

Cultural policy
in **Sierra Leone**

Arthur Abraham

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Studies and documents on cultural policies

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Preface

The purpose of this series is to show how cultural policies are planned and implemented in various Member States.

As cultures differ, so does the approach to them; it is for each Member State to determine its cultural policy and methods according to its own conception of culture, its socio-economic system, political ideology and technological development. However, the methods of cultural policy (like those of general development policy) have certain common problems; these are largely institutional, administrative and financial in nature, and the need has increasingly been stressed for exchanging experiences and information about them. This series, each issue of which follows as far as possible a similar pattern so as to make comparison easier, is mainly concerned with these technical aspects of cultural policy.

In general, the studies deal with the principles and methods of cultural policy, the evaluation of cultural needs, administrative structures and management, planning and financing, the organization of resources, legislation, budgeting, public and private institutions, cultural content in education, cultural autonomy and decentralization, the training of personnel, institutional infrastructures for meeting specific cultural needs, the safeguarding of the cultural heritage, institutions for the dissemination of the arts, international cultural co-operation and other related subjects.

The studies, which cover countries belonging to differing social and economic systems, geographical areas and levels of development, present therefore a wide variety of approaches and methods in cultural policy. Taken as a whole, they can provide guidelines to countries which have yet to establish cultural policies, while all countries, especially those seeking new formulations of such policies, can profit by the experience already gained.

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The opinions expressed are the author's, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Unesco.

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Foreword

This monograph, far from being comprehensive, is a modest attempt to describe cultural policy in Sierra Leone, paying particular attention to the socio-cultural and historical development, present organization, and future needs and priorities.

In preparing this document, I have been assisted in various ways by numerous persons: the staff of the newsroom of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, who readily gave me brochures and other documents; Mohamed J. Tunis, Deputy Director of the SLBS/TV, who gave valuable information and documents about rediffusion; John Vandi, Director of Culture, who willingly discussed many of his plans and proposals; E. F. Margai, Senior Education Officer, who procured records of the Arts Education Association of Sierra Leone and freely discussed them; Mrs D. H. Cummings, Curator of the Museum, who patiently searched for obscure documents and gave a lot of information; H. U. Cole, Secretary of the Monuments and Relics Commission, who virtually compiled much of the information embodied in Appendix I; J. S. T. Thompson, Assistant Librarian at Fourah Bay College, who promptly located documents for me and corrected some inaccuracies about publications; and finally, Harry Caulker of the History Department of Fourah Bay College, who typed the manuscript under very trying conditions. To all these and many others, my sincere thanks are due.

A. A.

Introduction: problems and needs

Cultural policy

That there is difficulty in the use of this term, which even represents an inherent contradiction, was first pointed out by D. Paul Schafer when he prepared the Canadian document for this series. Culture and policy represent two different perceptions of life; the former has an 'organic, natural or spontaneous' existence, while the latter is 'conscious, methodical and deliberate'. To resolve this contradiction, the Canadian document reconciled the two concepts as 'one integrative process, capable of uniting two diverse value systems', and in this way holding out a great hope for the future.

Accepting this position makes it unnecessary to enter into any further debate on 'cultural policy' from a theoretical standpoint, because the debate will inevitably become polemical. It is enough to accept that 'cultural policy' is imperative in a world whose technological advancements seem to threaten their very inventors and the world's inhabitants with extinction. Therefore, 'cultural policy' is necessary to ensure the preservation of the cultural heritage and indeed life and mankind itself.

The foregoing, however, does not explain what culture connotes in the context in which it is used in this monograph. Culture itself is an elusive concept that has been defined in hundreds of ways, and is capable of being perceived in countless forms, depending on the individual, social background, level of education, discipline, ideological outlook, etc. For this very reason, the Unesco General Conference at its fifteenth session 'decided unanimously against embarking on an attempt to define culture', much less the cultural policy of Member States. For our present purposes, however, we shall view culture as the sum total of the nation's life, its spirit and aspirations, its heritage, its traditions and the institutions derived from its history, all modified by external influences without being altered beyond recognition, and at the same time preserved in so far as is consistent with modern conditions of living and development. This means that culture here

represents an integrative process combining tradition with modern technological developments capable of adaptation within the society's cultural frame of reference. Because of this elastic view, it would be pretentious to try to be comprehensive. Loopholes, inadequate treatment of some topics, omissions, etc. are criticisms that can be levelled against this monograph, but they must remain a challenge for the future.

Parochial ideas of culture

The developing countries of today have all been victims of colonialism in the recent past. Colonialism itself was imposed because of the technological superiority of the colonizers. This has therefore led to a serious misconception equating technological superiority with superiority of culture—in other words, the idea that technology is the same as culture. Nothing could be farther from the truth. Yet many people believe in the superiority of the way of life of the technologically advanced countries.

