GDP per capita and primary school enrollment declined in the two decades following the introduction of adjustment and prior to the outbreak of conflict in 2002. In the case of Côte d'Ivoire, the decline in GDP per capita was largest after the introduction of the first programs between 1981 and 1985. However, it remained well below 1980 levels throughout the introduction of additional programs in the latter half of the 1980s and the 1990s. Post-adjustment changes in primary school enrollment levels were less significant, and it is unclear whether education was seriously affected by the programs based on this data. In addition to the general impacts on socioeconomic conditions, there is evidence that structural adjustment in Côte d'Ivoire disproportionately impacted urban Ivorians and Ivorians outside of coffee and cocoa production, magnifying existing gaps in economic prosperity and opportunity.

3.6 Summary of Findings

The above analysis on structural adjustment and its impacts on the economies and socioeconomic conditions of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire reveals several patterns. First, data on standard of living indicators such as GDP per capita and education suggest that the overall socioeconomic conditions of all three countries declined following the introduction of structural adjustment in the 1980s and prior to the onset of the first conflict in each country. The most obvious effects were in GDP per capita, which declined precipitously in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire in the years leading up to the conflicts. The impacts on education were less uniform across the three case studies, with Côte d'Ivoire demonstrating little variation in primary school enrollment in the years following the introduction of structural adjustment and leading up to the conflict. This raises interesting questions about the relationship between structural adjustment and declining socioeconomic conditions, given that education levels in were significantly higher than those of those of the other two countries prior to the introduction of structural adjustment.

Côte d'Ivoire also experienced a decade or so more of structural adjustment before descending into conflict in 2002. This is in contrast to Liberia and Sierra Leone, which descended into conflict in 1989 and 1991 respectively, which was within approximately a decade of the introduction of adjustment. These factors suggest that the initial level of development may be a factor in determining the extent to which structural adjustment impacts socioeconomic conditions. The three case study countries also demonstrated a steady increase in external debt in the pre-conflict adjustment period. Importantly, increases in debt were not restricted to concessional structural adjustment loans, but included significant increases in total debt that included other forms of international assistance and loans. This suggests that, when faced with the economic failures of adjustment, the countries were forced to obtain additional forms of credit outside of structural adjustment lending, further destabilizing their economies.

While the above data suggests a relationship between structural adjustment and economic decline in all three cases, one question that remains is whether economic decline would have occurred in the absence of conditional lending agreements. Given the historical nature of the study, it is not possible to determine what the economies of the three countries would have looked like without structural adjustment; and this raises the question of whether we can blame the programs for processes of decline that may have occurred had conditionality agreements not been implemented. However, while economic collapse may or may not have been caused by structural adjustment, the data reveals a second pattern that suggests that, in either case, structural adjustment played a role in determining the distribution of economic hardship in ways that contributed to conflict by determining who was affected by economic decline and how they were affected by it. In other words, the data on economic development in the adjustment period reveals a tendency for structural adjustment programs to exacerbate inequality and exclusion in the economic sphere based on their focus on specific sectors of development and the shrinking of other areas of the state and economy.

Though the mechanisms through which this occurred varied by country, it is clear that the programs favored certain groups in each society, often at the expense of others. In Liberia, adjustment favored foreign concession-holders at the expense of Liberians at the lower end of the socioeconomic ladder, while simultaneously targeting public sector employees and youth through the shrinking of the state bureaucracy and declining public expenditure. In Côte d’Ivoire, adjustment was structured to enhance production in the coffee and cocoa industries, and the programs were effectively designed to promote growth in those sectors at the expense of urban populations, and particularly public sector employees. In Sierra Leone, the magnification of inequality and exclusion through structural adjustment is less obvious than in the other two cases. However, the analysis above suggests that the removal of subsidies on basic commodities was one of the more devastating aspects of the programs and that they resulted in increased economic hardships for the urban and rural poor, both of whom were marginalized and excluded populations in the post-colonial period.

