CHAPTER 2. Theory and Research

2.1 Theory

There are two ontologies established in Chapter 1 for understanding how politics impact peri-urban and rural communities. Realists tend to extrapolate from formal structures all the way to international-structural dimensions, while relativists refuse to "skip" the critical steps of conceptualizing institutions, preferring to begin from the ground up and rarely conceding that generalizable conclusions are ready to be made. Strictly speaking, differing planes of ontological truth should not communicate, but for the opposing conclusions reached by those planes applied to my research question. Both are therefore needed to fill a remarkable void in the knowledge of local politics in Africa, as well as to advance a more ecological[140] understanding of the impacts of political systems. Among the broader research questions is whether the realists are correct in employing received facts in theory generation, not to mention whether chains of causality are reliable and valid. Are the concepts we use to assess local politics both reliable and valid?

For this study, I have chosen to select those which are not always representative of their ontological approaches, but which to me seem the most promisingly reliable, valid (demonstrated repeatedly in various studies), and capable of being operationalized. In the case of ontological realism applied to international structures, oil rentierism is used due to the degree of its theoretical advancement. The internally realistic approach is represented by "Neo-Tillyian" authors, while the relativists are represented by authors on "hybrid governance." With the exception of rentierism, which is by and large delineated by Douglas Yates with respect to Africa, the latter two have been grouped according to the similarities in both approach and findings of two or more authors (see Table 1).

[140] The contemporary understanding of political ecology owes itself largely to the work of Raymond L. Bryant. In "Political ecology: An emerging research agenda in Third-World studies," *Political Geography* 11, no. 1, (1992): 12-36, Bryant defines political ecology as "an attempt to develop an integrated understanding of how environmental and political forces interact to mediate social and environmental change" (Abstract). Philippe Le Billon is notable for expanding the holism of political ecology to non-environmental policy concerns. See "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts" *Political Geography* 20, no. 5, (2001): 561-584.

Uniting most realists is the underlying assumption that weak institutions and rule of law lead to the state being usurped by individuals and groups of individuals as an instrument of profiteering. When the country is endowed with a commodifiable resource, this tendency is exacerbated. Walter Rodney insistently argued for Africa's continued economic dependence, while Jean-François Bayart and Christopher Clapham deftly theorized individual and group responses to the dependent condition, focusing primarily on political elites. The result is a maelstrom of actors maximizing power and assets. Rentier theorists take the specific case of oil rent dependence to explain how elites, unfettered by law enforcement, exercise their maximizing prerogatives to the detriment of democratic and rule-of-law values. Rentier theory embodies an organized research program with defined concepts, falsifiability, and a theoretical commitment to the rigidity of universalist and structuralist thinking. Also, oil dependence represents an extreme form of dependence due to the unparalleled cash flows and central management of oil revenues. For these reasons, it serves as an ideal representation of ontological realism applied to African politics.

Ontological resource realism is therefore represented by the latest work of Yates, who expertly sums up the causal logic of resource rentierism. Dependency is created by a significant amount of oil rent, leaving aside the question of whether the country had been made dependent by its own political class so as to advance clientelistic interests. Within the political dimensions of rentier theory, the "state" is relieved of the burden of taxation thanks to windfall oil revenues. Neither does it make sense for the political elite to support the administrative infrastructure for tax collection nor do they find it expedient to draw unwanted attention to state activities. Because of this, the political elite cease to be accountable to the citizenry, which severs the channels of democratic participation and de-legitimizes the state (assuming legitimacy is to be had through formal avenues of public accountability). The more dependent a state is on oil for its financial sustenance, the more vulnerable it is to these outcomes.

Rentier theory is arguably grand theory, and this fact might lead some to argue against its applicability to rural and peri-urban spaces. It deals with abstracted concepts (e.g. "rentier mentality," "political accountability," etc.) and builds upon itself syllogistically, sacrificing specifics for analytical cohesion. Figure 1 demonstrates clearly this particular feature of rentier

theory via a tree diagram designed by Yates.[141] There are two reasons, however, for why I argue the applicability of rentierism to localities. First, the ontological and human behavioral assumptions underlying the axes of rentier theory are fairly consistent throughout, and are indeed applicable to rural and peri-urban spaces. Corruption is held to be the illegal personal gain through public office, legitimacy rests on the ability of a Weberian state to answer to its citizens, and democratic participation amounts to civil society. Behaviorally, individuals are maximizers facing constraints, albeit less than those in states with strong institutions. A "rentier mentality" should permeate all corners of society where there is perceived access to easy riches. Second, limited democratic participation, decline in state legitimacy, and corruption—the ultimate outcomes of the state's financial autonomy—are conditions sustained by individuals who themselves reside anywhere. If the state is any apparatus subsidized and sponsored by the main organs of statehood in a capital city, then most municipal government concerns matters of the state, and the theorized incentive to instrumentalize public positions for personal profit remains. Grand theories are there to be qualified, not proven correct.

Table 1: Synthesized Perspectives on Politically-induced Anomie in Africa

	Authors	**Ontology**	**Most instrumental catalyst of change**	**General process of arriving at social and political anomie in rural/peri-urban spaces**
Rentierism	Yates, Omeje, Bayart, Clapham	Realistic	International material interests, e.g. oil extraction	Oil rent > State financial autonomy > rentier mentality and state relief from taxation
Neo-Tillyian	Tilly, Boone, Mamdani	Internally Realistic	State formation and maintenance	Communal structure > Rural social hierarchy and economic autonomy > decentralized despotism as a state strategy
Hybridity	Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan, Lund, Hyden, Geschiere	Relative	Lack of local cognitive and institutional hegemonies	Non-hegemonic state and/or competing norms > Reforms/Situational adjustments > Incongruence, dilution, sedimentation

[141] Douglas Yates, *The Scramble for African Oil* (London: Pluto Press, 2012).

On the other end of the ontological spectrum of theories explaining the impact of politics on rural and peri-urban livelihoods are hybridists. For cultural-political relativists like Médard, Hyden, Moore, Douglas, Peters, or Geschiere, the state in its Weberian conception is problematized and may not even be a valid object of analysis in peri-urban and rural Africa. Among the cultural relativists are hybridists such as Hyden, Bierschenk, Olivier de Sardan, and Lund, for whom a problematic state conditions a territory's politics. Unlike rentierism, in which low accountability and corruption are consequences of a state's dependence on foreign-derived income rather than its own people, low accountability and corruption are ultimately products of uncertainty. The absence of a hegemonic, norm-setting state means that any additional reforms[142] are not guaranteed to be absorbed coherently, creating what Lund calls "incongruence" or what Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan term "fragmentation" or "dilution." The result may be a loss of predictability and the practice of "bricolage"[143] where the poorest segments of society tend to lose out. Additionally, no public authority feels the pressure to be held accountable thanks to dilution.

