The negotiation of 'corruption' by NGOs in Eastern Nigeria:
Engagements with local culture and global governance.

*CADAIR Electronic Version*

Laura Routley
Department of International Politics
Aberystwyth University
2010
Abstract / Summary

This thesis explores the discourses and practices of national Non-governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Enugu, Eastern Nigeria, as they relate to corruption. It examines how these discourses and practices reflect hybrid normative understandings of the state and politics. My research draws on nine months of participant observation with three Nigerian national NGOs (NGOs that are founded and run by Nigerians) based in Enugu, and on interviews conducted with the NGO workers. I examine how these NGOs are involved in grey practices, practices which can be seen to have certain attributes associated with corruption, but are not understood by NGO workers as such. I argue that the relationship of these organisations to corruption is highly ambiguous by showing that these practices are undertaken not for the benefit of NGOs or their workers, but in order to better assist their clients. My research findings imply that the ‘international’ norms put forward by advocates of good governance of a ‘proper functioning state’ are central to the norms surrounding these grey practices, albeit in a translated hybrid form. This translation is significant, for whilst the concepts of local and international norms and standards are discursively important for the production of the national NGOs legitimacy, their practices and discourses are radically hybrid. In examining this hybridity I contribute to the development of a more complex understanding of the translation of norms, arguing against those who conceptualise the role of national NGOs solely as extensions of the apparatus of global governmentality. I utilise Homi Bhabha’s concept of hybridity to argue that the hybrid discourses and practices of these national NGOs are produced by radically hybrid norms of politics and modes of governmentality. These practices are not a collage of pieces that can be traced back to either ‘local’ or imported conceptions, rather, they are ‘new’.
DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Signed ……………………………………………………………… (candidate)

Date ……………..

STATEMENT 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references. A bibliography is appended.

Signed ……………………………………………………………… (candidate)

Date ……………..

STATEMENT 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the summary to be made available to outside organisations.

Signed ………………………………………………………………(candidate)

Date ……………..
For Joe
# Table of Contents – CADAIR version

Abstract / Summary ................................................................. i
Declaration / Statements ............................................................ ii
Acknowledgements .................................................................. v
Acronyms and Abbreviations ...................................................... viii

## Introduction

Working with NGOs and thinking about ‘corruption’ ....................... 1
  - Hyper concern with Nigerian corruption ................................ 4
  - The location of the fieldwork ............................................... 7
  - What I am not studying ....................................................... 13
  - Focus of the thesis ............................................................ 15

## Conclusion

The proper functioning of the state and other hybrid discourses .......... 213
  - The Integral Façade of the State .......................................... 218
  - Hybrid Professional Demeanours ....................................... 222
  - Complex, Hybrid, Governmentalities ................................. 227
  - Conclusion ........................................................................ 234

Bibliography ............................................................................ 237
Preface to CDAIR Electronic Version

This thesis draws on fieldwork conducted with relatively small national NGOs in Nigeria. In order to protect these organisations and the individuals working for them, the organisations are not named, and each interviewee is identified by a pseudonym: this is the case in both this and the full version of the thesis. Additional precautions have been taken with this electronic version of the thesis, which has been edited to reduce further the possibilities for the identification of individuals and/or organisations. If anyone has a legitimate academic reason for wanting to access further content of the thesis they are very welcome to contact the author.

Laura Routley
January 2011
Acknowledgements

The Economic and Social Research Council provided generous funding without which the PhD would have been impossible. I also wish to formally thank the International Politics Department at Aberystwyth University for accommodating and nurturing me through my PhD (and, indeed, my previous degrees as well). Prof. Jenny Edkins in particular encouraged me to continue on to masters level and subsequently to a PhD. My supervisors have made a significant contribution to my progress through the process of producing a thesis. Prof. Richard Rathbone was called on for the final eighteen months of my thesis and his input has been invaluable, not least in hammering my prose into a more readable form. Richard was drafted in due to Prof. Rita Abrahamsen's departure for Canada: I have missed Rita's incisive criticism greatly in the latter stages of the thesis and very much appreciate the foundations she laid for me. Dr. Lucy Taylor provided stability, support and encouragement throughout and for that I am incredibly grateful.

My thesis involved a period of fieldwork for which there are a host of people who should be thanked. The majority of them cannot be named as I have expended considerable efforts ensuring their anonymity. There are, however, some who I can identify. Father Kevin O'Hara and Dr. Chris Willott assisted greatly with many of the practicalities of my first research trip. Nnanna Onuoha Arukwe provided me with connections to The University of Nigeria Nsukka and kindly invited me to give a paper there. I was given not just accommodation but a home by Aunty and Prof. and I became very fond of everyone I shared the compound with. My informal Igbo teacher (who delighted in teaching me various obscenities) also became a very good friend and her guidance around the city when I first arrived was invaluable. The heads of the NGOs provided me with assistance with visa applications and much else besides by way of practical assistance. Nearly all of my colleagues at the NGOs were open, welcoming and fun to work with and I miss them all. Outside of my work with the NGOs my friends Pauline and Stephanie provided me with a sense of family whilst I was away from home and I would not have eaten as well without them.

I must also thank Sue Barclay from the university's transcription service for her valiant attempts to decipher West African accents and, when faced with my rather over eager pestering, her patience.
Attempting to produce a PhD thesis takes three-to-four years: a long period in which a lot can happen. As a result, many people need to be thanked, acknowledged and remembered. There is neither the space, nor the time to mention everyone by name, for a PhD is – thankfully - not as much of a solo effort as it may appear. This is especially true of the International Politics Department in Aberystwyth which has a PhD community of a significant size, with an attendant friendliness and nosiness that cajoles and supports you through the process. I do, however, want to acknowledge Lisa Denney for her support and solidarity as a fellow Africanist. They say you can choose your friends but not your officemates, but I would have chosen all of mine. I will mention Andy Hom by name, not only for sharing the office with me but also for responding to my spelling, punctuation and grammar queries. In the broader ‘Aber Interpol’ cohort there are many I warmly count as friends and whose absence would have made the whole process considerably more miserable: they are too numerous to name, but I know who you are (and where you live).

There are, however, some friends and colleagues who demand mentioning by name. When the world ripped the carpet from under my feet and left me floundering in the first year of my PhD, four people in Aberystwyth valiantly endured my need for coffee breaks, movies and the pub; I owe a great deal to Dr. Laura Guillaume, Dr. Stephanie Ward, Dr Owen Collins and (soon to be Dr.) Stephan Petzold. I also phoned-in a considerable amount of long distance support from Kathryn Wallis, Fiona Fyfe, Corrine Emelius, and Adam Worth. Latterly, Paul Wright managed to arrive at just the right point to make many grammatical suggestions as well as undertaking food production, map drawing and cheerleading duties as and when required.

Throughout the ups and downs my family have provided buckets of loving (if often somewhat bewildered) support. I have also unceremoniously appended myself to the Grove family who have provided much needed solidarity and understanding.

Finally, this thesis is for Joe Grove, without whom it would never have been begun.
### Acronyms and Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AIDS</td>
<td>Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APGA</td>
<td>All Progressives General Alliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBO</td>
<td>Community Based Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFID</td>
<td>Department for International Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EFCC</td>
<td>Economic and Financial Crimes Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IFIs</td>
<td>International Financial Institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMF</td>
<td>International Monetary Fund</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICPC</td>
<td>Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Commission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGA</td>
<td>Local Government Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NITEL</td>
<td>Nigerian Telecommunications Limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGDO</td>
<td>Non-Governmental Development Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYSC</td>
<td>National Youth Service Corps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>Peoples Democratic Party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Working with NGOs and thinking about ‘corruption’

Working with national Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Enugu and thinking about ‘corruption’ is what, in essence, lies at the heart of this thesis. The research is based upon nine months of fieldwork undertaken with three national NGOs in Enugu, Eastern Nigeria, between the beginning of October 2007 and the end of July 2008. The focus of my research initially centred on differing views of corruption within Nigeria and the role of NGOs as anti-corruption agents. However, the conclusions of the thesis are in essence that ‘it is much more complicated than that’. National NGOs cannot be simply understood as anti-corruption agents. Nor can a discrete, emic Nigerian national NGO understanding of corruption be accessed. Rather, my thesis explores the ongoing processes by which NGO workers negotiated their relationships with the state, their funders and with their clients. It examines in particular how these relationships fit or diverge from the expectations of the development literature, particularly around the assumptions about ‘corruption’ contained in that literature. Due to the prominence that sets of norms play in understandings of corruption, and the critiques of the good governance agenda as imposing alien sets of norms, my central research question asks: How are norms of corruption negotiated in national NGOs in Enugu and what practices and discourses do they produce?

National NGOs have a particular interaction with the issue of the transfer of norms as in both development policy and the academic literature they are sometimes seen in a positive light as agents for progressive social change, and at other times they are seen negatively as pedlars of western values. I broadly agree with Elizabeth Harrison’s assessment that one

1 See discussion of this definition below
element missing from the literature on corruption, “is an understanding of the process of
translation, in which international discourses are re-articulated in national and local agendas.”6 This is not to say that such attempts to explore the translation of norms are completely absent from the literature, but the process remains obscure. This thesis does not aim to fully explain these processes, but it does point to their profound complexity and ambiguity through the examination of the relationship of some specific national NGOs to their donors, their clients and to the state. Utilising the empirical investigations of NGOs negotiations, demeanours and styles to reflect back on these issues of ‘translation’, this thesis argues that the discursive norms which were productive of NGO workers’ practices and understandings are radically hybrid, in line with my interpretation of Homi Bhabha’s concept of hybridity.7

My examination of the practices of national NGOs and their relationships with the state, their funders and their clients feeds into scalar and cultural debates about difference. Due to the concentration on these debates on the divisions between the local and the global I have avoided using terms such as local NGOs, indigenous NGOs or intermediary NGOs as the use of these terms, though not necessarily incorrect, may carry with them certain assumptions about the nature of the organisations. I have thus chosen to use the term ‘national NGOs’, for want of a better phrase, to denote organisations formally constituted as NGOs which are founded and run by individuals from the nation in which they operate. In the case of all the organisations with which fieldwork was carried out, their founders and the majority of their staff were from the Eastern region of Nigeria. Such organisations have been termed ‘Non-Governmental Development Organisations’ (NGDOs), ‘indigenous NGOs’ or ‘intermediary NGOs’ by other scholars.8 I use the term ‘national’ as I feel it is one of the more neutral terms available to differentiate them from their international counterparts.