Based upon the combined findings of the historical profiles and structural adjustment profiles, I argue that the magnification of inequality and exclusion of select groups that occurred as a result of structural adjustment led to conflict by shifting realities and perceptions of opportunities for socioeconomic mobility among significant proportions of the populations in each country. In Chapter 2, analysis of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire revealed the importance of marginalized groups in the development of conflict in each of the countries, with unemployed and uneducated youth playing a pivotal role in instigating violent conflict. What is key to my argument is the evidence presented in the previous chapter that suggests that the choice of these youth to participate in violence in all three countries was driven by the absence of 'normal' routes to economic stability and the perception that violence was a means through which to attain access to greater educational and economic opportunities. Though limited educational and economic opportunity was a challenge faced through much of the colonial and post-colonial periods in these countries, the extent of these limitations was significantly altered through structural adjustment's impacts on per capita income and education, and this process was one avenue through which foreign economic intervention in the form of structural adjustment exacerbated existing structures of inequality and exclusion. The second mechanism through which structural adjustment magnified inequality was the tendency of structural adjustment to favor elite groups in the economic and political spheres at the expense of already marginalized groups that had previously been dependent on state provision of services such as education to achieve upward mobility.

Chapter 4

Conflict Spillover?

4.1 Overview

In the preceding chapters, instability and violent conflict in each of the three individual case study countries were explored through historical profiles and an analysis of the impacts of structural adjustment on domestic political and economic conditions, exposing a number of common themes in the processes of conflict development in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire. An analysis of the three countries reveals that, while each country had unique experiences with state building and development in the colonial and post-colonial periods, they also shared several key experiences, chief among them a particular type of foreign economic intervention that evolved in the years prior to the conflicts, eventually taking the form of structural adjustment programs. Though the available data on the impacts of these programs is limited and imperfect in nature, it does suggest that the programs had detrimental impacts on the economies and political stability of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire in ways that directly impacted the trajectory of instability and conflict in each of the three countries.

While the findings regarding the occurrence of conflict in each individual country are relatively clear, what is less clear is whether the three conflicts occurred in relative isolation or were causally related. In other words, there is still the question of whether conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire can be attributed primarily to transborder processes of conflict diffusion or to the existence of similar domestic conditions that made conflict more likely in each individual case. In Chapter 2, the sections detailing the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire reveal clear transnational connections between state and non-state parties both before and during the conflicts. The connections suggest that the leaders of these groups had a number of political and economic incentives for offering both direct and indirect support to various parties to the conflicts throughout the region at various points in time. They also suggest that participants in rebel groups experienced some degree of interaction that facilitated the involvement of non-national rebel troops in conflicts in neighboring countries. However, while these links demonstrate a connection between the parties to the conflicts, they do not necessarily demonstrate that the actual occurrence of conflict in one country was the causal factor explaining the occurrence of conflict in the others. In other words, the existence of political, ideological, and even economic ties between the parties to the conflicts does not explain the willingness and ability of the populations within those countries to become the primary participants in instigating domestic conflict. Further, these connections do not explain how, and if, the existing networks between these countries shifted in the years preceding the conflicts in ways that incentivized cooperation and violence on the part of domestic combatants in each of the three countries.

In this chapter, I will explore these questions in order to determine whether the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire were primarily isolated instances of domestic conflict driven by similar climates of inequality and exclusivity, or related instances of conflict in a regional conflict system. The existing literature on conflict diffusion that was presented in Chapter 1 suggests that there are a number of possible processes through which conflict spillover occurs, the most likely of which are through the existence of transnational formal and informal economic networks and trans-border ethnic ties that promote the extension of violence based on ties to ethnic groups in neighboring countries. In the case of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, distinct colonial experiences resulted in widely divergent configurations of ethnic contracts and salience between the countries; and the historical analysis does not suggest that common transborder ethnic ties played a significant role in the conflicts in any of the three countries. For this reason, I will focus solely on transnational economic networks in assessing the possibility of conflict spillover. I will situate this exploration within my broader findings on the impact of foreign economic intervention on domestic stability, exploring the link between foreign economic intervention in each of the three countries and changes in regional economic dynamics. In particular, I will focus on shifts in trade patterns, both formal and informal, following the introduction of structural adjustment and in the years immediately preceding each of the conflicts in order to assess whether the propensity of structural adjustment programs to magnify inequality and exclusion domestically was transmitted across borders through its impact on formal and informal trade.