A third way acknowledges the uniformity of a state, one which acts according to a neo-Tillyian logic. For believers of extraversion and rentierism, the state in Africa is but a tool for certain elite and private interests. For neo-Tillyian perspectives, the state seeks to reify itself and engages in the four activities: war-making, state-making, protection, and extraction. Its decisions are therefore impactful and have consequences, and its decisions have a state-maintaining logic, departing drastically from the insights of hybridists.[144] Mamdani implicitly adopts this view in arguing that decentralized despotism has been a state strategy to maintain order in the context of dual economies. Clientelism and patrimonialism become the most efficient means to carry out this despotism, which perverts civil society both in the rural and urban sectors, rendering any attempts at reform utterly dependent on the randomized quality of local leadership. Boone's elaboration of Mamdani's thesis, however, relegates decentralized despotism to a state strategy arrived at in only one of four scenarios, and only one in which the sub-national population in question is hierarchical but dependent on the state for its economic well-being. When the sub-national population is

[142] Reforms are meant to convey any changes to the institutional landscape. Bierschenk and Olivier de Sardan refer to this process as "sedimentation," while Lund calls it "proliferation." See Lund, *Twighlight Institutions*.

[143] Mary Douglas, *How Institutions Think* (Syracuse University Press, 1986).

[144] Hybridists, in stark contrast neo-Tillyian authors, would most likely conceive the post-colonial state as a synthesis of institutions where opposing interests can find a place. In this way, hybridity departs from Médard's neo-patrimonialism. But unlike Médard, hybridists assume no negative outcome when postulating the impact of syncretized institutions on forms of anomie.

hierarchical and economically autonomous, the state's Tillyian prerogatives of extraction and state-making predict a regime strategy of usurpation of that sub-national population. Where there is little social hierarchy, the state will either "occupy" the region or remain absent, depending on the derivable economic benefits. Boone's work, built on rigorous theory and supported by case studies, is a fine example of neo-Tillyian application to African settings and guides the analysis in Chapter 6.

Long-term livelihoods in peri-urban and rural spaces can therefore be politically impacted in three ways: via the corrupting effects of a hijacked state dependent on foreign income, via a concerted state strategy of efficient control, or through the uncertainty and opportunism bred by an incongruous proliferation of loosely defined public authorities. Each theory posits a breakdown in public trust and a rise in informal and corruptive behavior, but many of the theorized processes of arriving at these negative conditions are clearly incommensurable and can hardly reinforce each other. For rentierism, the cause of noxious informality is due in part to a bloated state where government jobs are awarded for patronage and bureaucratic work ethic falls, while for Boone's neo-Tillyian approach informality comes as a result of rather the opposite—the strategic retraction of the state where local despots are given free rein. For hybridists it is neither; rather, a confused array of state-like authorities prevent institutionalization.

All three approaches theorize processes which converge on similar outcomes for livelihoods. Though different in name, these outcomes all more or less concern breakdowns in social and political systems which served to ensure stability and the regularization of social and political norms. In other words, they lead to social and political anomie and the problematization of previous interpretive models (patterns of interaction, otherwise referred to simply as institutions). Section 1.5 argued that governance was a value-laden concept which has been errantly substituted in much of the literature for desirable social and political outcomes, while development and economic indexes have questionable reliability in an African context. Instead, anomie is an outcome adapted to any social or political space, and may be considered a universal "bad."

What makes anomie so compelling as a concept and operationalized outcome within a study is also its weakness. "Good governance" is essentially a measure of good relations between state and society, but it is entirely objective. Good governance indicators are based on "hard" data and supplemented by expert testimonies responding to an objective questionnaire. These objective

criteria are more often than not "universal," and typically draw from consensuses reached by multilateral coventions such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Performance on these criteria informs success on many good governance indicators. As touched upon above, this represents a fundamental problem to be dealt with by not only political scientists engaged in a positivistic endeavor to improve government, but also by the oil curse researchers. Furthermore, governance indicators primarily describe state-society relations, but it is rare that Africans living in rural, agrarian conditions have frequent contact with the state or even exposure to the means of enforcing the rule of state law. What rules in these rural and peri-urban spaces tends to be society itself and the norms it has established, or attempted to establish, over time to provide social stability. One can even add to the list of societal objectives that of political stability, if we expand our notion of politics to embrace informal relations of power. Due to the focus on formal structures of power (typically located in urban spaces) by political science and how it has informed governance indicators, we are left with an unsatisfactory idea of "governance" in peri-urban and rural spaces where oil extraction is typically carried out and where the state is relatively absent; even if an African state worked towards improving its governance, little impact would be felt in the periphery. The sociological concept of anomie, i.e. the negative manifestation by citizens of rapid structural change, however, transcends urban-periphery divides. Societies are always in flux, but if the pace of change cannot be sustained by existing cognitive realities and expectations, anomie can prevail. If a society is not allowed the time and resources to adapt to structural reforms such as the fast-growing importance of money vis-à-vis ancestral knowledge, individuals may feel insecure, marginalized, a loss of orientation, or relatively deprived. These are certainly universal "bads" even as characterized by proponents of good governance. It is argued here that anomie is a more direct—and applicable—approach to identifying these negative outcomes in peri-urban and rural spaces.

But what has politics got to do with this? Firstly, politics cannot be disembedded from society. Public authorities are both a product and cause of societal characteristics. A "structural change" engendering anomic trends could therefore be instigated by state-led rentierism, local corruption, a disconnect between local government and its constituents, complex processes of monetization and capitalization, etc. It is the difficult objective of this thesis to determine via historicization the causes of these structural changes, not to mention identifying the structural changes themselves. This represents the inherent weakness of anomie as an operationalized

outcome in this study. Causes of change are neither elegantly derived nor efficiently described, and history is vital to the understanding of *relative* structural stasis. In addition, history is flimsy, and can be interpreted in multiple ways, which is why thick descriptions of the Ndougou's past are necessary. The other weakness of anomie as an operationalized and undesirable outcome is that evidence of anomie (examples) in and of itself does not indicate its cause by power structures, formal and otherwise. More interpretation and thus susceptibility to critique is warranted in order to establish a connection between structural changes and public authorities.