Since Euro-American culture was introduced through the process of Christian evangelization and school systems, its worst victims have been the 'Westernized' élites and the young people growing up to become élites themselves. These élites are usually associated with the urban centres and the so-called modern sector—business executives, politicians, civil servants, etc. However, the urban centres do not comprise only the élite classes. Migration from the rural areas into these urban centres has been a constant factor in African demography. These migrants usually have little 'Western' education, and form the bulk of the labour force and clerical workers. As non-élite classes, they look up to the élite classes for cultural values, just as the school-going youth do, because they are potential élites too. This is not to say that everybody in the towns behaves in the same way, or that there are no exceptions, no élites who deprecate the Western lifestyle. But there is a hard core comprising a good number whose perceptions of culture have been vitiated by these existing conditions. This core we shall call the average man.

Despite the fact that in many African countries Westernized élites and educated youth have been very active in the quest for cultural identity and the struggle for cultural emancipation, it is regrettable that Sierra Leone has not been particularly outstanding in these ventures. The average man is still mesmerized by the dominance of Euro-American cultural values, practised with religious tenacity by the urban bourgeoisie. So that when we talk of culture generally, say in Freetown, it means nothing more than the National Dance Troupe or the popular Mailo or Gumbay dances.

Many people see themselves as beyond the sphere of 'traditional culture' (even though it might be their heritage) because our colonizers have often referred to it as 'primitive', 'backward', or 'uncivilized'. So they see themselves as belonging to the colonizer's alien tie-and-jacket culture, which,

in a very real sense, is still sadly the mark of a 'gentleman' in today's Sierra Leone. No one in the 'senior service' can be seen officially dressed otherwise, even though factors of geography, ecology and, one might add, simple common sense would seem to dictate the opposite. On the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service, musical interludes are always European classical music. National programmes have still not been sufficiently culture-oriented.

The educated youth of today are the worst victims of the foreign, Euro-American cultural values, manifested in long, untamed hair, high 'platform' shoes, drug-pushing, hippie dress styles, etc. This is so because these young people are totally unprotected and hopelessly exposed to the economic dictates of a foreign culture that only seeks to penetrate any 'market' with a bewildering catalogue of non-essential consumer items, pornographic literature, films, music, etc. Add to this the fact that there is almost a complete lack of cultural education and no positive government prohibitions on the inflow of foreign cultural items: the consequences are not only culturally devastating, but economically disastrous as well.

As regards the lack of cultural education, an indigenous cultural play, festival or event is patronized because it is deemed 'esoteric', not because there is that spontaneous feeling of identity with the indigenous culture. There is no public participation, only amazement. This means that the level of cultural awareness is abysmally low. Despite recent incipient and somewhat uncoordinated efforts to create cultural awareness, the results have not been particularly encouraging. Educational institutions are not very committed to providing cultural education or increasing the level of cultural consciousness, dominated as they are by oligarchies with strong colonial traditions. Africanization and Sierra Leoneanization, in particular of the curricula and syllabuses, has not been appreciably radical. African literature and African history are far from being dominant subjects; they are still competing with Shakespeare and the reign of Henry Tudor as the beginning of 'modern history'.

Cultural needs

The foregoing demonstrates one dominant trend: a high degree of alienation and the persistence of colonial values, institutions and structures. Colonial and indigenous values are in a state of unstable coexistence, and in many cases the former are shown to be anachronistic and dysfunctional both to the preservation of our indigenous traditions and to the evolution of a national culture that adapts modern science and technology to maximize the functioning of inherited indigenous institutions. There is thus the need for a centrally directed policy to save the indigenous culture and to use it as much as possible in modern functions. The major thrust in the present work will emphasize cultural education as the main weapon for achieving

cultural liberation. This will grapple with the problem of alienation and élitism. The first step in tackling this task is to get the facts of our national history correct—a revisionist approach to decolonize our history as an academic discipline and to demonstrate that, contrary to official colonial records, we have indigenous traditions that should not be confused with traditions that took shape during the colonial period, and classed simply as our pre-colonial traditions. The rest of this monograph will attempt to trace the development and functioning of Sierra Leone's diverse cultural institutions up to the present, and end with a note on future needs in the context of national development.

Historical and cultural background

Underdevelopment of historiography

Sierra Leone faces all the problems of African historiography, and, what is worse, reasonable encouragement has not been given to the pursuit of cultural and historical research. There are thus yawning gaps in our knowledge as well as unresolved problems, if not riddles. No attempt has been made even to survey and collect oral traditions systematically, despite a few appeals from the wilderness. Very little archaeological investigation has been undertaken, all by foreigners, and in two instances as doctoral theses. The *nomoli*, the famous soapstone figurines dug up over vast areas of the hinterland, still pose an enigma. Who carved them? When? What purpose did they serve then as distinct from their ritual uses today? What accounts for their geographical distribution? Only speculative answers have been given to these questions.