4.2 Structural Adjustment and Trade

Structural Adjustment and Formal Trade

The data on trade between Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire is incomplete and, therefore, provides only an incomplete picture of the dynamics at play in the years immediately following the introduction of structural adjustment programs[1]. However, given the data that is available, there does not appear to be a clear and measurable link between the introduction of structural adjustment and levels of trade; and the three countries demonstrate significant variation in trading patterns throughout the 1980s. In the case of the trading relationship between Liberia and Sierra Leone, the general trend was a decrease in exports from Liberia to Sierra Leone in the first half of the 1980s and an increase in exports from Sierra Leone to Liberia during the same time period. This is in contrast to the latter half of the 1970s, when exports from Liberia to Sierra Leone were increasing and exports from Sierra Leone to Liberia decreasing (Table 1). However, while the direction of trade between the countries had shifted toward Sierra Leone by 1985, the available

[1] Incomplete data is due to inconsistent data collection and data collection methods of the three governments that were exacerbated by the outbreak of conflict in the region.

data shows significant variation over the five-year period, with Liberia's exports increasing more than $2.5 million between 1981 and 1982, before plummeting in 1986[2] (Table 1).

Table 1.

Direction of Trade, Liberia and Sierra Leone: 1975-1995 (Millions of US$)		
Exports		
Year	Liberia to Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone to Liberia
1975	0.37	0.81
1976	0.34	0.25
1977	0.48	0.58
1978	1.13	-
1979		-
1980	1.25	-
1981	0.89	-
1982	3.43	0.88
1983	1.05	0.96
1984	1.03	1.58
1985	0.99	2.2
1986	0.31	-
1987	-	-
1988	-	-
1989	-	-
1990	0.31	-
1991	0.34	-
1992	0.38	-
1993	0.45	-
1994	0.54	-
1995	0.66	-

Source: International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics

As with Sierra Leone, the available data suggests that Liberia's trading patterns with Côte d'Ivoire shifted dramatically and often throughout the 1980s, while also demonstrating a general decrease in exports from Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire and a general increase in exports from Côte d'Ivoire to Liberia. This is evidenced by the fact that Liberian exports to Côte d'Ivoire decreased from $1.7 million in 1980 to only $0.02 million in 1987, while exports from Côte d'Ivoire to

[2] Conflict broke out in Liberia in 1989, Sierra Leone in 1991, and Côte d'Ivoire in 2002.

Liberia increased from $4.99 million in 1980 to $37.19 million in 1989 (Table 2). Interestingly, the biggest increase in exports from Côte d'Ivoire to Liberia occurred between 1982 and 1983, during which time a number of structural adjustment programs were being introduced in both countries (Table 2). However, without more detailed data about the commodities being traded between the countries, it is difficult to ascertain whether the shifts in favor of Côte d'Ivoire were the result of structural adjustment policies that focused on cocoa and coffee as primary export commodities or simply a result of Côte d'Ivoire's significantly higher level of economic development during the time period.

Table 2.

Direction of Trade, Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire: 1975-1995 (Millions of US$)		
Exports		
Year	Liberia to Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire to Liberia
1975	0.71	3.85
1976	1.5	-
1977	1.72	-
1978	2.45	-
1979		-
1980	1.74	4.99
1981	0.5	7.47
1982	0.13	9.98
1983	-	16.64
1984	-	16.93
1985	-	12.14
1986	0.02	-
1987	0.02	-
1988	-	-
1989	-	37.19
1990	0.2	14.32
1991	0.1	15.16
1992	0.08	23.44
1993	0.04	3.88
1994	0.73	4.55
1995	3.57	19.05

Source: International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics

In the case of trade between Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire following the introduction of structural adjustment, a lack of available data on trade between the two countries makes it difficult to draw concrete conclusions. The only pattern that becomes apparent from the limited data available is that, as with Liberia, exports from Côte d'Ivoire to Sierra Leone increased significantly between 1975 and 1995, with exports skyrocketing from only $4.93 million in 1989 to over $20.52 million in 1995 (Table 3). However, given that this increase occurred a full ten years after the introduction of conditional structural adjustment in both countries, as well as the fact that a significant portion of the increase in exports occurred after conflict had already broken out in Sierra Leone, it is difficult to argue that this trend is a direct result of structural adjustment.