---

What emerged from working with the NGOs was the perennial oscillation in NGO workers' discussions between a desire to be seen to know the concerns of clients and to serve them, and of being associated with the importance and prestige of the international through their access to and role played in international arenas. National NGOs are frequently discussed as intermediaries between both scalar levels of the local and the international and between the different cultural perspectives assumed to prevail in each of these locations. It is this intermediary status that, is seen to be both their *raison d’être* (their key purpose and attribute) but is also a frequent source of criticism, often stemming from their relationship with international funders. National NGOs have been criticised by some scholars for being overly influenced by their funders, resulting in the neglect of their local constituents.9 This critique often results in a perception that the localness or the authenticity of the national NGOs is a vital marker of their worth. In contrast, Sarah Michael argues that African NGOs need to develop influence or ‘power’ in order to engage with this international level more fully and, vitally, on their own terms.10 Whilst she sees financial dependency as a problem, she argues that strong links to the international development community are an important aspect of a powerful (good?) NGO. Some scholars have then seen it necessary for NGOs to expand their impacts to benefit a wider group or have larger scale effects, to move beyond the locality in order to undertake a wider political project combating structural inequalities.11 What is central to both of these critiques either based on is their concern with national NGOs being in a better position to serve their constituents either through not neglecting their needs because their heads are turned by funders, or through being positioned in such a way as to be able to “influence the many international processes which affect them, their donors and their governments” and ultimately the communities they serve.12 This thesis explores how national NGOs are aware of the expectations on them to have demeanours which demonstrate their localness whilst also displaying their international influence: these practices show how they not only negotiate these tensions but also co-opt them.

---


10 Michael. Undermining development: the absence of power among local NGOs in Africa.


12 Michael. Undermining development: the absence of power among local NGOs in Africa.: 19-20
A key aspect of these criticisms is that they are both centred on the NGOs serving their constituents – the communities that they are seen to work for. They are seen to work for what Kamat refers to as ‘the common good’. In many senses it is this conceptualisation of NGOs as working towards this ‘good’, one that is applicable to all, which entails their almost automatic classification as anti-corruption organisations. There is, however, a tension here that is habitually overlooked between what is good for NGOs’ constituents and clients and what is perceived as ‘the common good’ which is, of course, highly contestable. In the context of the tensions between different understandings of both the ‘common good’ and that perceived to be good for NGOs’ clients, the relationship of NGOs to ‘corruption’ is revealed to be highly complex. In this thesis, I will explore how the national NGOs I worked with in Nigeria were involved in what I have termed grey practices which were not necessarily illegal as such, but did work to influence how state actors dealt with their clients. These practices can be seen as part of Olivier de Sardan’s corruption complex but are also motivated by national NGO workers’ desire to assist their clients. This thesis highlights these complexities and contestations over what the ‘common good’ actually is, and who is included or excluded from it in its various forms. These grey practices are explored in detail in chapter six, but the ambiguities within these dynamics inform the whole thesis.

Hyper concern with Nigerian corruption

The process of undertaking this thesis has demonstrated to me the substantial degree to which corruption and Nigeria are often closely linked in the popular imagination in the UK. When I was asked in social situations what my research was on and mentioned the words ‘corruption’ and ‘Nigeria’ comments would frequently be made along the lines of ‘Well, there’s a lot of that there isn’t there?’ or ‘Yeah, I get these emails...’. By the same token however I often received comments that ‘You should do some research on our local government’. I received this comment about Aberystwyth, Totnes, and the local politics of Birmingham, Alabama as well as about the expenses scandal at the House of Commons. Whilst for many corruption may be heavily associated with Nigeria, it is obviously by no means a uniquely Nigerian phenomenon, nonetheless, it is a major concern of Nigerians.

---

15 To the point at which I started not to mention corruption and only mentioned NGOs.
who often describe their country as beset by corruption.\textsuperscript{16} The term ‘corruption’ is used very widely and loosely in Nigeria for a huge range of practices: ‘corruption’ often conveys disapproval of a given practice rather than describing a type of practice. Daniel Jordan Smith has also observed this breadth to the term ‘419,’ which refers to the Nigerian legal code for the offence of obtaining goods by deception, and he describes how it is used to complain about errant boyfriends – ‘he played me ‘419’.\textsuperscript{17}

The international anti-corruption drive promoted by the World Bank, Transparency International and others has been interpreted as a normalising mission which produces corruption as a ‘problem’.\textsuperscript{18} Corruption as a ‘problem’ is, also, most definitely a Nigerian concern and is frequently loudly and opinionatedly discussed by Nigerians. Discussions and debates about the evils, causes of and solutions to corruption are not alien to Nigeria and are, in fact prevalent in Nigerian newspapers and in casual conversations about the ‘state of the country’. The generalised debates about corruption often decry the adverse effect that corruption has on development.\textsuperscript{19} There is a very positional element to these denunciations of corruption as there are to all such judgements which needs to be acknowledged in order for a more nuanced understanding of corruption to be gained. That these discussions of the phenomena of corruption draw on multiple discourses and are suffused with subjective positional judgement serves to complicate any attempt to decipher a firm definition, usage or meaning of ‘corruption’. However, I contend in this thesis that it is precisely this subjective positional element to corruption and its interaction with conceptions of politics and the proper functioning of the state which makes it such a fascinating topic to research.

This hyper-concern with corruption both within Nigeria and with regards to Nigeria means that Nigeria could be seen as an overly obvious site for research on corruption. However, the reasons I chose Nigeria as the focus for my research were, in a number of respects,
personal. Returning to the UK after spending six months in Nigeria in 2001 was disorienting: Stories about corruption which elicited great peals of laughter in Nigeria were greeted in the UK with exclamations of ‘how terrible’, sadly shaken heads or knowing nods. My initial motivation for this research was to explore the reasons for my feeling of things being lost in translation. Yet an overly simple concept of ‘translation’ assumes that there is a Nigerian understanding of ‘corruption’ and a British one, separate places and cultures between which things are ‘lost’ and where there is some sort of gap or disjuncture for them to be lost in. This is, I argue, a false assumption and the designation of these two discrete, separate views is an illusion although a frequently propagated one. The fallacy of this can be seen in the numerous links Nigeria and the UK share not least through the considerable Nigerian diaspora in the UK. Even if there were no such clear interactions, the separation would remain somewhat arbitrary. Yet this makes the variation in reactions between Nigeria and the UK all the more fascinating. What is most revealing in terms of the questions I ask in this thesis is that it was conversations around those practices often referred to as ‘corruption’ that seemed to offer the most challenges to translation. Moreover, it was an issue which was frequently raised by people in the UK in relation to Nigeria because, as I have mentioned, ‘corruption’ and Nigeria have often, in my experience, been seen as highly associated. This association of Nigeria with corruption is however not just a British fixation. Novelist and commentator Chinua Achebe quotes from a Nigerian Newspaper *The Weekly Star* that, “Keeping the average Nigerian from being corrupt is like keeping a goat from eating a yam.” This is one of the reasons why Nigeria presents an interesting, perhaps even overly obvious, case. However, it should be noted that Achebe disagrees with the sentiment of *The Weekly Star* and argues that corruption is not necessary and Nigerians are not fundamentally different from other people from other places.

The focus on corruption in Nigeria is reflected at the national level with two anti-corruption bodies having been established under the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo, the Independent Corruption Practices and Other Related Offences Commission (ICPC) and the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC). The IPCP was established under the Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences Act in 2000. Significantly, this was the first act presented to the new National Assembly by President Obasanjo following the transition

---

20 I went to work with an organisation which sent volunteers to work in some Nigerian universities and ended up teaching in Ebonyi State University.
22 Ibid.: 48
from military to democratic rule and his election in 1999. The IPCP has an educational function and is charged with promoting anti-corruption. Crucially, it also has the capacity to prosecute. A second anti-corruption agency, the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) was established in 2003 and is seen to have been more ‘headline grabbing’ than the IPCP. Shortly after its establishment it investigated all of the country’s thirty-six governors, and in 2005 dossiers were lodged with the Attorney General on each.

The three national NGOs that I studied operated within this context of elevated concern with corruption and the widespread discussion of the phenomena. Although their activities did not bring them into contact with the formal anti-corruption agencies, many of their activities could be seen to chime with the anti-corruption agenda of these organisations. For example one NGO had been involved in election-monitoring at the 2007 general elections. Yet not all of these NGOs practices can be understood to completely fit with the good governance prescriptions. Sara Rich Dorman has identified the tendency within the literature to wish to separate out the ‘proper’ NGOs (who function along altruistic principles and whose behaviour is beyond reproach) from the ‘fakes’ (corrupt self-serving NGOs whose interests are suspect and who damage trust in NGOs). The NGOs I worked with are certainly not corrupt and self serving and in my opinion they do much valuable work. Yet they are also implicated in practices which would fit within a broader set of behaviours which relate to corruption: what Olivier de Sardan describes as the ‘corruption complex’.