Ethnographic information is scanty. In 1916 N. W. Thomas, the official anthropologist, prepared his *Anthropological Report on Sierra Leone* in two parts, but it was concerned mainly with Temne customary law. This was a normal colonial practice—to use ethnographic information to formulate ways of holding down or ‘pacifying’ the local populations. Thirty-five years later, McCulloch’s *Peoples of Sierra Leone* appeared in the general series of the Ethnographic Survey of Africa conducted by the International African Institute. This was a result of the fact that ‘events and developments during the war led to a wider recognition of the need for collecting and making more generally available the wealth of existing but uncoordinated material on the ethnic groupings and social conditions of African peoples, particularly in connection with plans for economic and social development’. Conducted hurriedly, this ethnographic survey of Sierra Leone is scanty, confessedly deficient in many respects and today manifestly anachronistic. Yet no attempt has been made to remedy its shortcomings and produce a well-researched, well-balanced ethnographic work.

The Mende have been a little more fortunate. Kenneth Little's *The Mende of Sierra Leone* is a comprehensive ethnographic study, first published in 1951 and revised in 1967. In fact, there is more cultural and historical information on the Mende than on any other group inhabiting the hinterland of Sierra Leone. But much cultural and historical information is found about most groups in *Sierra Leone Studies*, old series, 1919-39, and new series, 1952-70, when it ceased publication. Three recent manuscripts by Sierra Leoneans, if published, might be invaluable in advancing our cultural and historical perspectives. They are all doctoral theses: H. M. Joko-Smart's *Customary Law in Sierra Leone*, a most comprehensive document, has been unfortunately costed prohibitively for publication, but Abraham's *Mende Government and Politics Under Colonial Rule* has been more fortunate in getting a publisher. Fyle's *Solimana and its Neighbours* will open up a much neglected area when it is published.

While there is an impressive bibliographical list of publications on the culture and history of Sierra Leone, their shortcomings are glaring. The vast majority have been written by foreigners, either as contemporary observers or traders on the coast in the past, or as recent research students writing degree theses. Because there are few or no facilities for doing field research, collection and systematization of oral traditions, etc., there is a tendency to rely heavily on documentary evidence, itself produced mostly by Europeans, which has two serious limitations apart from the question of authenticity. First, the Europeans' activities were concentrated mostly on the coast, and second, they were intensified in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Thus, spatially, we know more about the coastal areas than we know about the interior and, in time, we know more about the last two centuries than about any period before that.

This trend can be graphically illustrated even for the post-colonial period. Since 1961, about ten serious culture-related history books have been published on Sierra Leone, only two by Sierra Leoneans. Three of these books are exclusively about the western area, including one by a Sierra Leonean, while only one, by the other Sierra Leonean, is exclusively about the hinterland. The rest concentrate heavily on the coastal areas, but contain sprinklings of information on the hinterland. Except for one that deals with the period up to the eighteenth century, they all deal more or less with the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this same post-colonial period, about seven cultural monographs have appeared, only two co-authored by Sierra Leoneans: two deal specifically with religion among the Mende and among the Kono; three with Freetown cultural life; one, not very accurate, with Mende art; and the last one is a general ethnographic survey of the Limba people. There are of course a number of articles published in various journals and many unpublished theses and manuscripts.

But the main conclusion to be adduced from the foregoing is that while cultural and historical studies on Sierra Leone are in no sense static their progress is slow. Moreover, there is a serious imbalance that leaves many

gaps in our knowledge. Above all, the role of Sierra Leoneans in advancing cultural and historical knowledge about their country is unimpressive or insignificant, compared with the work done by foreigners. Perhaps it may not be an oversimplification to state that studies on our total culture and history are at an underdeveloped stage.

Inaccurate concepts

Colonial domination has led to distortion and falsification of African history by creating myths and transforming them into reality. The myth is so oft proclaimed and repeated that it ends by assuming a reality of its own. A number of such mythological concepts will be identified presently.

First, there is the myth of Africa being the 'Dark Continent' until Europeans 'discovered' it and by explorations 'opened it up' to international monopoly capitalism. Despite the explosion of this myth, schoolbooks still repeat that 'Mungo Park discovered the River Niger', or that 'Vasco da Gama discovered the sea route to India', and most Sierra Leoneans from schoolboys to university graduates still believe and will readily state that 'Pedro de Cintra discovered Sierra Leone in 1462'!

It will be pointless to enter into a discussion of the illogical nature of such statements, but if a proper cultural policy is to be formulated, it must be predicated upon correct historical facts. Historically, the Niger formed one of the commercial arteries on which the great empires of Western Sudan—Ghana, Mali and Songai—thrived. West Africans had developed the selective cultivation of food crops based on the use of the Niger four and a half thousand years before Mungo Park was born! That Mungo Park could discover the Niger is a logical fallacy. The Africans knew all they wanted to know about the Niger, and even conducted Mungo Park to its banks to see it. The real historical significance of Mungo Park then is that he was the first European to see the Niger, and attested to the fact that he saw it flowing eastwards. This was new knowledge for the European public, which called Africa a 'dark continent' precisely because they were ignorant of it. Some of the greatest civilizations flourished in the Niger valley at a time when Europe was in a state of feudalism.