Table 3.

Direction of Trade, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire: 1975-1995 (Millions of US$)		
Exports		
Year	Sierra Leone to Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire to Sierra Leone
1975	0.06	0.66
1976	-	-
1977	-	-
1978	-	-
1979	-	-
1980	-	-
1981	-	-
1982	-	-
1983	-	-
1984	0.69	-
1985	0.21	-
1986	-	-
1987	-	-
1988	-	-
1989	-	4.93
1990	-	16.32
1991	-	21.92
1992	-	26.02
1993	-	26.68
1994	-	26.51
1995	-	20.52

Source: International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics

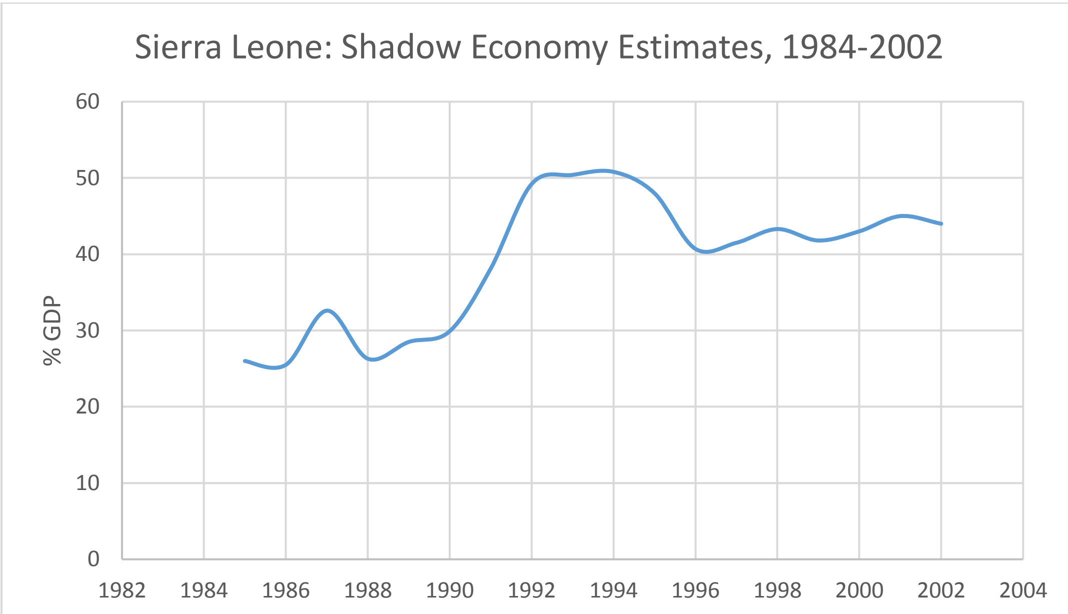
Overall, a macro level analysis of formal trade between Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire does not suggest that the devastating domestic impacts of structural adjustment outlined in the previous chapter had measurable and significant impacts on regional trading patterns in ways that would support a conflict spillover argument. However, given the limited amount of data available on Liberia and Sierra Leone during the time period, the inability to draw a conclusion about the connection between structural adjustment and regional trading dynamics may be a function of incomplete information and flawed data. In describing the dataset used above, the IMF states that the direction of trade statistics are compiled from domestic statistics agencies when possible, and estimated based on a number of other sources in other cases. As a result, there is often a large margin of error in the estimates provided, and this has the potential to skew the data toward countries with more sophisticated and reliable data collection capabilities. Given these limitations, I will not argue that the data proves definitively that there were no spillover effects in formal trade. Instead, I argue that the data simply does not indicative any particular pattern with regard to structural adjustment and regional trade.