The location of the fieldwork

- Section removed in CADAIR Electronic Version -

25 Lawson. The Politics of Anti-Corruption Reform in Africa.: 85 -88
27 Olivier de Sardan. A Moral Economy of Corruption in Africa?: 27
What I am not studying

There are, of course, many avenues which remain less explored or unexplored in this thesis. The discursive production of norms which are productive of the NGO workers’ approach to their work was the principle concern of my research and this is where my most substantial efforts are concentrated. Those discursive acts were themselves informed by a broader range of discourses than I was able to fully explore. One of the most prominent of these is Christianity, or more specifically, the forms of Christianity which are prevalent in Enugu. The churches within Enugu could be seen as another realm in which legitimacy and status are performed and produced. An individual’s status within his or her Church was mentioned at events like leaving parties, weddings and wedding anniversaries to convey their standing and virtue. In addition, the Church attended was often part of one’s social network and denominational affiliations were seen as significant as they were in part about social connections. The loud and frequent contestation over the morality of a given public official or public officials in general and the corruption in which they partook could be attributed to the highly religious nature of Nigerian society - although this may in fact be diagnosing a symptom as a cause. The influence of religion and particularly Christianity in Eastern Nigeria is a clear and dominant influence on the production of norms. The question often asked of me by my colleagues was ‘Which church did you go to on Sunday?’ No-one asked if
I had gone. Christianity was introduced to Nigeria in the main in the Igbo region by missionaries who were freed slaves from Sierra Leone.\(^1\) However, the current forms of the Church, especially the rising significance of Pentecostalism, do merit further attention. The ways in which the Churches within Enugu interact both with the production of norms and with the development of social networks would make for fascinating research, but this thesis concentrates on other factors.

This is principally due to how the field work was focused on the organisations themselves, which limited my interaction with Churches. The relationship of the NGOs to Christian organisations was highly varied: one NGO was a church organisation deeply embedded with one of the biggest ‘traditional denominations’ in the region. I use the term ‘traditional denomination’ to refer to those denominations introduced prior to independence in opposition to the relatively new wave of charismatic Pentecostal churches. Whilst the other NGOs often had very convivial relationships with churches (and, as I have mentioned, all the staff attended a church) there were sometimes conflicts. One NGO head told me of an incident where the NGO had been criticised for distributing information about HIV/AIDS and also about Female Genital Mutilation (female circumcision). She reported that one Reverend Father at the event had told people that “What they are telling people is corrupting people’s minds.”\(^2\) She felt that the religious leaders were more dogmatic than the traditional leaders in both the Muslim north and the Christian south.\(^3\) The outlook of NGO workers was then at times at odds with religious views as well as other elements of these views being incorporated into of the attitudes of NGO workers, a trend which may have been especially pronounced at the church based NGO. My fieldwork concentrated on the discourses and practices of NGO workers in their workplace and did not research their wider engagement with their churches or, indeed, their involvement in other arenas. However it certainly constitutes an area deserving of further study which could build on the work of Marshall-Fratani and other scholars who have examined Pentecostalism in Nigeria.\(^4\) Marshall-Fratani sees the attraction of Pentecostalism as one that lies, to some extent, in urban Nigerians’ desire to manage the demands and expectations of their families and extended kinship groups. Religious forms are, in this case, influenced by ongoing social change within Nigeria.

---

2 Interview Olanna, national NGO leader, Enugu, 11 July 2008
3 Ibid.
Focus of the thesis

The focus of the thesis is upon the national NGOs in Enugu that I worked with negotiating, firstly, the complexities of engaging with state institutions and obtaining services for their clients and, secondly, the ambiguities of their position as assumed intermediaries between the international level and the local level. These explorations are predominantly based on my participant observation with three NGOs in Enugu and interviews with the NGO workers with whom I worked. The discussion of these national NGOs’ relationship with the state is undertaken in chapter six and their intermediate role and their relationship with their funders are discussed in chapter seven.

My exploration of some of the ways in which NGO workers negotiated these discourses and practices of corruption and legitimacy highlights some of the ambiguities of these negotiations. I suggest that strong opinions about how the state should function ‘properly’ leads not only to moralising stances. Rather, NGO workers’ commitment to their clients and their ‘just’ treatment by the state often leads them to get involved in grey practices which tentatively and provisionally border on corruption. These complexities stand in contrast to many of the assumptions within both the academic and development policy literature about the nature and functioning of national NGOs. Corrupt NGOs have been understood (almost by definition) as not assisting their clients whereas those I worked with were only involved in grey practices to this end. The significance of these explorations therefore lies in how my observations engage with, contradict and build on the literature on corruption and on NGOs, a review of which is conducted in chapter two.

 Debates about the relationship between culture and corruption, including the impositions that NGOs and anti-corruption activities are accused of making on culture, form some of the key discussions to which this thesis speaks. However, I do not attempt to interpret and then represent a system of cultural norms that inform the work of these NGOs and which can then be examined to ascertain the extent to which these are western/liberal, ‘traditional’ or hybrid. Rather, this thesis focuses on the multiple, mutable and always hybrid discourses and practices which produce and re-produce discursive norms. What I mean by discursive norms are the elusive, vague normative assumptions which emerge out of these discourses. These are not experienced systemically as such but relate to the way that the legitimacy of practices are consciously and/or unconsciously produced through particular discourses.
What I examine is how NGO workers negotiate these discourses and view the legitimacy of their own and other’s practices through these multiple, complex and interacting discourses.

This thesis has been influenced by postcolonial and poststructuralist approaches and accords with a principle concern of postcolonialism - binaries - by way of a double move which highlights their productive power whilst attempting their erasure. The transcendence of these binaries for postcolonialism is conducted through an engagement with interconnectedness, the fluid, the hybrid and the ambiguous. This thesis also engages with understandings of global governmentality which produce not just a translation of norms but a reproduction of the subject as an individual, often understood as an economic actor. I seek to highlight how this emphasis on governmentality and the production of subjectivities lacks a discussion of the complexities of the relationships of governance, especially as they engage with other forms of governmentality. This can result in power relations being understood merely as a form of domination and an over-simplification that sees these complex engagements as clear-cut cases of ‘the west’ (however that may be defined) imposing its will upon African societies. In this I hope that my work possesses one of the attributes that Bhabha identifies with this postcolonial perspective that “It forces a recognition of the more complex cultural and political boundaries that exist on the cusp of these often opposed political spheres.” My interpretation of these approaches is laid out in the latter half of chapter five.

The first half of chapter five interrogates concepts of corruption. The term ‘corruption’ is not used for one discrete set of social practices but for many. As such, corruption could plausibly be seen as phenomena rather than a phenomenon. However, I suggest that even this adaptation misses much. Corruption is best examined not as a description of a practice, or a set of practices with thematically similar properties; rather, what is more significant about corruption is what the concept does. In chapter five I discuss at length the normative and positional elements of corruption and suggest that attempts at defining corruption in

---

8 Bhabha. The Location of Culture.: 248
9 Bracking: 3
10 Ibid: 11
terms of sets of practices omit these vital elements of what understandings of corruption do. I suggest that understanding these positional and normative elements to discourses and practices of corruption enables the investigation of how they are productive of, and produced by, understandings of legitimacy and the state.

Importantly, these discussions of the concept of corruption are undertaken in relation to the research conducted with national NGOs in Enugu. The methods employed in conducting the fieldwork are discussed in chapter four. The location of the research however cannot be seen as incidental and chapter three provides information on some aspects of Enugu’s history to assist in contextualising the discussions more fully.

The central core of the thesis addresses how national NGOs negotiate their way through what are multiple, complex, multilayered and radically hybrid norms, and as outlined above, these norms are discursively constituted and not, therefore, fixed. Rather, they are produced through various discourses of legitimacy and the contestation of these. These discourses are multiple and draw on a plurality of other discourses, so for example my NGO colleagues considered that Governor Sullivan Chime was a good prospective leader because not only because he was a ‘strong’ Christian, but also because he was a lawyer and was considered to have knowledge of their field of action. He was, as I have also mentioned, seen to be ‘getting the job done’. The various norms which emerge through these negotiations and which become apparent through the discourses and practices of the NGOs and those they engage with - the state, their funders and their clients – are not unique to national NGOs or to Nigeria. I suggest that discourses of legitimacy are multiple everywhere. However, the particular ways in which they are negotiated and articulated and the precise discursive palette that is drawn upon varies and thus produces unique practices of legitimisation and contestations of legitimacy. This thesis offers an insight into the negotiations of legitimacy and corruption undertaken by a particular group of NGO workers. However, the hybridity of the norms which are both drawn upon and produced in this process have broader implications which I draw out in the final chapter of the thesis.
The proper functioning of the state and other hybrid discourses

This thesis is about ‘corruption’ but, it is not about defining it or identifying it, or even about a simple comparison of the different ways it can be understood. Rather, this thesis grapples with the ‘life world’ of national NGOs in Eastern Nigeria who operate within an arena of contested legitimacy. This arena is populated by conceptions of corruption that are created, issued and propagated by the World Bank and other international organisations. These are often, in essence, legal and procedural with a focus on the misuse of public funds, and they define corruption as ‘the abuse of public office for private gain’, a definition which rests on a particular distinction between the public and the private. But this arena is also populated by competing discourses of legitimacy and moral obligations to particular groups which lie outside of these more legalistic conceptions of corruption. These other discourses of legitimacy have been discussed by other scholars through the examination of rhetorics of consumption and eating and through the image of the father figure. Corruption in Nigeria, as has been discussed, is often talked about via images of consumption. Scholars have also engaged with redistributive logics and moral obligations to others within a group or social network. This thesis builds on and adds to these arguments of alternative conceptions of corruption by further investigation into how these multiple discourses of corruption co-exist and are negotiated by NGO workers and leaders as they try and achieve their own aims which, to an extent, rest on assisting their clients.