The 'opening up' of Africa was really nothing more than grafting it on to the periphery of the international capitalist system. This made it a satellite, condemned to an existence of dependency, whose development has since been conditioned, not by the rational idea of improving the living standards of its vast populations, but by the irrationality of the consumption patterns of its capitalist-colonialist masters. Unequal development was institutionalized and guaranteed by colonialism, but it has not disappeared with the political disappearance of colonialism, because the structures through which that inequality was perpetuated still remain paradoxically the dominant institutions in today's 'independent' African nations. The

quest for a new international economic and social order today is a direct result of the 'opening up of Africa' by Europeans.

Pedro da Cintra and the Portuguese after him found well-organized states with sophisticated political and social systems with which they interacted.

In 1896, the British proclaimed a protectorate over the hinterland of the Colony of Sierra Leone. It was said that the British *pax* was necessary to put a stop to 'intertribal warfare' and 'slave-raiding', which disrupted production and trade. Tiny chiefdoms were the basic political units, and they had allegedly failed throughout history to unite into larger polities, each remaining fiercely independent. It was colonialism that allegedly united them and tried to foster a sense of nationhood among the various 'tribes'. This colonial interpretation is false, but it found its way into many official documents and was taken up by writers, and then it was transformed and has survived as 'facts'.

With new evidence coming to light, some paradoxically from the colonial records themselves, we now know that the peoples of the upper Guinea coast organized themselves into larger polities, each of which comprised several provinces, called chiefdoms in the colonial period. Each of these chiefdoms belonged to a larger political organization in the pre-colonial period.

It is true that some of the largest groups of people in Sierra Leone, such as the Mende, the Limba and the Temne, never evolved into a single political state. Each of these groups comprised a few states, although a sense of belonging was fostered by the similarity of their social and cultural institutions. However, other groups, such as the Yalunka, the Vai, the Loko or the Sherbro, succeeded in developing a common political state. By the late nineteenth century, owing to a variety of reasons that have yet to be probed, some of these states suffered a decline, and the provinces usually asserted their autonomy. But they nevertheless recognized the nominal suzerainty of the overlord. With the pending proclamation of the protectorate, the British actively intervened to prevent any re-organization aimed at reviving a declining polity. After the colonial takeover, states that still remained large were dismantled, and their provincial parts labelled chiefdoms. The number of chiefdoms increased with bewildering rapidity during the first three decades of colonial rule, because of the fragmentation of the pre-colonial states. As a corollary, not all rulers were 'petty chiefs'. States were ruled over by kings, and their subordinate provincial rulers were chiefs.

To use 'intertribal wars' and 'slave-raiding' as a justification for depriving Africans of their sovereignty and their territory was to say the least unwarranted. The wars were certainly waged, but warfare had a pattern, an order and well-structured conventions. It was not just the savage outburst of 'uncivilized tribes' to satisfy their 'horrid craving'. Moreover, the wars never disrupted production adversely: on the contrary, the warriors were men and had to be fed. Late-nineteenth-century export statistics actually show an increase in exported produce, although the value

declined. It is difficult to imagine one whole 'tribe' at war with another 'tribe'. The real contestants were kings, chiefs or warriors and their followers. And, depending on the circumstances, there was more likely to be intraethnic rather than 'intertribal' warfare.

This was also a time when Europeans were demanding 'legitimate' trade in place of 'slave trade'. To produce the legitimate crops, palm produce, etc., labour was needed. To procure the labour, one had to go to war to obtain captives, who were then put on the farms to grow or produce the legitimate crops the Europeans wanted. Maltreating the captives would have risked an exodus with disastrous economic consequences. Thus there could not have been 'mere slave-raiding'.

It is in the light of perspectives such as I have tried to demonstrate in this section that the rise of a new historiography should be encouraged to form a vehicle for enhancing the development of national cultural awareness. This in effect means giving serious encouragement and funding to research, and giving commissions to the researchers to produce the kind of textbooks necessary for the purpose, at all levels of the formal educational structure and for the general public too.

Ethnic distribution

Sierra Leone comprises about sixteen ethnic groups. Some are concentrated in particular nuclear areas, while others have dispersed over vast areas. The largest group is the Mende, who occupy the southern half of the country in an east-west belt. To the south-west of the Mende and along the coast are the Sherbro, the Krim and the Vai (or Gallinas). On the western Mende border with Liberia are found the Gola, whose nucleus is in Liberia. The Mende are flanked on the north-east by the Kono, wholly concentrated in Sierra Leone, and the Kissi, whose nucleus is in Guinea but who spill over into Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The second largest group is the Temne of the Northern Province, whose main zone stretches eastwards from the coast with a northern apex wedged between the Limba and the Loko. The Loko are found to the north of the Temne and south of the Limba, while the Koranko occupy a region north of the Kono, north-east of the Temne, and east of the Limba. To the north of the Koranko are the Yalunka, while the Soso, whose nuclear area is in Guinea, flank the Limba to the west.