Structural Adjustment and Informal Trade

While the impact of structural adjustment on formal economic interactions is useful in understanding conflict diffusion processes, what is perhaps more important is assessing their impact on informal economic networks in the region. As outlined in previous chapters, the region in which the conflict occurred, and the country of Sierra Leone in particular, is home to valuable resources that have played a significant role in the development and informal economy of the region. Given this fact, an examination of these informal networks in the post-structural adjustment, pre-conflict years is imperative to understanding whether conflict diffusion did occur. However, as with the analysis of formal trade in the region, the data available on informal economic networks in the pre-conflict period is scarce and unreliable. Given the inherently secretive nature of informal trade, there is a large gap in data on levels of informal trade between the three countries specifically. However, there has been some quantitative work done on the overall size of the informal economies of the three countries; and it is these statistics that I will use to measure changes in transborder informal economic activity. While this will not provide a comprehensive picture of the specific trading dynamics between the countries in question, it will provide some understanding of whether informal economic networks were expanding in tandem with structural adjustment programs in the years leading up to the conflict.

Similar to the data on formal trade, the limited data on the informal economies of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire does not sufficiently link the introduction of structural adjustment to shifts in informal trading networks, and in particular, to an increase in informal trade that could have served as the mechanism through which conflict spread. Sierra Leone experienced significant growth in its shadow economy in the decade following structural adjustment and prior to the conflict; and it grew from 25.5 percent of GDP in 1986 to 38.1 at the outbreak of the conflict in 1991 (Figure 13). Importantly, the shadow economy was in a period of growth and not decline in the two years prior to the conflict. However, it is also important to note that, though it was growing in the two years prior to the conflict, the actual size of the shadow economy was smaller in the year prior to the outbreak of conflict than it had been three years earlier in 1987 (Figure 13). In addition, the most significant growth in its informal economy occurred after the conflicts in both Liberia and Sierra Leone had already begun (Figure 13; Figure 14). In fact, the informal economy of Sierra Leone was in one of its smallest periods both in the two-year period prior to the outbreak of conflict in Liberia and in the two-year period following the outbreak of conflict in Liberia and prior to the outbreak of conflict in Sierra Leone (Figure 13; Figure 14).

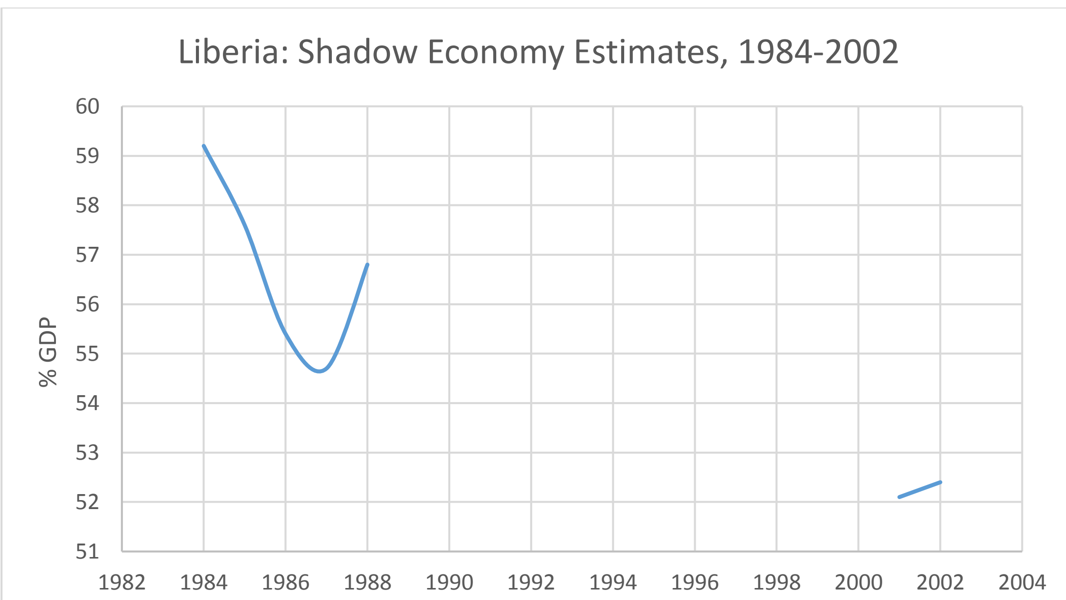
Figure 13.