My thesis highlights that an acknowledgement of the positional elements of discourses of corruption is vital for comprehending the politics of corruption in Nigeria and beyond. Acknowledging this positional aspect of denunciations of corruption may not resolve the paradox highlighted by Daniel Jordan Smith, namely that people in Eastern Nigeria simultaneously condemn and participate in corruption. It does however explore the dynamics of this seeming contradiction. By a positional understanding of discourses of

---

1 Szeftel. Misunderstanding African Politics.: 221, Bukovansky. The Hollowness of Anti-Corruption Discourse.: 186 and Harrison. Unpacking the Anti-corruption Agenda.: 18
2 See for example: Schatzberg. Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa. and Bayart. The State in Africa.
4 Smith. Kinship and Corruption in Contemporary Nigeria.: 246. see also Schatzberg. Political Legitimacy in Middle Africa.: 44-5
corruption I mean to say that corruption is not simply indentified by the action undertaken. Rather, it is about who carries such actions out, their reasons for doing so, the ends for which they are aiming, the outcomes of ‘getting the job done’ and in many cases also about the relationship of the assessor of legitimacy to the actor. This focus on the positional elements of discourses of legitimacy and judgements of ‘corrupt’ behaviour underlines the importance of recognising the normative elements of corruption inasmuch as corruption retains its usage “as a term of moral condemnation”.

There are differences between what is broadly regarded as legitimate in Aberystwyth, West Wales and Enugu, Eastern Nigeria; viewing these differences as a mosaic of different and discrete ‘norms’ or conceptions of corruption is however neither helpful nor enlightening. There is not a separate ‘western’ set of norms centred on the notion of the public good which is excluded from Nigerian understandings. These are present in Nigerian discussions and discussed widely in the press; The Guardian (Lagos) newspaper argues, for example, that; “The common good should always dictate how public funds are deployed.”

Procedural concerns are also not an alien discourse within Nigeria and ‘due process’ regularly appears as a concern in Nigerian newspapers. Similarly, some of the practices which I describe as grey practices in the thesis are illegal, but I was only aware of this because one of the NGO workers who was a lawyer told me as much. The ways in which concepts such as ‘due process’ are understood will vary just as understandings of corruption do. However, to ignore the multiplicity of understandings of corruption and their hybridity misses the ongoing negotiation that characterises the contestation and reproduction of notions of corruption and legitimate politics.

This thesis explores the attitudes of national NGO workers and leaders in Eastern Nigeria to corruption and the different social meanings which they attribute to practices which, under a good governance rubric, could be regarded as corruption. However, it explores this in conjunction with an examination of the relationships between the ‘local’ and the ‘international’. This complicates the analysis and highlights the hybrid, shifting nature of discourses about ‘right’ behaviour and the corrupt opposites of those behaviours. The analysis cannot, therefore, locate an emic understanding of corruption as such; these norms cannot be isolated from other discourses of what might be considered etic norms such as

---

5 Williams. New concepts for old?: 504
6 2007. ‘All of us are Winners only PDP is Looser’ The Guardian 3rd November 2007: 56
7 ‘Lawn Forouk and Integrity Group’s crusade’, Usigbe, L. 2008. ‘Oil Sector Probe: Reps uncover breach of due process’, Vanguard, 1 June 2008: 5 Usigbe, Binniyat, and Salem. 'What did OBJ spend on PHCN?'
the good governance agenda. This is, perhaps, particularly the case in the context of NGOs, but is by no means peculiar to them. Nigerian NGO workers negotiate through multiple discourses of corruption and morality, including those of the good governance agenda, in their assessments of and responses to the legitimacy of practices. The discourses they negotiate, produce and re-produce are hybrid and moreover, they are productive of hybrid conceptions of politics and the proper functioning of the state which frame and inform their practices vis-à-vis the state. In line with Bhabha's concept of hybridity I suggest that these should be seen as radically new, and not merely a collage of previous discourses. The hybridity of these discourses and practices may be particularly apparent in the context of national NGOs which occupy a peculiar position vis-à-vis the international and the local. However, I suggest that there is nothing peculiar to national NGOs about these hybrid processes of production and the negotiation of what is understood to be corrupt or legitimate. The discursive production of corruption and legitimacy reflects understandings and contestations of the natural form of politics and modes of governmentality. Thus, negotiation of corruption that the NGO workers carry out through their practices and discourses of corruption are entwined with concepts of the proper functioning of the state and of serving the people.

The hybridity of these discourses is significant as much of the literature on African corruption views corruption as the outcome of conflicting social norms which undermine the official structures of the state. Corruption is often associated with looking after one's own ethic group (tribalism) or with patrimonial client networks, the latter sometimes being understood as grafted on to the former. Even where patrimonial loyalties are not seen to necessarily undermine bureaucratic organisational loyalties and maybe even reinforce them, there is an understanding that these factors have to be carefully managed. These are sometimes viewed as elements which are rooted in the tradition and culture of African society in contrast to the state which is often perceived to have been imposed through colonialism. This particular dichotomy is seemingly easy to undermine as, the state can no

---

8 Philp. Defining Political Corruption.
9 Landell-Mills. Governance, Cultural Change, and Empowerment.: 546-7
10 Smith. A Culture of Corruption.: 349 Igwara. Dominance and Difference.: 88
longer be seen as solely as an external imposition, despite its Western roots. The contemporary Nigerian state operates within a constitution formulated in 1999 (almost 40 years after independence). Even if the division is not understood to rest within the context of colonialism, some form of dualism frequently appears within the literature, wherein corruption is explained through a division between two sets of norms or modes of action. These dualisms include Olivier de Sardan’s separation between official and practical norms or Bayart’s pays légal and pays réel – to take two prominent examples.

The division between sets of norms has also been discussed in terms of international norms (of a highly westernised form) and local norms. The good governance agenda has been critiqued as an imposition of alien norms and political modes. Moreover it has been seen as a productive of particular normalised forms of subjects. As such these interactions could be seen as a negation of difference. NGOs have been seen to be part of these efforts at normalisation and behaviour change. Further, it has been argued that NGOs could be seen as the advance guard of a liberal project. The anti-corruption drive has, in short, been understood to be part of a global liberal governmentality. In a parallel manner the images which dominate debates about the value of national NGOs also often rely to a greater or lesser extent on an understanding of a separation between different sets of norms. These are usually the norms and values of their funders which are seen to be international norms in contrast to the values and priorities of their constituents. Furthermore, those norms that are often thought of as ‘western’ are frequently associated with the ‘elite’ within Africa. The norms and values of the ‘local’ in contrast often associated with the rural and the poor are often seen as separate and moreover are frequently romanticised. As such, the local often seems under-defined with the notion that different interests may still conflict at this level being glossed over.

14 Olivier de Sardan. *Practical norms* and Bayart. A History of Extraversion : 229-30
15 Booth. *Elites, Governance and the Public Interest in Africa*
18 Mohan, and Stokke. Participatory development and empowerment: the dangers of localism.
19 Ibid.: 249
20 Ibid.
The emphasis on civil society and on the importance of national NGOs has been predicated precisely on their localness. This localness is valued because they are seen to work within local norms and utilise local forms of knowledge. They are also seen to work for the ‘good’ of people at this local level, especially for the ‘poor’ and the marginalised.

These relationships can be seen to condition the professional styles adopted by NGO workers and the organisations I studied. From a global governmentality perspective it could be understood that these organisations are being governed from a distance and the NGO workers are produced as particular subjects by these disciplinary mechanisms. Moreover, these NGOs can be seen to be an extension of this governmental apparatus. The two images of NGOs are, therefore, conflictual. On one hand they are seen as highly localised institutions who work to benefit the people and on the other hand, they are seen to be internationalised constituent parts of the apparatus of global governmentality. However, the practices of the NGOs are in many senses much more hybrid than this portrayal allows for: their habitus is one which is not neatly internationalised. Rather, the demeanours they adopt are not just those they feel display their professionalism to their international funders but rather are often taken on to demonstrate the legitimacy of NGOs and NGO workers to those at the local level. National NGO workers, moreover, are not only produced as subjects through the subjectivisation processes of global governmentality but are rather also subject to political rationalities that could be seen to be in line with Bayart’s concept of the politics of the belly. I would not follow Warnier and understand it as a war of subjectivisation between these two modes of governmentality. Rather, from my observations of NGO workers I understand these mentalities of government and the concepts of the proper functioning of the state which they produce to be are hybrid and negotiated. The discourses and practices of the national NGOs studied in Nigeria produced and re-produced discourses and practices of legitimacy and corruption that were radically hybrid. These shaped their aims and motivations and were productive of what seemed to be the pragmatic solution to problems.

---

22 Gary. Confrontation, Co-operation or Co-optation.
23 Ferguson. Global Shadows.: 103
25 Ferguson. Global Shadows.: 103 and Bebbington, Hickey, and Mitlin. Can NGOs Make a Difference?: 7
26 Warnier. Foucault in Africa.: 103
The Integral Façade of the State

The image of two separate realms operating in conflictual ways is evident in some conceptualisations of the African state. In some of the literature on corruption and the African state in general, there is a pervasive sense of a thin façade of the western style state which hovers above African societies. This view of the state is clearly profoundly connected to the view of transition from one set of social structures that are considered to be traditional, to another set that are considered modern, and it is this transitional element that Lentz’s “(still?)” alludes to. Some scholars argue that there needs to be greater progress in this transition, that African states need to gain these ‘essentials of Western governance’ to progress and to benefit their people, although it is often agreed these measures should have cultural relevance. Others however argue that it is this façade of western governance which is getting in the way and systems need to be developed which fit with the African way of doing things. These distinctions between what constitutes the façade and what constitutes the real activity occur in much of the literature contrasting the pays réel and pays légal (Bayart) or between the ‘official’ and the ‘real’ (Blundo and Olivier de Sardan). But as Blundo and Olivier de Sardan also observe, the ‘official’ state is part of the ‘real’ state.