A case of an African structural change, or a change in model/pattern of interpretation, was given by Gem et al., who find the concept of anomie "heuristically fruitful in understanding underground mutations of the social order, rather than ephemeral episodes of conflict or violence."[145] With respect to Senegal and Côte d'Ivoire, the authors explored the local interpretive model of traditional solidarity and its relative success under the countries' exogenous contact with globalization and economic opening. "Once taken for granted," they argue, "the rules governing the exchange of gifts and the redistribution of wealth have become subject to complex negotiations. The situation implies that individuals have assumed a degree of freedom but also that those who depend on them no longer know exactly what to expect." Clientelism, for instance, allowed interpretive models to flourish in urban (modern) spaces. The individual burdens become therefore both economic and psychological, as cadets expend mental energy trying to appraise their degree of certainty in solidarity transactions, which came less and less to fruition. And without the ability to provide adequate social security, African states inadvertently necessitate the continued societal reliance on solidarity, however compromised and problematized it has become.[146]

Anomie can, in fact, affect any pattern of interpretation within society, including politics.[147] Even if one accepts political and rule-of-law variables as valid barometers for measuring the health of societies, "political anomie" is a measurable/observable construct with known relationships to negatively perceived political degradations,[148] such as the outcomes predicted by rentierism. These

[145] Jean-Pierre Gern, Etienne Maillefer and Olivier Tschannen, "The Economic Crisis, Globalization, and Anomie in West Africa." In Peter Atteslander, Bettina Gransow, and John Western, eds. *Comparative Anomie Research: Hidden Barriers-Hidden Potential for Social Development*. (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 99-100.

[146] ibid., 110.

[147] Sebastian De Grazia, *The Political Com-munity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948).

[148] Charles D. Farris, "Selected Attitudes on Foreign Affairs as Correlates of Authoritarianism and Political Anomie." *The Journal of Politics* 22, no. 1 (1960): 50-67 ; Robert E. Agger, Marshall N. Goldstein, and Stanley A. Pearl. "Political Cynicism: Measurement and Meaning." *The Journal of Politics* (23, no. 3 (1961): 477-506) ;

include limited democratic participation, decline in state legitimacy, inefficiency, and corruption. Among the first to operationalize the term "political anomie," Ferris defined it as "feelings of powerlessness, cynicism, futility and apathy in relation to the political system."[149] Only later did the term fall out of fashion, giving way to the much more recognizable "political disaffection."[150] But because the indexes Yates uses to support concepts such as corruption rely on perceptions, and because these perceptions approximate the individual manifestations of political anomie, the concept is both useful and valid for the purposes of fieldwork data collection. In the case of each theory, anomie must be shown to have derived from informality, corruption, and a handful of other political outcomes.

2.2 Research Design and Case Selection

2.2.1. Restated Problem and Questions

Which political structures and processes lead to political and social anomie in peri-urban and rural communities, and how? I arrived at this slightly reformulated question after discovering ontological nuances in the literature, as well as after opting for anomie as an outcome with more promise for universal application. Keeping in mind my three theoretical approaches, as well as the theoretical interest in restricting cases to oil-bearing communities, the following questions have directed my research as they apply to each community:

1. What political interpretive models[151] existed prior to oil exploitation?
2. Did social and political anomic structures arise after oil exploitation? If so, in what form?
3. Which of my three theoretical approaches best explains and accounts for a change in anomic structures?

Nathan Glazer, and Daniel Patrick Moynihan. *Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews, Italians, and Irish of New York City*. Vol. 33. (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970).

[149] Farris, *Selected Attitudes*, 53.

[150] James D. Wright, "Political Disaffection." In *The handbook of Political Behavior* (pp. 1-79. Springer, Boston, MA, 1981) ; Torcal, Mariano, and José Ramón Montero. *Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies: Social Capital, Institutions and Politics.* (Routledge, 2006).

[151] Otherwise known as patterns of interaction, or even institutions in the sociological sense.

The following research design aimed to answer these questions, and in so doing allowed me to reach tentative conclusions regarding not only the most appropriate ontological approach for understanding politics in peri-urban communities, but also the most impactful strata of governance as well as inter-communal differences which were discovered to be important factors in the development of anomic structures.

2.2.2 Design and Methods

The research questions cannot be answered using quantitative methods, given the problematization of several concepts and definitions. As such, it is most appropriate to proceed with a comparative case study methodology. In addition, Robert K. Yin remarks that *how* questions, as opposed to *what* or *why* questions, "deal with operational links over time, rather than mere frequencies or incidence."[152] A copious amount of quantitative research has been devoted to discovering linear relationships around the resource curse and rentierism, as Chapter 1 has shown, yet this research has tended to leave out consideration of anthropological methods, as anthropologists of oil have noted. And while hybridists have tended to exclude or simply ignore that many local institutions are constituted in interaction with an international system which is itself governed by empirics and quantitative data—FDI, for instance—such quantitative impacts should more properly be tested in a comparison (see below). Since local institutions have no consensus definition due to the relative novelty of both the sub-field and this research question, the choice of a qualitative case study methodology becomes ever more justified. According to Yin, the strength of such a case study is in the high degree of conceptual validity it affords the researcher.[153] Concepts such as "anomie" and "institutions," let alone the "resource curse" and "governance," cannot be fully extrapolated in a quantitative study and fully accounted for. Anthropologists, and even some political scientists, make a very strong case for ethnographic work which evades strict descriptions of what accounts for local community power and good governance.

[152] Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods. 4th ed*. (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2009), 9.
[153] ibid.

The variation of case study design chosen to answer the research question is the comparative method, and more specifically the Most Similar Systems Design (MSSD). To test the validity of a theory, the comparative method establishes relationships between two or more variables by holding others constant.[154] In MSSD, as many independent variables between two systems (in this case, states) as possible are held constant so as to isolate those "experimental" variables which may be the cause for a different *dependent* variable between the two systems. "Common systemic characteristics are conceived of as 'controlled for,' whereas intersystemic differences are viewed as explanatory variables."[155]

Two fieldwork locations, Gamba in the Département of Ndougou (Gabon) and Takoradi in the Western Region (Ghana), were chosen for comparison over the time period concerned. This time period is designated by the beginning of oil exploration through the present. In this regard, both cases have in common several "control factors" for each community or small region. The control factors include, first and foremost, the existence of upstream oil operations which is said to curse local populations, not only through environmental degradation and economic imbalance but also through the hollowing out of institutions which may have been accountable to the citizenry. Secondly, each community is located within a sub-Saharan African, post-colonial state. That is, each community has had to negotiate presupposed neo-patrimonialism and adjust to the reality of informal power relations and extraversion at the state level which hardly pre-disposes state elites to seriously regard rural constituents.