The Krios are mainly in the Western Area. But the Mandingo and Fula, recent migrants, occupy two parallel axial belts—the Kabala-Makeni axis and the Sewa river basin.

It is extremely difficult to reconstruct with any degree of certainty the early history of most of these groups. When, however, the Portuguese arrived on the coast of modern Sierra Leone in the sixteenth century they found a Sape confederacy comprising the Limba, Temne, Bullom (Sherbro),

Historical and cultural background

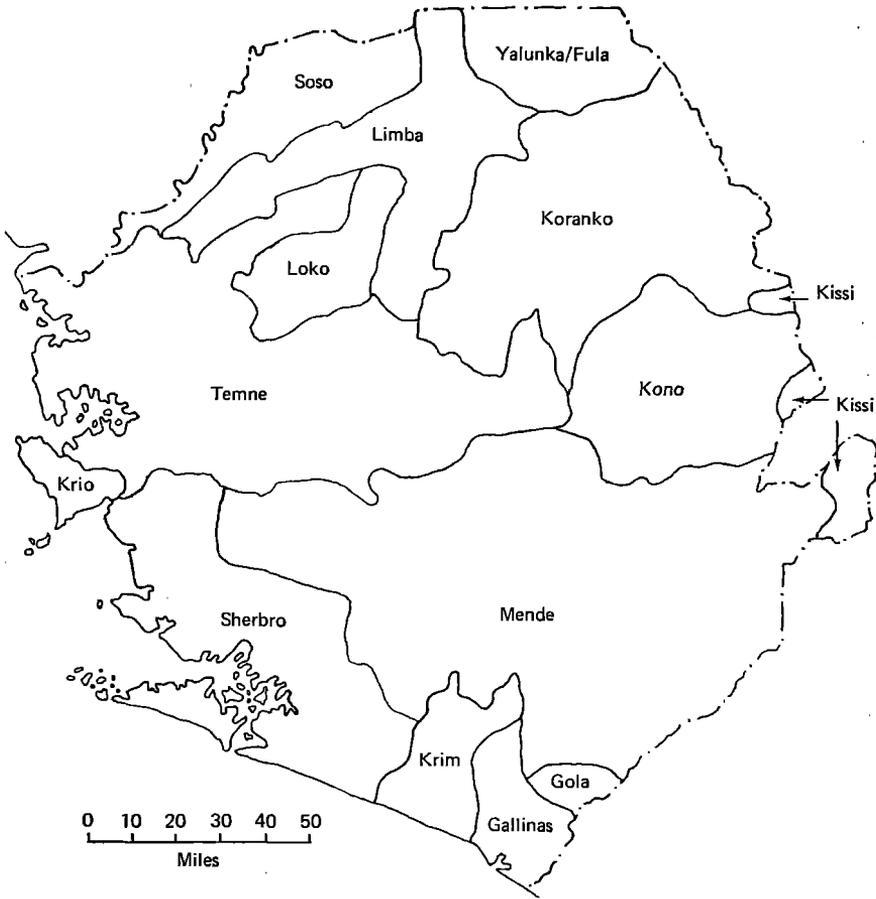


FIG. 1. Illustration of the section entitled 'Ethnic Distribution' on page 18.

Baga, Landauma and Nalu peoples, these last three being found only in Guinea today. The Vai were further down the coast, having migrated there from the interior, leaving behind their kindred, the Kono. The Soso were already established on the coast north of the Limba, having migrated there while hunting elephants, leaving behind their kinsmen, the Yalunka. No mention is made of the Mende until the late seventeenth century, and of the Loko until the late sixteenth century.

One of the most important events in the history of Sierra Leone, about which much has still to be studied, is the invasion by a Mende-speaking people called the Mani in the mid sixteenth century, with drastic political and cultural consequences. Having overrun the Sapi confederacy from the region of Cape Mount, the Mani were emboldened to subdue other peoples further north. The Limba simply retreated, and burnt their towns before the advancing Mani. But the Soso not only retreated, they left behind poisoned food which the Mani ate and were decimated. The Mani then retreated to the peninsula region, and formed four kingdoms from the former Sapi confederacy, ruled over by Mani kings. Farma ruled over the kingdom of Boure or Sierra Leone, which was centred on the peninsula, and in all probability was Temne-speaking. An effective wedge was driven between the Bullom, leaving a southern kingdom ruled by Selbora, corrupted to Sherbro, a name by which the Bullom of that area are known today. The northern portion beyond the peninsula remained the Bullom kingdom proper. The fourth kingdom was that of the Logo (Loko), centred on Port Loko.

It is believed that the Loko and the Mende were products of the Mani invasions—an admixture of the Mani/Mande conquering stock and a pre-existent aboriginal Temne/Bullom stock. The Mende and Loko languages are mutually intelligible, and this has led some writers to assert that the Loko represent an advance-guard of the migrating Mende from the interior westwards towards the coast.