The understanding NGO workers possessed of the actual functioning of the Nigerian state at the local level in Enugu and how they interpreted these views of the state through the proper functioning state which they imagined builds on Blundo and Olivier de Sardan’s observation that the official is part of the real. An imagined proper functioning of the state was productive of the practices that the NGOs undertook in relation to the state, as was their perception of the state not meeting these standards. My observations here build on Gupta’s work which treats corruption as “a mechanism through which “the state” itself is discursively constituted”, in order to highlight that the discursive constitution of the state in Nigeria involves two imagined states one of which is imagined as ‘real’ and the other being imagined as an ‘ideal’ fully functioning state. Thus, many of my observations demonstrate how the ‘real’ functioning of the state as it is experienced emerges not only from the procedures of the ‘official’ state and the practical norms employed which operate alongside,

29 Kelsall. Going with the Grain  
31 Blundo, and Olivier de Sardan. Editors. Everyday Corruption and the State.:108  
32 Gupta. Blurred Boundaries. : 376
but from also from the imagined proper functioning state which is held as a norm from which the ‘real’ state deviates. There is a transgression of what would be seen as ‘good governance’ through the grey practices that national NGOs are involved in. I have discussed these processes as ‘obtaining rather than demanding accountability’. This is the central deviation of the grey practices of the NGOs vis-à-vis the conception of ‘good governance’, namely that they obtain for certain individuals services which are not provided universally. Their methods of obtaining these services are not necessarily illegal. The provision of computers or the regular provision of stationary to the local police, the good relationships these gifts produce, and the proper treatment of the clients of the gifting NGO that eventually results, could be defended against a charge of bribery. It was more about encouraging them to continue to do “a good job”. However the discrimination that occurs in some cases between the NGO’s clients and other anonymous users in their treatment by state agents can be seen to undermine the bureaucratic rationality of fairness and equality.

The payment given to a prosecutor not to oppose bail in a particular case however may be viewed as a more clear case of bribe. Yet, in many senses these actions had similar motivations, namely for their clients to receive the treatment that they felt was appropriate in line with their imagined properly functioning state. There are also many even more ambiguous cases like the payment of the members of the amnesty commission to sit. This instance could be seen as an extension of the provision of medical supplies to the prisons health centre, in terms of the NGO ensuring that the prisoners they seek to assist are dealt with as they ‘should’ be. However, it could also be interpreted similarly to the payment made to the prosecutor in the example I mention above, as illegal. There is then a considerable range of ambiguity in NGOs practices that I recap here. Ironically these practices are often motivated by trying to produce the proper functioning state they imagine. As outlined in chapter six the NGO workers often see their role as correcting the state, trying to ensure that some of its processes do not go awry and in short trying to ensure it does what it is supposed to. The irony of this situation is that the motivations of the NGO workers who undertake grey practices are firstly about the welfare of their client, but they are also about getting the state to operate in the way that they perceive that it ‘should’ and ensure, in other words, its proper functioning. Often they are procuring the treatment for their clients that they believe should be universally accessible. They do not necessarily see their interventions as what ‘should’ happen but they see them as necessary.

33 Interview, Adamma, national NGO worker, Enugu, 20 March 2008
34 Olivier de Sardan. "State Bureaucracy and Governance in West Africa." : 59
“We just have to do these things if we really want to do this work of helping... you find yourself doing things that ordinarily shouldn’t be your responsibility because, but you just have to do it.”\textsuperscript{36}

One key commonality runs throughout these examples of grey practice. These practices do not encourage the equity, or fairness (or indeed the indifference) implied in the functioning of a procedural rationality.\textsuperscript{37} This separates them from many of the practices which are seen as unproblematically promoting good governance, which is in many ways predicated on this view of procedure producing ‘fairness’. Rather than producing smooth running procedures (even as they may want to), grey practices often work to de-anonymise the ‘anonymous user’ so that some kind of personal connection emerges. This can be seen to be a personalisation of the public sphere which, when accompanied by practices of state officials, serves to ‘privatise’ public services such that they are available through a personal, rather than a bureaucratic, decision making system. This is precisely what is regarded by some as ‘corruption’.\textsuperscript{38}

Despite their incompatibility with elements of a bureaucratic procedural rationality and good governance, grey practices rely on and work through formal state structures and, in fact, only make sense within these structures. The state does not necessarily comply with the standards prescribed within many accounts of good governance, or with an ideal form of a rational, legal bureaucracy. These departures notwithstanding, the framework cannot be seen as irrelevant. The functioning of the state – or rather the proper functioning of the state – is what is at stake in these practices even as some of the actions the NGOs undertake breach one of the key planks of this mode of governance, namely that equity ‘fairness’ is maintained through procedural rationality in which individuals are treated equally as ‘cases’. The national NGOs’ interventions are in some senses informed by good governance criteria in that they are concerned with obtaining effective, efficient services of their clients. That clients are often indigent also suggests that they could be seen to be fulfilling the pro-poor aspects of good governance as well. However, they contravene good governance prescriptions for equality and universal provision\textsuperscript{39} in achieving these ends. And whilst the NGO’s actions are often focused on broadening rather than narrowing access, they feel ‘unable’ to demand the universalisation of service provision, or maybe more appropriately

\textsuperscript{36} Interview, Ifeka, national NGO worker, Enugu, 10 December 2007
\textsuperscript{37} Olivier de Sardan. "State Bureaucracy and Governance in West Africa." : 56
\textsuperscript{38} Ibid.: 59
\textsuperscript{39} Grindle. Good Enough Governance Revisited.: 556-7
that their demands would not be heard, thus work at a more personalised level. Even as they think that such a universal system should be in place. To illustrate,

“When these inmates now go to the hospital, everything was supposed to be for free for them as the government should give them waivers for their medical treatment. Sometimes to get those waivers will take days. And the longer we wait for those waivers to come. The, the worse the situation of the inmate becomes. So rather than waiting for those waivers NGO-A will take up the bills pay for everything that would have been free. So long as they save the life of this inmate [...] And, it is funny that the government still does not deem it necessary to make things very easy for these inmates medical wise as in, making it such that they don’t necessarily have to wait for waivers, making it such that there is a standing instruction that once there is proof that this person is from the prison you go on and treat them without necessarily getting the waivers.”

Many of the grey practices that the NGOs were involved in can be seen as the product of having to deal with a state which does not function in line with the standards espoused either by ‘the good governance agenda’ or even by the state itself. However I suggest that this does not necessarily make the state a façade. The term façade implies that behind this frontage - erected for appearance’s sake - a different system operates. Bukovansky asks that if anti-corruption is about good leaders doing the right thing, then “...what are the criteria for ‘good’ and ‘right’ – and who should decide on them?” This is an important question, which in many ways lies at the heart not only of questions about corruption but one which is central to understandings of politics, as Philp highlights. What becomes clear is that the practices of the national NGOs are precisely aimed at this question. These include the generalised interventions of a pedagogic nature such as workshops for police on issues surrounding sexual harassment. They are however also in evidence in the grey practices of NGOs. There was great variety in the practices of NGOs and many of them, including grey practices, were undertaken in order to get an aspect of the system which has not been ‘working’ to ‘work’. If for example the state’s own standards such as the provision of medical care to prison inmates are not met, to expand upon the example given above, it may seem that the rational bureaucratic state is merely a front for the real mode of governance. However these parameters retain their significance for they become part of what is seen to constitute a properly functioning state and thus come to be part of what is aspired to. The façade of the rational bureaucratic state stands in striking juxtaposition to the way in which the state is experienced, but these experiences are understood, by the NGO workers at least,

40 Interview, Ifeka, national NGO worker, Enugu, 10 December 2007
41 Bukovansky. The Hollowness of Anti-Corruption Discourse.: 183
42 Philp. Defining Political Corruption.
through precisely their relationship with this ‘façade’. The façade of the rational bureaucratic state is in fact integral to how the state is experienced.

Hybrid Professional Demeanours

As much as National NGOs are in many ways seen to mediate between their clients and the state they are also seen to act as intermediaries between international funders and their clients. As the president of a Cape Verden local association quoted at the end of the last chapter shows, donors would prefer in many senses to “fund” “the people” directly – but cannot because, in effect, they “don’t exist”. This observation lies behind much of this thesis’ attempts to draw out some of the ambiguities involved in how national NGOs are conceptualised in development policies as relating to a ‘local’ which is equally as elusive as “the people”. This is not to say that national NGOs do not provide many ways to locate CBOs, or that they do not have knowledge of local areas and structures that is invaluable to development organisations. National NGOs are often judged by funders and development policy makers as useful because of the access they provide to ‘the people’. This desire by national NGOs for local authenticity brings its own contradictory demands to be professional and efficient but also to demonstrate not only knowledge of, but moreover, affinity with those who the assistance is aimed at - those who are often understood by NGO workers as the ‘less privileged’, or whom DFID term as ‘the most vulnerable’. There is a profound tension here as the skills, education and demeanours required to fulfil the first requirement of efficiency are frequently seen to sever the affinity with those categorised as ‘less privileged’ and ‘most vulnerable’, who are conceived often as dwelling at the ‘local’ level.