The differences between the communities may be considered the potential explanatory factors for different anomic outcomes. Some of these factors also appear as explanations for local governance variance in the literature, a convenience which firmly grounds this thesis in several related research programs given above.[156] Prominent among the explanatory factors are pre-colonial culture and indigenous political systems. Though chieftaincy is the most prevalent form of local governance in sub-Saharan Africa, public spaces at the local level are characterized by a

[154] Arend Lijphart, "Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *American Political Science Review* (65 (1971): 682–693.

[155] Henry Teune, Adam Przeworski, *The Logic of Comparative Social Inquiry*. (New York: Wiley-Interscience, 1970), 33.

[156] Both the APPP introduced in Chapter 1 and the anthropology of oil (see Behrends) aim towards a comparative program of ethnography.

proliferation of social forms and structures which mediate power relations.[157] Secondly, though each of the communities is administratively subjected to a post-colonial state, those states do not share the same "extraversion portfolios," a concept developed by Bayart which describes choices available to extraverted state elites who depend not on their constituents but on external actors. Extraversion portfolios are enhanced and diversified when elites have more resources, such as oil, to instrumentalize towards their domestic authority. Inversely, a lack of resources depletes extraversion portfolios, leading to contestation from within. An extension of this hypothesis would surely have it that elites with less diversified extraversion portfolios are less powerful vis-à-vis internal pressures such as local and regional grievances. Less diversified extraversion portfolios may be the result of declining oil output, allegations of human rights violations, or over-dependence on any single external actor, whether it be a particular state or multinational corporation, all of which is deeply enmeshed in state history and state events. If any of these factors can be traced to changed social and political anomie in these communities, a case for rentierism is made. Thirdly, the studied localities will differ based on the political economic disposition of local elites vis-à-vis the state.[158] Finally, one community (Gamba, Gabon) is located in a rentier state, while the other (Sekondi-Takoradi) is not, or is at least in the process of developing a rentier state, i.e. those which do not meet the criteria for true rentierism but are nonetheless trending in that direction.[159] Gamba is theoretically exposed to all the ailments attributed to states highly dependent on natural resources for government revenue, while Sekondi-Takoradi benefits from more diversified political economies, and should not be expected to undergo the kind of monetization of socio-political relations which takes place as a result of rent-seeking. To pick up where the three factual research questions left off in Section 2.2.1, the introduction of a comparison invites the following three analytical research questions:

4. What institutional differences (patterns of interaction) existed between the two communities before oil exploitation?

[157] J.P. Olivier de Sardan, "A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (37, no. 1 (1999): 25-52) ; Bierschenk, Thomas, and Jean-Pierre Olivier De Sardan. "Local Powers and a Distant State in Rural Central African Republic." *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (35, no. 3 (1997): 441-468.

[158] Boone, *Political Topographies.*

[159] Beblawi and Luciani, *The Rentier State.*

5. Did these institutional differences account for differences in the growth or decrease in anomie?
6. What conclusions can therefore be drawn pertaining to the validity of the three approaches, and more specifically to the most impactful strata (international/exogenous, state-local/endogenous) on livelihoods?

Chapter 3 and Section 7.1 respond to Research Question 1, discussing via diachronic historical narrative the pre-oil interpretive models of Gamba and Sekondi-Takoradi respectively. Likewise, Chapter 4 and Section 7.2 elaborate the post-oil changes in anomic structures in Gamba and Sekondi-Takoradi respectively. Chapter 3 and Section 7.1 heavily rely on secondary sources, namely historical accounts and documentation, while Chapter 4 and Section 7.2 rely on both documentation and interviews.

Since notions of political interpretive models are vague, the twin methods of "process tracing" and Historical Institutionalism have been useful. "The method of process tracing," states Tulia G. Falletti, "was originally proposed to incorporate historical narratives within highly abstract theories and explanations in the social sciences."[160] The point is to link the development of institutions and other factors to a different outcome (i.e. factors of changing anomie) with the use of historical narrative, locating cause and effect along the way. It is a method that best suits the discovery of exogenous or endogenous dialectics of changing anomie over time. As Falletti states,

> When narratives seek to incorporate relatively long periods of time, changes in variables that are exogenous (or endogenous) to the model are likely to occur and can significantly change the actors' preferences, options, and strategies. The idea of stable equilibria is severely confining when applied to historical narratives. Hence, analytic narratives are not well suited to incorporating changes that reshape the preferences of actors or the effects of events that may render previously available options no longer viable.[161]

[160] Tulia G. Falletti, "Theory-Guided Process-Tracing in Comparative Politics: Something Old, Something New." *American Association of Political Science Newsletter* (Fall 2006), 1.
[161] ibid., 3.

Chapters 5-6 and Section 7.3 each respond to Research Question 3, where the chosen theory (see Table 1) is applied to changes in anomie in Gamba and Sekondi-Takoradi respectively. Gamba's lengthier experience with oil extraction, in addition to the fact that little to no like research had been conducted there prior to this study, necessitated a more profound examination of interpretive models and anomie, which then necessitated a lengthier analysis in Chapters 6. Chapter 5 is dedicated to rentierism, since Gabon qualifies as a "rentier state" in the literature, while Ghana evidently does not. I therefore decided that Section 7.3 sufficed to analyse the relative validity of the three approaches in a more holistic sense. Chapters 5 and 6, however, are organized much more along the lines of the theoretical axioms laid out in Table 1.

The reader will note that Chapter 7 falls significantly short of of Chapters 3, 4, and 6 in terms of depth and length. The reasons for this are simple. For one, Takoradi and the six coastal districts of the Western Region (Ghana) are, as we shall see, much better represented in both historical and analytical literature, while Gamba and the Ndougou (Gabon) appear only sparingly in the literature. Annie Merlet and Christopher Gray, for instance, have given historical depth to the Loango coast and southern Gabon respectively, but only touch upon the sparsely populated Ndougou region in passing. This is because the Ndougou was always perceived as being part of the outer fringes of the Loango confederacy/kingdom, as well as a relative backwater in southern Gabon where more populated areas—such as that surrounding Tchibanga or Mouila—are understandably better represented. In order to construct a narrative of the Ndougou, therefore, bits of and pieces of these works, among others, must be drawn out and subjected to my own historiography. Only after this can a model of social and political interaction for the Ndougou be confidently presented and used to juxtapose with the introduction of the oil industry in Chapter 4. By contrast, Takoradi and the six coastal districts of the Western Region have not only received systematic treatment by researchers, but have also been subject to oil-impact analyses. The re-interpretation of data for my own purposes in this regard was therefore made easier.

Beginning with Chapter 7, comparisons are made intermittently which address Research Questions 4 and 5 and bring to light key difference in pre-oil patterns as well as key differences in the existence and strength of post-oil anomic structures. Lastly, the Conclusion responds synthetically to Question 6, while also acknowledging limitations in the research design and suggesting a path forward.