In the late eighteenth century a movement began which was to give rise to the last ethnic group, the Krios. For humanitarian and economic reasons, a settlement was begun on the Sierra Leone peninsula for freed slaves, who were promised freedom after fighting on the side of the British in the American War of Independence. Other waves, the Maroons and Nova Scotians followed, and the settlement became known as Freetown. In 1807, the British Parliament outlawed the slave trade for British subjects, and all ships captured with slaves on board were brought to Freetown for adjudication. These re-captives, as they came to be called, were settled in the villages around Freetown. Coming from diverse places with various cultural backgrounds, the inhabitants of the Sierra Leone peninsula had to evolve a new language and culture, which were heavily imbued with British values. They engaged in different professions, education and trade, and formed the main proponents of Western culture. By the late nineteenth century they all came to be called by the generic term Krios.

The colonial occupation

Africans on the coast of Sierra Leone had maintained trading relations with Europeans since the sixteenth century. By the seventeenth century, this commercial relationship came to be dominated by a single commodity demanded by Europeans—slaves. For the next three centuries slaves formed the dominant constant in European and African relations.

In the nineteenth century this trade ceased to be necessary to Europe and was abolished. New commodities had to be found to replace it. Already, some European nations had become industrialized and wanted raw materials and markets as well as new outlets for their surplus capital. These economic forces caused political and diplomatic rivalries that in the end led to the scramble for and partition of Africa in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Treaties were hurriedly 'signed in all the approved forms of legal verbiage incapable of translation by ill-educated interpreters'. The actual terms were misrepresented to the African signatories. In 1896, the small colonial establishment in Freetown decided to extend its jurisdiction over the hinterland, on the pretext of stopping slave-raiding and removing obstacles to trade. The Protectorate was thus proclaimed, depriving the Africans of their sovereignty. In 1898 a house tax was imposed that sparked off widespread resentment culminating in war. The British won the war. For the next sixty years the history of Sierra Leone was one of colonial domination.

Socio-cultural organization

Unity in diversity

Despite the fact that there are sixteen ethno-linguistic groupings in Sierra Leone, there is nevertheless a remarkable degree of similarity in socio-cultural institutions and values. Except for Krio, all the languages of Sierra Leone belong to the Niger-Congo family of Greenberg's linguistic classification, and in particular to two subgroups of this family: the West Atlantic, to which belong Temne, Sherbro, Krim, Gola, Kissi, Fula and Limba, and the Mande subgroup, to which the others belong. Most of these languages have dialectal differences but are usually interintelligible.

In addition, external forces have acted on these peoples, bringing them into closer contact with one another. Among the most important forces are Islam and European contact. Contrary to the oft-repeated cliché that before colonialism relations between these ethnic groups were dominated by lack of social interaction and by suspicion and fear, there is a good deal of evidence to show that there was commercial, cultural and political intercourse. The so-called intertribal wars, rather than separating ethnic groups, brought them into contact.

Itinerant Muslim traders travelled widely and even settled among various communities, gradually influencing them to accept the way of Islam. European traders on the coast needed agents in the interior, and so a number of middlemen emerged, conducting trade in European merchandise at several removes in the far interior.

State organization

There is a striking similarity in the political organization and administrative structure of the polities that developed in the Sierra Leone hinterland. These were roughly polities of a federal kind with a titled

Socio-cultural organization

suzerain who was elected to the office for his prowess by a consensus of the elders and strangers were not known to be excluded from the contest. In theory, the king had absolute powers, but in practice he was kept in check by his council of state (which met only occasionally), his court council, which resided in his capital town, and by powerful sanctions and rituals imposed by institutions known as secret societies.

The state was divided into a number of provinces, each ruled by a chief, who was usually descended from the founder of the nuclear settlement. Although responsible to the king, he carried out the day-to-day administration of his province, including the administration of justice, without interference. He was obliged, however, to pay annual tribute to the king, provide warriors during an emergency, and in necessary circumstances pay extra levies. Appeals from his decisions were heard directly by the king's court. The provincial chief also had his own council, which he consulted on all important matters.

Below the provincial chiefs were town and village chiefs, who were usually the oldest surviving members of the family that founded the town or village. They carried out much the same functions as the provincial chiefs.

The council of state usually comprised the court officials, provincial heads, eminent warriors and learned men. Owing to difficulties in communications and other reasons, this council met irregularly. The king took immediate advice from his court officials, who in most cases had specific functions and titles, as in a modern cabinet.

Socio-economic organization

Most groups in Sierra Leone are divided into clans, but these are noticeably absent in the southern half of the country. Domestic organization, however, centres on the household, a group of patrilineal kin living in a compound (a specific section of a town or village). In some cases the compound is the same as the village.

The household's survival was based on a number of dependents, incorrectly called slaves. These dependents included women (free and unfree), captives from wars, or persons pledged as security for some form of service. The dependents formed the bulk of the labour force, which provided most of the wealth of the head of the household.