There is an assumed division between ‘elite’ and ‘masses’ in Africa, who are considered to be separated often not only by their socio-economic interests but also in essence by their culture - as elites are often seen as operating within modern methods in contrast to the ‘poor’. Bayart discusses how the elite and the masses are interconnected via rhizomatic networks. Yet he does not implicitly contest their distinctiveness as such. I would suggest that the association of elites with a different set of cultural values is problematic. The NGO workers and leaders do not simply separate themselves from the generally poorer rural areas

---

43 Interview, Chiamaka, national NGO worker, Enugu, 24 January 2008
45 Mohan, and Stokke. Participatory development and empowerment: the dangers of localism.
46 Bayart. *The State in Africa*: 218
or from more ‘traditional’ practices; in fact, some of the social status of NGO leaders in Enugu arises from their chieftaincy titles and from taking on traditional leadership roles. I do not deny – in fact I highlight – that the attitude of NGO workers towards their clients was often paternalistic. However, I suggest that it is not helpful to understand these NGO workers as separated from the cultural milieu of their clients for, just as the relationships of NGOs to funders is much more complex than this separation would imply, so too is the relationship between clients and NGO workers, which is highly ambivalent. Moreover, the relationship between clients and NGOs is not based solely on their ‘localness’ in contradiction to the literature which expresses concern that national NGOs’ ties to their funders will sever or weaken their links to their clients.47 The clients of the NGOs and the communities they work with are keen to see that the NGO has access to the international, due to the resources, influences and status that this implies. In addition the separation of the elites from the masses on the assumption that culture is somehow bound up with poverty carries with it the danger highlighted by Fergusson that,

“...The persistence of cultural difference, meanwhile (however inventive and hybrid it may be), can come to appear as the token not (as it often appears to the anthropologist) of brave cultural resistance, but of social and economic subjection (where a “traditional way of life” is simply a polite name for poverty).”48

There is a huge tension here between what counts as ‘combating poverty’ and what is damaging to ‘tradition’ which is not mine to resolve. Most examples of contestations over practices which can be seen through the lens of ‘traditional’ versus ‘modern’ have very different attributes. I suggest that in essence these are political debates in which those pursuing a particular agenda make claims to authenticity and tradition or rational progress and modernity to gain legitimacy.

As discussed in the previous chapter, one of the NGO workers responded to a question I asked her about working with traditional leaders which illustrates this.

“But when you bring evidence base of people living in that community that have died because this thing has not been addressed then their eyes are opened and when you tell them and ask them ‘do you know that A who is a member of B family died because of this?’. [...] It is a huge task trying to convince them but when you come in with proof, with statistics, and you speak to them in a language that they can understand and you come down to their level, you know, you find that they listen."49

---

47 Hulme, and Edwards. "NGOs, States and Donors."
48 Ferguson. Global Shadows: 20-21
49 Interview, Obialo, national NGO worker, Enugu, 24 June 2008
Obialo, relates how both ‘statistics’ and local knowledge are needed simultaneously for the legitimacy of the organisation’s intervention to be established. It is not simply that the methods of truth perceived as more ‘official’ or ‘modern’ such as statistics, provide the context in which local knowledge can then operate: rather, the two forms of verification and legitimisation can be seen to interact with each other and in this instance reinforce each other. No one party to this situation separates out these discourses of legitimacy, they could just as easily be seen as aspects of the same discourse rather than separate ones. But there is a move in many of these interactions which is not peculiar to national NGOs but is perhaps a key part of how they position themselves wherein they see themselves, and are seen by others, as intermediaries of some description located between the international level and the local level. They view their peculiar advantage to lie in their dual access to ‘local’ information (that A died of AIDS) but also access to broader more internationalised forms of information, statistics and other information that describes AIDS in very different terms. Their significance and legitimacy as organisations thus is seen to lie for the NGO workers and for those they work with, in their deft negotiation of international modes and local ones.

The NGO workers’ demeanours of legitimacy could therefore be seen as hybrid insofar as they combined many elements of ‘professionalism’. The hybridity of these practices and demeanours is not one of collage, the sense that they brought two elements together in a proximate way, rather it is a hybridity from which something new emerges. This newness is perhaps most obvious in some of the practices undertaken to display the legitimacy and significance of the organisation not just to funders but to the broader local society. Banners had to be produced to accompany almost every workshop, training event and public occasion. The banner would have the logo and name of the organisation, the name and date of the event and, sometimes, the names of honoured guests, etcetera. These were seen to be important as they operated as a sign of a ‘serious’ organisation. They were understood to be part of their professional image, a professionalism which is often conflated with westernisation. Yet these are not ‘imported’ practices; they are not familiar to me from the voluntary sector in the UK for example. Similarly, the report which was taken to the United Nations was printed in relatively large numbers at a professional printing firm in colour, with much fuss made over the quality and the printing process, to the point where I got to know the staff of the printing firm quite well. In contrast the submission from the British NGO delegation was printed out in black and white seemingly from an ordinary office printer and appeared to have been reproduced on a photocopier. It could be understood that certain
aspects of the professional ‘branded’ NGO style were being copied but they were not reproduced perfectly. They could, therefore, be seen as a form of mimicry. Bhabha conducted a long and complex discussion of mimicry in which he asserts its ambivalence.\(^{50}\) He sees mimicry as a strategy to appropriate the other and their power;\(^{51}\) which could be related to the legitimacy that the NGOs gain from their professional demeanours. But Bhabha also sees mimicry as re-inscribing the dominance of the ‘original’ that is mimicked;\(^ {52}\) thus national NGOs involvement in these practices also reinforces the perception that these are the appropriate modes of conduct.

This ambivalence is certainly at play in the demeanours of professionalism, yet these practices move away from being a form of mimicry alone to constitute practices which have their own social logic in addition to, although not outside of, their allusion to the ‘original’. The banners and glossy printed reports are not from ‘elsewhere’; they are very much part of the social world in which the national NGOs operate. They are, I suggest, part of the articulations of their legitimacy which speaks not to the external as such, but to local actors. It is the gloss of the external that provides part of the ongoing establishment of their legitimacy and their importance. The ‘gap’ - the difference between the presentation of the British report and the Nigerian one - is not one of miscomprehension. It not simply that the national NGOs I worked with were somehow trying to act like western NGOs and failing. Nor was it solely mimicry. Rather they are part of an ongoing production and reproduction of practices and discourses which are inevitably hybrid in the way they emerge and the forms they take. The glossy cover of the report for the United Nations was not, in fact, for the benefit of those at UN at all. It was printed for consumption within Nigeria. And when I say consumption I do not necessarily mean reading the report in full, but rather that the report would become one of the publications displayed and ostensibly ‘sold’ at the organisation’s events. I have queried the concept of ‘selling’ the publication because although I went to a number of events where they were displayed, I very rarely saw them purchased (in fact I can recall only one occasion). Obviously it is possible that I did not attend the right events. Nonetheless, I was sceptical about the NGO head’s claim that the publications provided a significant source of income to the NGO – at least in the sense of direct sales.\(^{53}\) However the reports were still for consumption within Nigeria. Even if they were not purchased, they generated credibility insofar as they were seen, they looked

---

\(^{50}\) Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, 129

\(^{51}\) Ibid.: 129

\(^{52}\) Ibid.: 122

\(^{53}\) Interview, Olanna, national NGO leader, Enugu, 11 July 2008
‘professional’, and they had been produced to be taken to the United Nations. They were important to the NGO as an element which augmented its standing and I would suggest that there was little point in co-ordinating the production of a report for the UN if those you wanted to impress locally were not aware of it. The importance attached to the role of being the co-ordinating organisation for the report to the UN is demonstrated by the fact that there were actually two organisations within Nigeria who had produced what were, in essence, competing reports, although they raised similar issues. It was not a disagreement about the concerns which needed raising and when our delegation was in New York I was involved in bringing the two sets of attendees together to produce a co-ordinated response. Rather it was about inter-organisational competition at the local as well as the international level, though the two are not easily separable. These practices are not always focused on the legitimacy that they will accrue with funders: the audience for these practices is often more local. These practices were not solely, or even primarily undertaken with reference to the opinions of their funders, but demonstrate an ongoing concern about ‘local’ opinion.

There remains, however, a profound ambivalence to these activities and their frequently multiple audiences. For example the banners displayed at events, alongside event photographers (an element of professionalism I have not mentioned yet) had a particular ambiguity. Whilst they served to confirm the standing of the NGO, they were also seen as a way of providing evidence to funders that events had taken place. My research suggests that the evidencing of events and activities in general was particularly important and was one of the key ways in which funders governed the NGOs, for auditing was conducted not only of the organisation accounts but of the activities that they carried out. This monitoring of programmes and projects by funding agencies is not absent from the voluntary sector in the UK by any means, but it seemed to be a more prominent element in Nigeria – possibly due to Nigeria’s reputation for corruption as well as the pressures on funders to ensure that their money is well spent. However, the relationship that Nigerian NGOs had with their funders was not unfamiliar to me from my experience of the UK voluntary sector. One element of UK voluntary sector practices that that the national NGOs reminded me of is the ‘spin’ that would inevitably need to be placed on how effective events were, or on the manipulation of statistics or other information to gloss the image of a given organisation as it appeared to funders. None of the UK voluntary organisations I worked with ‘made-up’ the numbers of those they assisted as seems to have happened on one occasion at one of the Nigerian

Ikelegbe has also noted the reluctance to co-operate between organisations, who conduct parallel activities: Ikelegbe. The Perverse Mainfestation of Civil Society.
NGOs I worked with; although it should be noted that this only came to my attention due to the disapproval of one of the NGO workers which would indicate that this was not a universally accepted practice within the organisation. However, I recall one occasion whilst working in the British NGO sector when I was told to suggest that 17% of our clients on a particular project were from an ethnic minority for the purposes of a report. In reality this was one boy out of six children: it was not a lie, but it may have deliberately amplified the gloss that statistics can be credited with.

There is a profound hybridity to the practices and demeanours of NGO workers which has a style all of its own. The professionalism exhibited through such things as banners, glossy reports and the like, is not the same professionalism of British voluntary sector workers. It is not that these elements are necessarily radically different, as both banners and glossy reports could be part of the practices of British organisations – but in other contexts, for different reasons, and with different effects in mind. However, these hybrid sets of styles and practices also demonstrate a concern with producing legitimacy for their organisation not just with international organisations and international funders but with the communities within which they work and with the other professionals and state employees they work with.

Complex, Hybrid, Governmentalities

“The combination of modern and archaic regimes of power produces unexpected forms of disciplinarity and governmentality that make Foucault’s epistemes inappropriate even obsolete.”