2.3. Case Selection and Fieldwork

Two states, Ghana and Gabon, were selected based on adherence to the research design and feasibility. One community from each state was selected for fieldwork, and varies in terms of the potential explanatory factors outlined above. Gabon, like Angola and Nigeria, is among the older and more experienced rentier states on the continent, having first begun exploration as a French colony in 1929, although larger-scale commercial drilling had not begun until after World War II. By 1959 enough crude was pumped to warrant the construction of a pipeline,[162] and by the 1960s Gabon and the chief French operator of its onshore and offshore blocks, state-owned Elf-Aquitaine had made petroleum the Gabonese government's primary source of revenue. Oil production, however, peaked in 1997,[163] making Gabon an interesting case as to how different institutions react when future revenue streams are no longer guaranteed. Furthermore, the decline of French clout and the rise of Sino-American competition, which has coincidentally prolonged the Bongo regime's oil lifeline, introduces a dynamic international context. As previously explained, fieldwork in Gabon was prioritized for this study, due to the relative lack of research on this region in the literature.

Ghana is a relative newcomer to oil extraction, having only discovered oil in the promising Jubilee field in 2007. That field then came online in 2010, and exploration has proceeded apace. Ghana is interesting to study because the bulk of its oil activities are carried out by Western majors, and the Chinese presence, though felt in other sectors, is not as pronounced here. While most of Ghana's oil activities are offshore following a continent-wide trend, exploration and gas production have extended onshore, implicating local authorities and communities. Oil block Tano 2A, in the southwestern tip of the country bordering Côte d'Ivoire, had yet to come online at the time of fieldwork, but it might appear that a process of monetization has already begun in anticipation of the coming online of several fields.

The two countries are interesting to compare due to their prima facie historical differences (see Chapter 3 and Section 7.1) which make it likely that divergent institutional patterns exist between them and their communities which have not yet been identified by previous

[162] Yates, *The Rentier State*, 56-7.
[163] Yates, *The Scramble,* 31.

ethnographical, sociological or anthropological studies. Finally, these cases both differ importantly in their respective levels of anomie, which is dealt with in Chapter 4 and Section 7.2.

2.3.1. Why choose the Ndougou lagoon (Gamba, Gabon) and the Western Region (Sekondi-Takoradi, Ghana)?

Oil communities are ideal spaces to look for answers as to the extent to which certain political processes are responsible for overall changes in livelihoods, perceived and otherwise. Oil communities abound on the continent, as nearly every sub-Saharan nation is engaged in production to at least a very small extent. Thus, the universe of potential cases rose to the hundreds. But since the objective was to discern the most locally impactful political processes and actors, it made sense to choose two oil-bearing communities which differ drastically in such prima facie characteristics as state centralization and the scale/size of oil production, which would suggest a locally impactful state and/or a locally impactful international presence respectfully, as seen in section 2.1.

I focused most energy on selecting and investigating a community within a highly centralized state apparatus and where oil extraction was both prolonged and intensive. Since most theories of African politics account little for local impacts on local livelihoods, such characteristics would potentially yield the most extreme case of state and international impacts on local livelihoods. Falsification of either rentier theories or Neo-Tillyian perspectives in such a case would demand qualification of mainstream theories and perhaps even adherence to an entirely new framework.

The choice was therefore made to select an oil-bearing community within an African rentier state. Qualifying as oil rentier states in 2014 were Angola, Cameroon, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Gabon, Nigeria, and Sudan/South Sudan. Reasoning that declining oil industries would shift state and MNC strategies thereby nullifying any putative dominance of state and globally private designs, both Cameroon and Congo-Brazzaville were disregarded as potential cases. Feasibility then took precedence, as communities in both Chad and Sudan/South Sudan were deemed too precarious and insecure for the inquisitive and sensitive nature of political research. Communities within Angola and Nigeria would have constituted ideal cases but for a language barrier in the former and the superfluousness of research in the latter. Gabon remained

as a unique opportunity to uncover a relatively understudied rentier space at the local level, with the added advantage that its national rentier politics had been thoroughly invested and threshed out.

The community most putatively impacted by oil exploitation in Gabon has been Gamba and the surrounding communities lining the Ndougou lagoon. Since the early 1960s, Gamba has hosted Shell Upstream's crude oil terminal, which has drawn from reserves in and around Gamba and the Ndougou lagoon. Since 1989, the massive Rabi-Kounga field north of the lagoon granted Gamba and its corporate/administrative apparatuses a new lease of life. Since then, regional oilfields supplying Gamba's terminal have contributed to approximately half of Gabon's total oil production. Most of the rest of Gabon's oil exports are derived offshore. In addition, Gamba has served as a base of oil operations for an uncharacteristic amount of time as far as African oil-bearing communities go, gifting researchers decades of memories, data, and population continuity.

The next task was to locate a second site and thus the basis for a comparison per section 2.2.2. African oil-bearing communities not residing in oil rentier states vastly outnumber those within. Ghana, however, surfaced as a natural choice for a number of reasons. Though substantial enough to attract junior oil companies, the discovery of the offshore Jubilee field in 2007 failed to demonstrate enough proven reserves to qualify Ghana as a rentier state. In rentier theory and Neo-Tillyian logic, the local impact of the Ghanaian state and its concession operators is presumptively and relatively small, which is only compounded when one considers Ghana's devolved institutions vis-à-vis those of Gabon. On the other hand, the size of the field in nominal terms—370,000,000 barrels of oil—approximates that of Rabi-Kounga's north of Gamba—440,000,000 barrels. The infrastructural, administrative, and demographic impacts on both communities (the Ndougou lagoon and the Western Region) could therefore be reasonably expected to approximate one another. Under these conditions, hybrid governance approaches based on largely subnational processes would arguably predict similarly anomic evolutions in situations of institutional incongruence. Comparing the Ndougou lagoon and the Western Region thus held out the possibility of yielding significant theoretical feedback.

It should be noted, however, that only a "loose" comparison is possible between Gamba and Takoradi, despite both hosting the bulk of their respective country's oil industry. Since Ghana is by no means an oil rentier state, a critique of rentierism can only be achieved through the single case study of Gamba, Gabon. Furthermore, the population of the six coastal districts of Ghana's

Western Region (which includes the city of Takoradi) is most likely in excess of 1.5 million, while that of the Ndougou Department (which includes Gamba) is roughly 14,000. The impact of intervening variables having to do with demography, class formation, and political formations are therefore present. Generalizable conclusions can therefore only relate to the relative impact of oil on local politics and anomie in each space, while these intervening variables must be accepted as factors of differentiation between these two spaces. However, the comparison will acknowledge that the vastly different demographic characteristics of Takoradi and the six coastal districts of the Western Region did in fact significantly alter the region's historical experience and capacity to absorb change.