Some wealth was obtained from booty captured in war, some inherited, but the economic welfare of the society depended on agriculture. That was why in the nineteenth century the capture of people became the prime cause of wars. Labour was scarce in proportion to an abundant supply of land.

Among most groups, land was held communally by families, but the chief or king was the custodian to ensure that, at least since the nineteenth

century, no unfair dealing was transacted that would deprive his people of their means of living.

Food was not the only item of agricultural production. Raw materials, such as cotton, were also cultivated to feed the local country-cloth industries. Other industries included the making of pots and pipes, the manufacture of iron tools and implements such as guns, machets, hoes, etc. But the 'principal industry' was the weaving of cloth, and consequently full-time professional classes emerged. There were other arts and crafts, such as the making of baskets, mats, fishing nets, etc., but they were mostly part-time occupations that flourished between the end of the harvest season and the beginning of farming operations for the following season.

Surpluses generated from agricultural and industrial pursuits led to flourishing commercial systems and so-called long-distance trade. Currency systems, too, emerged, and country-cloth itself became one notable currency. Accumulation on a capitalist scale, however, proved impossible because food produce is perishable and social customs dictated a fundamental redistribution of accumulated wealth.

Belief systems

Belief in a supreme deity is common. It is also believed that a more accessible world of natural and ancestral spirits exists, with earthly manifestations—natural objects such as large trees, stones, rivers or shrines built to the spirits. Every important phase of life is therefore accompanied by rituals. No important event, be it good fortune or catastrophe, passes without offerings of sacrifices to the spirits. From the moment a child is born, every stage of its development—puberty, marriage, etc.—is accompanied by rites and ceremonies. In some societies, there are special cult priests responsible for these spiritual functions.

Rituals are usually accompanied by music, so that dance and drama are invariably linked to the belief systems. Formal training for these as well as many other aspects of life is conducted through the so-called secret societies.

'Secret societies'

All communities in Sierra Leone have powerful institutions called uncritically 'secret societies'. Every adult in the community is supposed to be a member of one of these societies, so that in actual fact a society cannot be secret to its members, but only to non-initiates—children and outsiders.

There are some societies that are strictly for men, such as the Poro, Ragbenle, Wonde, or Gbangbani; some strictly for women, such as the Sande or Bondo, and others that accept both sexes, such as the Humoi. Some of these associations are only found among restricted groups; for

instance, the Gbangbani is only found among the Limba and Loko while the Wonde is only found among the Kpaa-Mende. In structure and function, however, there is a great degree of similarity among all these associations, the most widespread of them being the Poro and Bondo. Violation of their laws or peeping-tomism usually carries very serious penalties, not excluding death.

Although it is usually said that formal education began with the coming of Christian missionaries, there is good reason to disbelieve this. Since the Poro and Bondo effected the transition from childhood into adulthood, one of their most important functions was to prepare the initiate for his place in the society through rigid training of body and soul. A strict timetable and curriculum were adhered to through a formal system that lasted anything up to seven or more years. This prepared the graduate for the civic responsibility he owed to his community.

When boys were initiated into the Poro, they were taught basic cultural norms, local history, acrobatics, hunting, music, dance and drama, and above all the art of warfare. Arts and crafts also formed part of the training. In the Bondo, the girls were taught beauty culture, singing, dance, drama, domestic science, hygiene, mothercraft and child welfare. It is difficult to see how such a rigid system of education, which confined the students to a specific programme of study with full-time tutors over a number of years, can be called an informal system. The difference in emphasis in the training of boys and girls reflects the needs of society: the young men graduated fully prepared to contribute to the civic and economic life of the community and to defend it by fighting if necessary, while the young women were prepared to take their places in homes as wives, bearing children and contributing to agricultural production. The Poro had important economic functions. It was one source of labour, and had powerful sanctions to control economic life. For instance, the Poro could determine when certain crops could be harvested. This was to ensure maximum production by preventing people from harvesting before the crops were fully mature.

Although there were specialized medical associations, the Poro and Bondo also performed medical services. Basic first aid was taught, and violation of certain customs could only be cleansed by rites in these associations. Head Bondo women in particular still remain today skilled midwives.

Since politics was mostly outside the domain of women, the Poro fulfilled powerful political functions. The council of state met in the Poro lodge; a succession dispute could only be settled in the Poro; the Poro was responsible for the election, coronation and burial ceremonies of kings and chiefs. Very important decisions, particularly regarding war, could only be taken in the Poro. Wide currency has been given to the fact that the so-called Hut Tax War of 1898 against British domination was the work of the Poro.

The spirits of these associations were represented by masked dancers

who usually led the festivities that marked the graduation ceremony, which sometimes lasted for days; it gave the professional or amateur the opportunity to show his prowess in acrobatics, dance, drumming, dress, etc. The whole community participated spontaneously in this cultural festival. Young boys and girls practised to the tune of the music, or permanently became fans of the artists they admired most.