Those who utilise Foucault’s concept of liberal governmentality to discuss ‘good governance’ and corruption tend to assume the deployment of this apparatus has particular effects; the institution of particular behaviours and practices and the production of a particular type of subjectivity. This imposition is often posited in critiques of global anticorruption efforts; Bukovansky argues that there is an “external imposition of contingent standards on societies that are not fully participating in defining those standards.”

This imposition of values requires a level of disconnection between the community on which they are imposed and the one from which those standards are seen to emanate. However, where the fault-line of this disconnection lies is difficult to locate in the case of Enugu and

---

55 Bhabha. The Location of Culture.: 278
56 Doornbos. “Good Governance”: The Metamorphosis of a Policy Metaphor.: 6
57 Bukovansky. The Hollowness of Anti-Corruption Discourse. 184
the national NGOs studied, as my research demonstrates. It is impossible to satisfactorily disentangle what is of Enugu and what is from elsewhere. Bukovansky's concerns about the power imbalances which are clearly at play in how anti-corruption and other international programmes operate should not be dismissed. Often the power relations of international initiatives are such that those within the country have only limited say over what happens and how the terms on which these programmes operate are defined. Gould and Ofanea have conducted a detailed exploration of the effects of the power relations involved in the civil society involvement in the production of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers in Tanzania, for example. But these power relations are also often about internal exclusions and politics as much as they are about external politics, and as such it is important to outline the complexities of these power relations, rather than assuming a kind of inevitable domination of international agendas with broadly western origins.

My explorations of the practices of the national NGOs studied highlights that national NGO workers do identify themselves and the NGOs they work for as agents of assistance, and that they are committed to these ‘people’: ‘impacting people’s lives has been my goal’. There seems to be a convergence in agendas between donors and the national NGOs but the target that is agreed on is a highly vague one of helping ‘the people’ or ‘the poor’, or rather helping “poor people build a better life for themselves”. This broad convergence leaves space for many different understandings of how society works and how assistance can be provided. There are also significant sets of power relations at play between national NGOs and their funders, which can be argued to govern the behaviour of national NGOs; yet there is also significant space for agency. The translation and negotiation involved in these interactions is further complicated by the different understandings of ‘goods’ (by which I mean elements of what is regarded as the good life), and perceptions of which activities are ‘workable’. Some of the practices and power relations that characterise these relationships between national NGOs and funders can be understood through the concept of governmentality, as can some of the relationships between national NGOs and their clients - particularly in their pedagogic roles. Funders of the national NGOs do have, at times, distinct intentions to change behaviours and practices, and these have been outlined as governance aims by scholars critiquing, for example, the World Bank’s micro interventions. Sometimes these interventions by funders have relatively grand aims, for

58 Gould, and Ojanen. "Tanzania: merging the circle."
59 Interview, Ojofof, national NGO worker, Enugu, 12 March 2008
example: “the necessary restructuring of Nigerian society”. This reshaping of the social fabric – and ultimately of the subjectivities – concerns those suspicious of liberalism. These concerns do not only centre on the neo-liberal economic agenda: they also focus on its homogenising offer of choice along certain lines, as in freedom to make the ‘right choices’, to become particular types of public citizen. Yet, how the choices that they are placing in front of people are comprehended and how they interpret these ‘right choices’ is highly contingent. This hybridity goes beyond Foucault’s acknowledgement of agency that governance “is to structure the possible field of action for others”; but that within this field there are “several [possible] reactions and diverse comportments [which] may be realized”. For whilst I acknowledge the importance of freedom in the functioning of liberal governmentality, I suggest that the hybridities I highlight here are attributable to the hybrid structuring of the ‘field of action’, rather than only evidence of the diverse demeanours that this structuring allows.

I do not dispute that the good governance agenda “constitutes a surfeit of purportedly universal notions about what is good which actually reflect certain rather specific features of the history of the West.” However, this notion of ‘good’ has western ‘roots’ does not mean that it does not have resonance within Nigeria, nor is this resonance necessarily an imposition as such. I would suggest that there can be an over-emphasis on the continuity of ideas which fixes concepts into particular discourses and insists that they continue to belong and be of their roots. Discourses associated with ideas of good governance, the rule of law, and human rights are seen to remain essentially ‘western’ or otherwise perceived as an incomplete or inaccurate copy of the western original. However, the way in which the national NGO workers who I worked with in Nigeria understood and utilised concepts which could be considered ‘western’ or having ‘western roots’ belies a complex translation that, in fact, often disconnects them from these roots. I suggest that rather than being seen as either directly transplanted or they can be seen to be infused with,
“…a newness that is not part of the ‘progressivist’ division between past and present, or the archaic and the modern; nor is it a ‘newness’ that can be contained in the mimesis of ‘original and copy’.”

Often those who examine the effects of global governmentality do not always pay full attention to the effects of this translation and how they complicate the power relations between actors.

In the case of the national NGOs these power relations are extremely complex. It is not a simple case of the imposition of external values for many of the norms around justice and human rights would be claimed by NGO workers as their own, or part of their own, values. But the way in which these are understood may well be strikingly different to how they might be interpreted in other contexts. It is also not a simple case of the co-option of these NGOs by their funders as their practices contradict ‘standards’ that their funders often promote. Neither is it their complete integration into a global liberal governmentality, for their practices can also be seen to operate through a different mode of governmentality which produces different forms of subjectivity.

It is not especially original to discuss the limits of governmentality, after all; governance is considered to be an operation which always innately fails to some extent. There will always be some slippage within the disciplining and production of subjects. These failures are, however, significant for they demarcate the points of conflict and contestation at which the apparatus which disciplines subjects and produces them as liberal individuals confronts different forms of personhood. It is difficult to discuss governmentality failing as such for it does not possess intentionality. However, if we see governmentality as particular forms of political rationality, different rationalities can be identified. Liberal governmentality (which I suggest is the form which Foucault and those academics who utilise his work discuss most frequently), does have specific features in its mode of operation. It is this liberal political rationality which appears to be contested in my observations of the national NGOs in eastern Nigeria, and yet, at the same time, this form of governmentality does have effects – even if these are unintended side effects.

Some of these tensions are associated with the mentality of government that Bayart calls the ‘politics of the belly’, and which he

68 Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*. 325
69 Lemke. Foucault, Governmentality, and Critique. 56 and Rose, O'Malley, and Valverde. Governmentality.: 98
71 Cf. Fergusson Anti-politics machine : 255-256
understands as a different form of governmentality. Williams and Young’s arguments about the production of liberal subjects through the activities of NGOs, which reasons that they are part of an apparatus of governmentality, misses these conflicts. In essence then these limits of governmentality denote a conflict between different modes of governmentality, not solely resistance to liberal governmentality.

There are some markers for how different mentalities of government operate upon different understandings of the social world, and they can be gleaned from the contestation surrounding the ‘public’. The public is a foundational concept for most understandings of corruption, and there are many contestations around the constitution of the community of the public or publics. Much of the literature which discusses concepts of legitimacy within Africa orientates itself around different conceptions of community and different concepts of which communities are the most significant. In Hindess’ interpretation, Foucault views the political reason prevalent in western history as “a type of reason that treats the state as “the highest of all” forms of community.” The notion of the public can be seen as the more frequent way to refer to the communal notion of the state. Whether the state, or rather the whole population of the state, is viewed as the ‘highest form’ of community and what can be considered to be in this groups’ interests is essentially what is contested in the discourses of corruption, which surround the demarcation of the public and its interests. The division between state and society, public and private are also seen within the governmentality literature as an effect of a specific neo-liberal governmentality and as an object of study.

The division of public and private is seen as an object of study for its role in answering certain questions and in making subjects governable: in part, this is about a process of individualising and totalising. That is to say the production of individuals as though they are cases with particular attributes which make them identifiable part of particular populations, within a larger population. The population and the maximisation of its wellbeing are part of Foucault’s concept of bio-politics. This maximisation of the wellbeing of the population has been part of the development of ‘the social’ and of social intervention,

---

72 Bayart. The State in Africa.: 268
73 Hindess. Politics as Government.: 390
according to Foucault and those who had developed his ideas.\textsuperscript{76} Thus, the concept of ‘the population’ would seem to be a logical part of the work of those who are seen to be undertaking social intervention in the developing world, namely NGOs. However, the national NGOs I studied have a much different relationship with their clients which did not conform to the production of a society of individuals that can be categorised and make up the population and different subsets of population. NGO workers had a clear image of ‘goods’ for their clients, and had a sense of duty towards them but this was a much more personalised relationship, which belies an understanding of their clients as an individual who possesses several characteristics which define them as a particular case, a particular subset of the population.

The interactions I observed with clients were more personalised - in contrast to being indifferent and bureaucratic. I do not argue that there is something special about Nigerians in their dislike of being a bureaucratic ‘cog’. However, this indifference is connected to an idea of fairness through the equitable treatment of all who can be regarded as the same kind of ‘case’. This personalisation, by contrast, is reflected in the desire to be seen as ‘patrons’ in some senses, to be appreciated for what you personally have done for these people. This can be seen in some of the comments made by the NGO workers about their motivations for doing their job,

“I'd like the situation when I’m dying at least if I’m opportune to open my eyes I will see a lot of people crying. Not because I’m dead but because ‘hey’ they will be saying ‘hey if this guy were alive life would be better for me this guy assisted me in this or that’.”\textsuperscript{77}

“I love it so much because it touches the heart of the people…You give a lot of endless joy. Most time you render such free services to people you may not recognise them. You are passing on the road or after mass someone will walk up to you and say ‘Aunty’\textsuperscript{78} you say ‘Ah how are you?’ ‘Aunty you may have forgotten me I am that lady who you did [assisted]’…It gives joy you cannot really quantify.”\textsuperscript{79}

This understanding is not ‘personal’ in the same way, as you may not recognise those who you help but what seems to be important is that the agency of the NGO worker in rendering assistance to the recipient receives is recognised as an act that they have personally undertaken. NGO workers gain social status from this both in terms of the rhetoric of


\textsuperscript{77} Interview, Obialo, national NGO worker, Enugu, 24 June 2008

\textsuperscript{78} Aunty is a term of respect usually used for a woman who is older/higher in status than you. It does not necessarily denote a familial relationship.