Source: Alm & Embaye (2013), *Using Dynamic Panel Methods to Estimate Shadow Economies Around the World, 1984-2006*

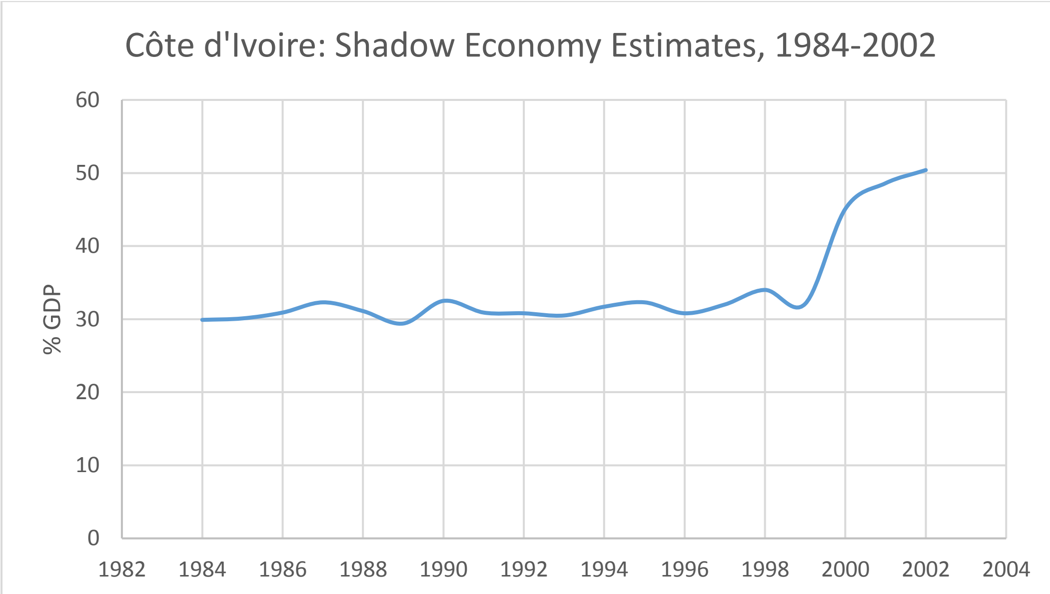
In the case of Liberia, there is very limited data on the size of the informal economy, but the available numbers suggest that it was shrinking in the first half of the 1980s before it began to grow again between 1986 and 1988. While data is not available for the following years, the graph suggests an upward trajectory in the two years leading up to the outbreak of conflict in Liberia. However, even with the growth that occurred after 1986, the informal economy was still 2.4 percent smaller in 1988 than it had been in 1984 (Figure 14). Due to the absence of data after 1988, it is impossible to tell whether Liberia's shadow economy grew following the outbreak of conflict in Sierra Leone (Figure 14). However, were there data demonstrating that trend, it would still not explain the actual outbreak of conflict in Sierra Leone, as the growth would not have occurred until after conflict began. The size of Côte d'Ivoire's shadow economy fluctuated between approximately 29 percent of GDP and 34 percent of GDP from 1984 to 1999 before skyrocketing to 50.4 percent of GDP between 2000 and 2002 (Figure 15). Like the other two countries, Côte d'Ivoire was experiencing an upturn in the size of the informal economy in the three years prior to the conflict, though this was almost two full decades after the introduction of structural adjustment in the country. Interestingly, Côte d'Ivoire is the only country of the three in which the size of the informal economy the year before the outbreak of conflict was the largest it had been since 1984. Also important to note is the fact that Côte d'Ivoire's informal economy does not appear to have been significantly impacted by the outbreak of conflict in Liberia or Sierra Leone, with slight decreases in size at the outbreak of the Liberian conflict in 1989 and the outbreak of the conflict in Sierra Leone in 1991 (Figure 15).