2.3.2. Data sources and access

The research design called for data generally related to the following: historical perceptions of livelihood changes and evidence of social and political anomie, historical information on relationships of power at all levels (including "public" actors and preferences), and finally more recent livelihoods, evidence of anomie, and relationships of power. For each of the three theories/approaches discussed—particularly with respect to rentierism—more specific information was required in one or several time periods, such as demographic shifts, tax receipts, evidence of democratic accountability, and evidence of state legitimacy. I therefore needed documentary, statistical, and oral data. In both fieldwork sites, reliable data had already been produced when it concerned national statistics, actors, and relationships in both historical and recent timeframes. When data called for these items at the local level, only Sekondi-Takoradi and Ghana's Western Region in general had been adequately documented in both history and recently—unsurprising given its population density and commercial importance. Gamba and the Ndougou lagoon, however, chiefly held esoteric or ancillary importance for historians such as Annie Merlet, due to the outdated importance of the nearby lagunar village Sette Cama. The late Christopher Gray, ex-Peace Corps volunteer who had become a student of Gabonese institutions,

also devoted much time and energy to the region, but was also primarily concerned with ethnographic history.[164]

Data collected on Gamba and the Ndougou lagoon, therefore, was mostly done onsite with the help of informant networks. Almost no in-depth documentation existed on the region for the post-colonial era concerning the factors of analysis stipulated, thus I relied most often on interviews with locals and contemporary forms of oral tradition where consensus existed. Once an important contact was procured, I could branch out in web-like fashion and thereby secure more and more interviews. Generally speaking, I searched out and focused on interviewees associated with the following broader categories: the oil industry (Shell-Gabon), the prefectoral state, the devolved state (or "local assemblies"), villagers (the Ndougou lagoon), townspeople (Gamba), and clergy. Unsurprisingly, discussions often led to the realization that I had neglected an important actor or group of actors, such as the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), locally-based national politicians, certain civil servants, and fishermen, whom I would contact immediately for information and discussions. All in all, the method of tapping into social networks was satisfactory, and provided me with the most efficient means of surveying and documenting. In any case, it was sufficient to provide me with at least 3-4 interviews per day with targeted interlocutors, totaling over 100 interviewees and hundreds of pages of historical, demographic, and statistical documentation (See Appendix A).

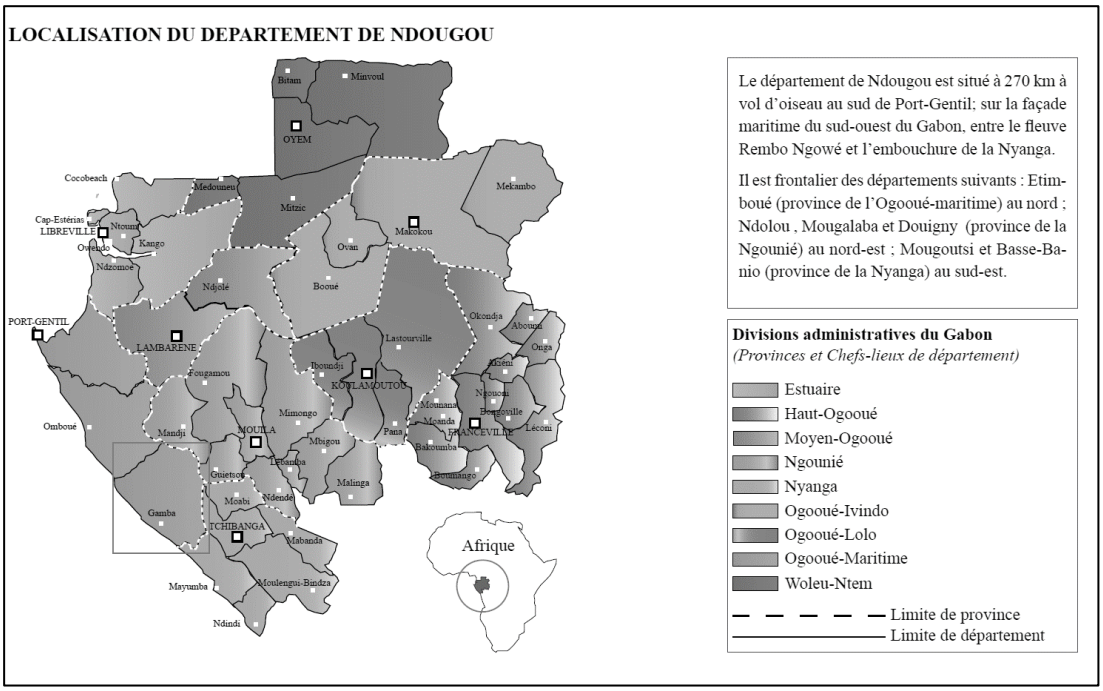
A similar strategy was applied to Sekondi-Takoradi. As in Libreville, I began in Accra with contacts obtained via links at the African Studies Centre in Leiden, Netherlands. Similar categories were targeted and searched out with the networking method, until eventually I was granted appointments with the very active Western Region Coastal Foundation, who were generous enough to provide me with two weeks of planning and contacts in my fieldwork site. Since the region and its recent experience with oil exploitation had already garnered ample national and international interest—both in academic and media circles—it was not necessary to commit as much time and resources to establishing basic facts and trends. Instead, a cursory survey of important actors was sufficient to complement existing literature. After roughly 4 weeks of

[164] Christopher Gray, *Colonial Rule and Crisis in Equatorial Africa: Southern Gabon, c. 1850-1940.* (Vol. 13. University Rochester Press, 2002) ; Christopher Gray "Who Does Historical Research in Gabon? Obstacles to the Development of a Scholarly Tradition." *History in Africa* (21 (1994): 413-433.

research, dozens of interviews were conducted and dozens of pages of relevant documentation and statistics procured (See Appendix B).

In both cases, access to people and documentation was, put simply, the result of persistence. As might be expected, requests for political information were habitually met with suspicion, ambiguity, or even silence. With the overtly political nature of the information sought, I found myself having to gain trust, which typically involved second visits, or even third visits in some instances. In the worst cases, information critical to filling one or several research objectives was simply unattainable. In these instances, I've done my best to alert the reader to conjectures based on incomplete or non-consensual oral data.