\textsuperscript{79} Interview, Adaugo, national NGO worker, Enugu, 21 July 2008
being patrons (‘big women/men’ with influence) but also in terms of the recognition of their professionalism and professional abilities. I think that it is difficult to separate the two out. However, in both cases the accolades to some extent remain personalised; it is the workers, not the organisation, who are assisting and being praised.

The clearest example of this conflicting understanding of the mode of governance in which they were involved can be seen in the interactions between funders and advisors over the administration of a section of one of the NGOs. There was genuine dismay at the idea of administering assistance to clients based on bureaucratic measures and requirements; turning clients away because the quota of cases for that month had been reached seemed to them to deny the purpose of their organisation. There was also clearly little enthusiasm for my efforts for them to survey (govern?) themselves and their clients through instituting systems to monitor cases and record basic statistics. This can be seen as a rejection or resistance to what Olivier de Sardan refers to as procedural rationality – the reduction of people to cases. Foucault also discusses the production of people to cases in *Discipline and Punish* as part of the emergence of a new modality of power,

“...in which each individual receives as his status his own individuality, and in which he is linked by his status to the features, the measurements, the gaps, the ‘marks’ that characterize him and make him a 'case'.”

The attitudes of the NGO workers can also be seen to be part of a different rationality of governance, one which does not totalise and individualise in the same manner as the liberal governmentality which Foucault describes the emergence of in *Discipline and Punish*. The governmental rationality that permeates the national NGOs does not see the need to survey these people as cases, possessing attributes of subsets of the population. In other words it diverges from liberal governmentality. The imperative to bureaucratisation that both procedural rationality and liberal governmentality require, and which is seen as having a moral imperative, is eschewed to an extent. However by the same token these NGOs are, precisely, bureaucratic organisations. Case files are kept, and systems for allocating clients a place in the queue are operated. The forms of governmentality that produce the practices of the NGOs I worked with are hybrid and contain contradictions. These contradictions are not unique to Nigeria or to NGOs, however, they have effects and produce particular practices. Some of these are what I have discussed as being grey practices. These, grey practices, can be seen to be aligned with the bureaucratic rationality of good governance in

---

that they want the state institutions to ‘work properly’ and accord with their image of a proper functioning of the state. But at the same time their interventions, whilst broadening access to services, are not strategies to universalise access. They are strategies that build relationships in order to obtain access for their clients.

The discourses and norms which were productive of the practices and attitudes of the NGO workers are already hybrid. It is not that the practices become hybrid due to the multiplicity of concepts of legitimacy and accountability (although these concepts are certainly multiple). Rather this hybridity is, as Bhabha describes, an ongoing dynamic process.\(^\text{81}\) Part of this continuous negotiation of social goods is the negotiation of concepts and practices of legitimacy, accountability and their transgression - corruption. The practices and discourses of national NGOs, whilst they are hybrid, are also discursively productive of the legitimacy of the state in relation to an imagined ideal of its proper functioning and their own legitimacy as organisations.

**Conclusion**

This examination of national NGOs in Eastern Nigeria and their relationship to corruption shows that the terrain that the NGO workers navigate is a profoundly complex one. Little academic work has been undertaken on the relationship between national NGOs and corruption.\(^\text{82}\) As such, the investigations and analyses that comprise this thesis open up new areas for investigation in the literature on NGOs. The current, and limited, explorations of corruption and NGOs often see NGOs either as organisations set up to fraudulently access international resources, or as agents of anticorruption and ‘progressive’ change. The NGOs I worked with do not fit either of these caricatures: rather, their interactions with the state show that although NGO workers are profoundly concerned about the proper functioning of the state (which they feel often goes awry) they do not always prioritise a bureaucratic rationality. Conceptions of a proper functioning state are productive of grey practices, which are undertaken in response to the obligation felt by NGO workers to serve ‘the people’ - even as they contradict the fairness perceived to lie in a procedural rationality whereby individuals are understood as cases.

\(^\text{81}\) Bhabha. *The Location of Culture*.

This fuller exploration of these borderline practices in national NGOs contributes another angle to the ongoing work of Olivier de Sardan, Tidjani Alou, and Blundo on empirical investigations of corruption at the local level. It expands this work away from a primarily service-user interface with the state and also adds a new locale, given that much of their research has been conducted in Francophone areas. Moreover, this thesis builds on this literature and aims to highlight the complexities and hybridities of the norms and practices being explored. It problematises those critiques of NGOs which are based, to some extent, on a notion of their exteriority – whether this is because of their co-option by funders, their elite status, or because of their lack of ‘localness’. The findings of my research also draw attention to tensions within some critiques of development which characterise it as a liberal intervention or form of governmentality which imposes particular forms of behaviour.\(^{83}\)

Whilst some elements of these critiques emphasise important issues, the explorations of these elements here highlights the complexities of the interactions between donors, development actors and recipients which are often neglected in these and other approaches.\(^{84}\) It highlights that conceptions of national NGOs as operating as part of a global form of governmentality, and/or of a ‘different’, ‘African’ set of norms which govern national NGO practices are both simplistic. They fail to account for the complexity of how individuals and groups interpret and enact ideas and norms, in part because they do not fully acknowledge the complexities of interaction between Africa and ‘the West’, and tend to sideline African agency. Moreover, whilst many of these approaches acknowledge hybridity to an extent, that acknowledgement produces a kind of collage of discrete pieces rather than the more radical break that is implied in Bhabha’s concept of hybridity.

At the beginning of his book *Citizen and Subject* Mamdani argues that how Africa is understood and the policies for what ‘should be done’ for the continent are split along modernist / communitarian lines,

“One side calls for a regime that will champion rights and the other stands in defence of culture. The impasse in Africa is not only at the level of practical politics, it is also a paralysis of perspective.” \(^{85}\)

The work of most scholars does not fall un-problematically into one camp or another, and Mamdani’s comments are necessarily ‘broad brush strokes’. These tensions are not solely


\(^{85}\) Mamdani. *Citizen and Subject*: 3
those of two opposing factions; they are present within liberal engagements more broadly which continue to be involved in a struggle to reconcile a desire to pursue a particular vision of ‘the natural form of politics’ whilst also wishing to preserve difference.\textsuperscript{86} As we have seen, national NGOs in Enugu are caught in the midst of these two sets of demands, which are also mapped onto a scalar imaginary of the ‘local’ and the ‘international’. They are expected within the development literature as well as by local Nigerian actors to defend culture due to their authenticity, whilst simultaneously being ‘modern’ bureaucratic organisations who champion rights. Moreover, their efficacy at one of these aspects is often seen to undermine their ability to be successful at the other. The dichotomy that Mamdani highlights is thus credited with concrete effects. However, under closer scrutiny it also crumbles: one discourse does not preclude the other. The broadest impact of the findings of this thesis is therefore a challenge to the idea that modernist and communitarian discourses are, or even can be, separate entities as they are translated into policies and practices. I am not making a utilitarian argument that modernisation can be in tune with culture (which was, after all, one of the aims of some of the good governance literature).\textsuperscript{87} Rather, I suggest that national NGO workers in Enugu, and quite possibly millions of other Africans, negotiate rights and culture not as oppositional forces but as part of the ongoing ‘messy’ negotiations of politics.

\textsuperscript{86} Williams. Liberalism and 'Development Discourse'.: 422-23
\textsuperscript{87} Landell-Mills. Governance, Cultural Change, and Empowerment..
Bibliography

18 February 2008. Indecent Dressing - the Limit of Legislation, This Day

26 April 2010. Nigeria's PDP leader Vincent Ogbulafor on fraud charges, BBC News Website

16 July 2009. Nigeria's peace hopes rest on Okah, BBC News Website

20 April 2006. Nigeria's shadowy oil rebels, BBC News Website

23 March 2006. Nigeria census officials attacked, BBC News Website

2007a. 'Lawn Forouk and Integrity Group’s crusade', Vanguard, 23 November 2007: 20


2007c. 'Warders don’t eat prisoners' food', Saturday Punch, 13 October 2007: 7

2008a. 'Chime adamant as opposition awaits ruling', The Guardian, 15 January 2008: 8

2008b. 'How rising oil revenue kills the tax system in Nigeria', Vanguard, 17 March 2008: A12

2008c. 'My Power Project Story by Olusegun Obasanjo', Vanguard 12 May 2008: 1, 5, 12, 14


Ajani, J. 2007. 'Shifting the paradigm on oversight function', *Vanguard*, 23 November 2007: 19-20


Aminu, M. 2008. 'Why Corruption Survives, By Maduekwe', *This Day*, 22 January 2008: 12


Amuda, S. 2008. 'FG Realises N1.8trn Revenue in First Quarter', *National Mirror*, 26 June 2008: 1


Kolapo, Y. 2008. 'The economic cost of a Ribadu exit', The Punch, 4 January 2008: 15


National Youth Service Corps, 2010 The Corps Service Year


Ndjujihe, C. 2008. 'Lawmakers contributed to the rot in the power', The Guardian, 9 April 2008: 9

Nigerians Already Know Dele Giwa’s Killer. 20 October 2008. Nigerians Already Know Dele Giwa’s Killer, Newswatch


Ombe, I. 2008. 'Squalid existence in Nigeria’s first oil-producing communities', *The Nation*, Lagos. 5


Sequn, A. 2008. 'Ministry of... Cook Cartoon', *Vanguard*, 12 May 2008: 18


252


Usigbe, L. 2008. 'Oil Sector Probe: Reps uncover breach of due process', *Vanguard*, 1 June 2008: 5