Figure 14.



Source: Alm & Embaye (2013), *Using Dynamic Panel Methods to Estimate Shadow Economies Around the World, 1984-2006*

Figure 15.



Source: Alm & Embaye (2013), *Using Dynamic Panel Methods to Estimate Shadow Economies Around the World, 1984-2006*

4.3 Summary of Findings

Based on the available data on shifts in formal and informal trade between Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire, it does not appear that structural adjustment impacted transborder economic networks in ways that facilitated conflict diffusion across borders. With regard to formal trade, structural adjustment appears to have had little measurable impact; and one of the the only clear patterns is significant fluctuations in trade volumes between the three countries between 1980 and 1995. The other pattern observed is a bias in favor of Côte d'Ivoire that appears to increase throughout the 15-year period. However, the data used in this study is not comprehensive enough to explain the cause; and it does not appear to coincide with structural adjustment specifically. In the case of informal trade, the findings more clearly demonstrate a lack of connection between structural adjustment, increased informal trade, and conflict in the three countries. These findings suggest that conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire was primarily a product of domestic conditions and processes, rather than an example of conflict spillover from one country to another.

Conclusion

On the surface, the post-World War II decolonization of Africa appeared to signify the end of Western domination in the developing world and the beginning of economic and political self-determination for newly independent African states. Over the next three decades, these states entered a distinct period of development during which they attempted processes of state-building and integration into an increasingly global economy. When states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire deteriorated into civil conflict decades later, academics, international financial institutions, and state actors rushed to provide explanations for the lack of stability in the region, blaming the conflicts on the failures of the African people to transcend primordial ethnic feuds, establish good governance and strong institutions, and to prevent greed over natural resources from erupting into violent competition. However, the occurrence of conflict in the three neighboring countries and in clusters of countries in several other sub-regions of the continent also raised the question of whether African states were experiencing the development of regional conflict systems through which violent conflict spilled across national borders.

Subsequent research on the phenomenon of conflict spillover found significant support for theories involving the transnational transmission of conflict through economic, political, and ethnic networks, sparking a debate over whether the prevalence of conflict in the various sub-regions of Africa was a cause of domestic conditions or the spread of conflict from one country to others. In the course of this debate, the explanations for conflict and conflict spillover in Sub-Saharan Africa have expanded to include factors such as colonial legacy and neo-colonial domination in the form of economic intervention in recognition of the importance of global power dynamics in analyses of the developing world. Despite the expansion and increasing depth of literature on conflict, explanations of the civil wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire in particular have fallen short of providing a comprehensive understanding of conflict dynamics in the individual countries and the sub-region as a whole. This is largely due to reliance on explanations involvement the existence of valuable natural resources and problematic ethnic and religious relationships. As a result, the role of foreign actors, both historically and in the immediate pre-conflict period, has been understudied and understated in explanations of the conflicts.

It was with these gaps in the literature in mind that I designed my research on Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire; and the explorations in this paper were conducted with two primary purposes. The first purpose was to begin to fill some of the gaps in the literature on conflict in the region through a multilayered analysis of the international political economy processes of the colonial and post-colonial periods in order to determine the role of foreign economic intervention in the occurrence of conflict in each of the three countries. The second purpose of this paper was to determine whether Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire represent instances of conflict spillover from one country to another; and in the case of conflict spillover, to determine the mechanisms through which the conflicts were spread beyond the national borders in which they began. Though constrained by time and data limitations, my research revealed several important findings that have at the very least begun to answer the two questions outlined above.