2.3.3. Fieldwork in Gabon and the Ndougou lagoon: Conditions, reflections, and limitations



Map 1: The Department of the Ndougou in Gabon (PDL, 2012)

Statistical and documentary evidence being hard to come by, I relied heavily on people and their stories for data, and people are to a large extent affected by the atmospheres surrounding them. Places and circumstances surrounding interviews varied greatly, from office environments and schools to homes and villages, and in each environment different registers of formality took

hold. Many times, an unknown breach in etiquette, change in personnel, or some other factor altered a productive dynamic—even the weather, if atypically hot, could be a factor.[165] Secondly, information was something of a commodity in Gabon. In a context of authoritarian control and oral cultures, knowledge of the past and personal stories might be considered assets or even weapons. Therefore, caution on the part of my interlocutors was normal, except in more informal contexts made so through introductions by trusted contacts, the nature of questioning, or through meeting in a residential context. In brief, physical and social environments were always conditioning the process of data acquisition. The following descriptions seek to share those environments so that readers might better understand the context in which information was distilled, including the limitations that inevitably arose during the process.

I spent the first two weeks of my Gabon stay in the capital of Libreville, in order to interview a number of academics and other actors involved in national politics. With an estimated population of 700,000 (roughly 40% that of Gabon), Libreville is by far the country's largest city. As such, it is fairly cosmopolitan and its denizens relatively unperturbed by outsiders. What's more, the categories of interviewees I selected in Libreville favored candid dialogue, as most if not all interviewees were familiar with the character of my research. Academics at the University of Omar Bongo were most esoteric yet receptive to my queries,[166] while public officers tended towards caution and/or obscuration and obfuscation, such as was the case at the United States Embassy, and surprisingly less so at the Ministry of Hydrocarbons. Most vocal, expressive, and undeniably candid were opposition elements, who had no qualms expressing real opinions but who in the process may have sacrificed authenticated facts. All of these factors had to be considered and balanced when interpreting the validity of claims and the honesty of opinions.

Gamba presented its own opportunities, challenges, and inherent limitations for the outside researcher. Though much of the difficulties in data acquisition might be attributable to much of the region in general, Gamba had its own unique idiosyncrasies. Much of those idiosyncrasies

[165] My stay in Gamba, for instance, was often punctuated with visits to the prefect, from whom I needed renewals of my *laisser-passer* documentation. If an administrative assistant was present whom I had never met, I would often wait for thirty or more minutes before an audience with the prefect, while my boat captain and prefect-appointed driver patiently waited outside for the day's work to begin.

[166] Questions of an overt political nature would often be dealt with in disciplinary jargon, especially where anthropologists and historians were concerned. Nevertheless, politically sensitive questions were not necessarily evaded; instead, they were touched upon circuitously and sometimes euphemistically, reflecting the paucity of political research at the University of Omar Bongo.

revolve around context and environment, and so are not capable of being subsumed under known categorical headings. The best way for readers to capture the conditions of research is through the following descriptions.

2.3.3.1. Traveling to Gamba: checkpoints, precariousness, enclavement

Some writers talk about something known colloquially as "place lag," where the pace of travel exceeds the pace of adjustment to place and atmosphere. This was as much a challenge for me as it was an indication of Gamba and the Ndougou's relative isolation from even countrywide networks of exchange. Arriving at Gamba was the first challenge, as no airlines—save chartered flights exceeding 10,000 euros—were scheduling service from Libreville to Gamba's small but jet-worthy airport. Neither of the handful of suggested airlines in either my Brandt guide or my Petit Futé were providing service to Gamba, and the third airline had presumably been closed for business. Ferries were only servicing the popular Libreville-Port Gentil route, turning around well short of Gamba. The only way to access Gamba, then, was by road and bush taxi.

As the crow flies, Gamba is less than 400km from Libreville, but one can only access the country's potentially 10th largest city circuitously, and sometimes treacherously. A well-paved road, the N1, links Libreville to Mouila, after which it intermittently gives way to flattened dirt or gravel. The bus from Libreville services most larger towns along this route, including Lambarene, until after a bumpy and compact 10-hour drive it arrives at Tchibanga, the administrative and commercial hub of the Nyanga department. Since bush taxies ferrying people and goods to Gamba only depart in the morning, the quickest overland journey from Libreville to Gamba necessitates two days' travel, and, consequently, an overnight stay in Tchibanga. The morning of departure, bush taxis leaving for Gamba and other regional destinations from Tchibanga's bustling central market square depart as early as 6 a.m. The first 2-hour leg of the journey scales pseudo-paved and dirt roads, which are even hazardous during the dry season; our driver stopped to assist one bus whose tire popped in the middle of the forested bluffs. Once near the Gulf shore, bush taxis to Gamba are forced to turn west and off-road along a coastal marsh.

Photograph 1: A welcome signs greets those entering Gamba. The Royal Dutch Shell logo is opposite Gabon's national flag. (July, 2015)

If Gamba can be considered an enclave, it is because the treacherous drive through the marshes renders cheap and easy movement in and out of the Ndougou a complete fantasy. First, only pickup trucks equipped for off-roading can reasonably traverse the ruts, fallen trees, and rocks. During the dry season, sand and mud routinely stop vehicles for hours on end, as is what happened to my bush taxi on the way to Gamba. During the rainy season, most traffic grounds to halt as the seasonal marshes are subject to recurrent and heavy flooding. Second, once one successfully crosses the marshes, one must board a ferry to cross the Nyanga River at Mougagara. Formerly a manual ferry operated with ropes and pulleys, the newly engine-powered mini-barge must first transport the pickup truck before turning around to retrieve the passengers, for fear that an overloaded truck would sink the barge. The lack of a bridge means that scaled-up commerce and movement of people cannot take hold, as pickup trucks are rather limited in their capacities to carry people, foodstuffs, and other goods sold in the Gamba market or in Plaine ("district" or "quarter") 3. During my own trip, a dozen unbuckled passengers sat atop heaps of foodstuffs (mostly yams), while five of us squeezed tightly into the 3-4 seat cabin. For a slightly larger fee I sat in the front passenger seat, while a teenage girl squeezed in between me and the driver, as the girl was forced to shift and contort herself to avoid interfering with the manual stick shift. Once

disembarked in Gamba, those traveling in the back of the pickup were caked in red clay from head to toe, due to the dirt kicked up by oncoming or leading traffic on the Gamba-Mayonami road.

One further but no less difficult obstacle in arriving at Gamba is the gauntlet of security checkpoints one encounters from Libreville to Tchibanga, and from Tchibanga to Gamba. Seemingly every hour, our progress was ensnared by huddles of police officers reviewing our documents. At each of the checkpoints—typically before entering municipal districts—everyone displayed their national identification, and my passport was almost always singled out for further inspection. In the meantime, our driver would routinely disembark with a manila envelope and return empty-handed. The most pugnacious of officers was stationed before the entrance to Gamba's borders, which comes only after the entrance to the Yenzi management camp. There and upon first arriving, the officer took issue with my paperwork attesting to the purpose of my visit, and ordered that I disembark. After a fair amount of quarreling and negotiation, he agreed to allow me to proceed with the others to the bus station so as to recuperate my suitcase, on the promise that the driver would bring me back to the checkpoint. Once back at the checkpoint, I was forced to phone my contact at Shell to come in person and make a convincing argument as to my stay. My contact later explained that the officer was simply looking for bribes.

2.3.3.2. Atmosphere

Anyone who sojourns long enough in a certain locality might make connections between the atmosphere—the weather, the layout, the general mood—and the social mores of the denizens themselves. Gamba proves no exception. Upon entering the town, a sign welcomes you to Gamba, and the logo of Royal Dutch Shell is proudly placed opposite the national flag of Gabon. Continuing on the road one spots the expansive Yenzi management camp, cordoned off with security fencing and guarded by a series of gates, each manned with private security. Plantations growing local wares straddle both of the road thereafter, until one reaches Plaine Bienvenue, a district characterized by ranch houses and widely separated government offices. Moving closer towards the town square, the impressively maintained high school occupies a significant corner. Turning right, one finally reaches the town square, soon after which the shops and markets of Plaine 3 predominate. The vast majority of the city's life takes place in Plaine 3, which is at once

chaotic, sometimes convivial, and always busy. This despite Plaine 3 occupying the smallest territory of all districts. Its unplanned residential zones are set off behind the shops, and if undiscerning, it is entirely too easy for one to miss the sprawl of Plaine 3's dwellings, and where undoubtedly most of the local flavor is.

A rough translation of *Gamba* or *N'Gamba* from Vili/Loumbou to English yields "mist" or "fog," a potent metaphor which inspired the title of this thesis. The nightly drop in temperature often reaches the local dew point, meaning the lagoon gradually becomes shrouded in a gray, heavy mist. By early morning, visibility, especially near the banks of the lagoon, can shrink to a few dozen meters. As often happens, a lack of wind and sun can leave the heavy mist in place until well after noon. In such conditions, the concentrated population of Plaine 3 is even more hidden from view. The lagoon in these conditions is scarcely navigable, and only so with the aid of an experienced boat pilot who has a good enough sense of direction to avoid the dozens of islands which inevitably obstruct what would otherwise be a simple course heading.

Many mornings were spent in these conditions, where the air was so thick that simple ambulation became arduous. My boat captain and prefect-appointed minder would typically arrive late at the small boat ramp, often by two hours and bearing expressionless and drawn faces. Their contempt for the day's work ahead was obvious, but the mist was so heavy they hardly had energy to express it. After a week of touring villages and repeating the somber morning routine, it became necessary to greet the two with drinks, manioc or other edibles so as to lubricate the wheels of sociability and industry. Such offerings had the added advantage of distracting my minder during early-morning interviews, where his presence was likely to moderate the openness of chiefs in particular, who clearly wished to remain on the prefect's good side. If sufficiently sated, he would saunter off and recline somewhere to drift off to sleep, while the boat captain would continue whatever personal business he had with friends and family in any particular village. This was my best chance to extract valuable information, and the effectiveness of the approach contributed to more productive second visits.

When midday broke and the sun burnt off the remaining mist, the heat could become so unbearable that potential interviewees often retreated indoors to eat and nap. Those working the plantations would return to the villages and often congregate in homes to enjoy a common meal, whether it be rotisserie turtle or roasted buffalo. During these rare occasions where young and middle-aged men were available for discussion, I often felt unduly callous in pressing for

discussions. It was already enough that I sought answers to sensitive questions with a minder present. But questioning also seemed to interrupt a daily ritual adapted to the commanding cyclical patterns of the local weather system, such as conserving as much energy as possible at high noon and eating in a cool, dry place. Empathy therefore often led me to postpone questioning until evenings. Evenings, for these reasons, tended to become the most opportune time to procure sensitive information and achieve the candor necessary towards procuring that information. People most often felt comfortable under cover of darkness, away from the prying eyes of my minder and perhaps also enlivened by the forgiving coolness which descended with the sun. It was in conditions such as these that even my prefect-appointed boat captain suddenly revealed the village-wide rumors of vampirism in Sette-Cama, motioning towards a schoolhouse with a lit cigarette while enjoying a beer on the porch of the village guesthouse. It was also under these conditions that the cantonal chief of Pitonga stared me down with half-drunken, fiery eyes, and professed to know the truth of what really went on in the Ndougou lagoon. All in all, the best information was procured in the most informal, obscure of circumstances, when locals were neither dictated to by the air, the sun, nor fear.

2.3.4. Fieldwork in Ghana's Western Region

The conditions of data acquisition were, and perhaps unsurprisingly to those familiar with the region, much more conducive in Ghana and the Western Region than in Gabon and the Ndougou. This was so for a few reasons, not least of which was the ease of accessing Sekondi-Takoradi via the N1. Buses were running to the city regularly and took approximately 5-6 hours. All of the issues which arise when attempting to access an enclave were therefore absent, including the monotony of stopping at several gratuitous checkpoints and having papers checked regularly. At the time of fieldwork, Ghana, unlike Gabon, had no distinction between a research visa and a tourist visa. For this reason, the level of scrutiny by uniformed officers when exiting and entering Sekondi-Takoradi was much less, not to mention my angst. Because all areas of interest in the Western Region were accessible via road, there was no need to procure a motorboat as was the case in the Ndougou. Also, no one suggested to me that I should report my activities to either of

the District Chief Executives, whereas such was often the case with respect to the prefect in the Ndougou.

Data acquisition in the Western Region was also facilitated by a culture of transparency, to be discussed in further detail below. Sekondi-Takoradi is also a cosmopolitan city, habituated to free movement and the free exchange of ideas and people. My intentions were therefore accepted at face value during interviews with villagers and chiefs, who understood immediately that the information given would only be used for educational purposes. In fact, and unlike in the Ndougou, chiefs and villagers of the Western Region were very eager to talk and give interviews, whereas those in the Ndougou much of the time did so out of complacency and a sense of courtesy. In a nod to the vitality of Ghana's free press, chiefs and villagers seemed keen that their story and their plight be published for a wider audience. This was the case in Nyankrom, for instance, where villagers were quick to give their opinion on local companies, even against that of their Queen Mother. It is perhaps due to these factors that much more information on Sekondi-Takoradi's experience with oil extraction has appeared in the press and in scholarship outlets.