Foreign Economic Intervention and Domestic Conflict

With regard to the relationship between foreign economic intervention and conflict, case study analyses of the three countries demonstrate a clear connection between foreign economic intervention in the colonial period and the establishment and entrenchment of unequal and exclusive economic and political structures in the post-colonial state. This connection was present despite widely divergent experiences of colonialism and pseudo-colonialism through direct rule, indirect rule, and "special relationships" under France, Britain, and the United States. While the differences in governing approaches utilized by the various colonial powers shaped the post-colonial states of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire in unique ways, the institutionalization of economic and political inequality was a common feature in all three of the post-colonial states; and it was a feature that looked remarkably similar in all of the cases given the number of differences between them. Though the groups of elite and marginalized were not necessarily consistent across the three countries, there were similar patterns in the creation of divides along regional, rural-urban, tribal, age cohort, and other lines during the colonial period that were tied to colonial economic development and exploitation of extractive industries such as commodity crop agriculture and mining. In each of the three countries, these divisive lines were not dissolved with the end of colonialism, but instead were incorporated and cemented within the post-colonial state structure, allowing for the advancement of elite groups at the expense of other groups. As a result, development in the post-colonial period was constrained and informed by these inequalities and forms of exclusion in ways that encouraged tensions and competition between groups.

In the case of neo-colonial foreign economic intervention through structural adjustment programs, analysis of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire suggests two key relationships. First, in each of the three countries studied, structural adjustment appears to have contributed to overall economic decline and instability in ways that destabilized the countries' governments and contributed to increased economic hardships in general. However, as previously mentioned, this finding cannot be proven definitively, given that it is not possible to determine whether the same level of economic decline would have occurred without the introduction of structural adjustment. The second, and more important, finding was that structural adjustment programs also facilitated the magnification of inequality and exclusivity in the domestic sphere through their inherently biased nature designed to promote economic growth in certain sectors at the expense of other sectors and populations. Through this process, already struggling populations faced increasing economic marginalization in the adjustment period. It was within this increasingly limited economic environment that opposition arose in the form of marginalized youth and other segments of the populations with few alternative paths to the achievement of political and economic mobility. These findings suggest that foreign economic intervention provided the foundation for political instability in the colonial period, later providing the spark that would transform that political instability into violent conflict through further economic intervention in the form of structural adjustment lending.

Absence of Regional Conflict Spillover

The second key finding in my research was the surprising lack of evidence for the existence of conflict spillover in the case of Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire. Despite expectations that historical transborder trade relationships between the three countries would be impacted by colonial and neocolonial intervention in ways that encouraged their growth in the pre-conflict years, the limited data analyzed suggests that neither formal nor informal trade were significantly altered by structural adjustment. Further, the data does not suggest that the size of the informal economies in the pre-war years was a predicting factor in when the conflict would occur, and in two of the three countries the shadow economy was smaller at the outbreak of the conflict that it had been several years before. The results of the data on informal trade are slightly puzzling, as informal resource markets and arms trade across borders have been primary explanations for conflict diffusion in the region. However, based on the combined findings of the historical profiles, structural adjustment section, and analysis of transborder trade, conflict in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Côte d'Ivoire does not appear to be attributable to processes of transborder diffusion. Instead it appears to be the consequence of problematic domestic structures and conditions.

However, given the lack of data, the findings of this paper do not provide a definitive answer to whether the conflicts in the region were the result of conflict spillover; and the topic will need to be explored by further research. While it does not definitively answer the conflict spillover question, this thesis does support several key findings of the broader literature on structural adjustment, as well as making several important contributions to the literature on the relationship between structural adjustment and conflict. First, this thesis appears to support the findings of critics of structural adjustment who argue that it contributes to decreased state capacity, increased economic instability, and the exacerbation of existing societal divisions. More importantly, it seems to support the findings of authors who tie the problematic economic outcomes of structural adjustment to the outbreak of conflict in Sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the findings of this paper support arguments positing that many conflicts in Africa have been mislabeled as ethnic conflicts or political struggles, when they are in fact the consequence of the suboptimal outcomes of structural adjustment. In addition to supporting these findings, this thesis adds to the literature by suggesting that structural adjustment is not an isolated occurrence of foreign intervention with isolated consequences for economic decline and inequality. Instead, this thesis suggests that structural adjustment is a continuation of foreign intervention that impacts existing inequalities caused by previous occurrences of foreign intervention.

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