Cultural festivals

Today the graduation ceremonies such as have been described above do not form the only occasions for cultural performances. The period between the end of the harvest season and the beginning of the next planting season is usually bursting with activity. Specifically, drama/dance groups perform on almost every night that the moon shines. Professional story-tellers and magicians travel the whole countryside.

There are associations without a political or ritual character that are also represented by masked dancers, who perform on any occasion that calls for merriment. In recent times Christmas Day seems to have become one of the most favoured occasions for a festival. Young boys who are not yet initiated simulate the major associations and have their own masked dancers as well.

The cultural impact of colonialism

The colonial situation

With the imposition of colonial rule, a foreign superstructural entity, culturally different and alien, was superimposed upon the colonized society. A plural society was then created, characterized by the antagonistic relationship between the foreign rulers and the indigenous subjects, who mingled but did not mix.

The dominating society, representing a technologically advanced society, infused elements that affected the pattern of change. Indigenous sovereignty was lost, and the rulers were made adjuncts of the colonial administrative mechanism. All indigenous rulers robbed of their sovereignty were styled 'paramount chiefs', with many of their powers and functions abrogated by the colonial power. Large territories were then fragmented and rivalries generated.

Two contradictions arose, within the new colonial chieftaincy and within the colonial administration itself. The chief got his ultimate support from the colonial power, not from his people. If he represented some unpopular wishes of the administration to his people, he risked a revolt. If he failed to carry out an order, he faced likely deposition. On the other hand, the colonial administration took over as the ultimate king-maker,

and at the same time as the protector of the people against their chiefs. As long as a chief retained the support of the administration, he could safely keep his office. A chief could thus oppress his people as long as he had the support of the colonial administration, but the latter too had the new function of protecting the subjects against the oppression of their chiefs.

Missionary activity

Missionary activity inevitably became associated with Western education, for only through this system could the missionary work of evangelization be accomplished. To be admitted to a missionary school, one had to become a Christian. To become a Christian, one had to give up all one's previous beliefs, which the missionaries dismissed as 'fetishist', and then be baptized into the new religion. The whole cultural life of the society was declared pagan, and Christians had to abhor it.

As a result, traditional methods of education and medicine were discouraged, and the missionaries created a new élite whom they taught to despise their brethren, customs, institutions and history. The new élite then despised its own culture and aped the ways of life of the foreign colonizer. New symbols of élitism emerged—in this case, the English language, English dress (jacket and tie) despite the humidity and the burning tropical sun, English food, music, etc.

Members of this élite class looked to London for their values, aspired to the positions of the colonizing class, and were almost completely alienated. At a certain point, some time about the Second World War, they claimed to speak for their 'backward' brethren, and preached that they must be the legitimate successors of the colonial masters. Some regained the consciousness that they were Africans, and therefore could never become Europeans, however religiously they aped European ways. But most African élites have continued to see themselves as superior to their kindred, and continue to behave as such. The educated man traditionally becomes alienated from his own people. Most therefore stay in a no-man's land, neither European nor completely African. At independence, the out-going colonial masters abdicated power to this alienated class, which has failed to sever the colonial umbilical cord by maintaining the consumption patterns inherited from their colonial masters.

Socio-economic impact

The imposition of colonial rule brought the colonies within the orbit of the capitalist system. The colony was henceforth to be the dumping ground for colonial goods and capital, and the constant source of raw materials. Indigenous commercial and currency systems were destroyed and new systems linking the colonies organically with the magnet of colonial economic power instituted.

The only capital investment project undertaken in Sierra Leone before the advent of diamond mining in the 1930s was the railway. In effect, no new patterns of production were introduced; the railway simply escalated a pre-existent economic system. It served as the catalyst to exploit the raw materials of the country as well as the vehicle to bring Manchester cotton closer to the rural population, thus destroying the vitality of indigenous cloth weaving.

Diamonds were discovered in the 1930s, and mining operations led to mass migrations and consequent shortage of the staple food, rice, because labour migrated. Cash crops, such as coffee and cocoa, were introduced at the same time, thus diverting more labour from the production of the staple food. In effect, the colony came to be used to maintain the good health of the colonial power at the cost of the colony's own good health.

The combined effect of the railway and mining operations was to create urban centres where crime, unemployment and abnormal behaviour were rife. It became difficult for the chiefs to cope with the problems of law and order created by these new phenomena.

Persistence of indigenous institutions

In spite of the negative effects of colonialism on indigenous culture, many indigenous institutions have survived, even if their role, scope, and functions have been modified. About 80 per cent of the population are still rural dwellers and, although partially exposed to Western culture, retain their basic traditional mode of living. The effects of colonialism and consequently of Westernization are culturally predominant only in the towns and in the central institutions of government developed during the colonial period, which were taken over without modification at independence.

In all fairness, the colonial administration attempted to prevent the process of alienation because, as it was preoccupied with law and order in the early days, Western education was thought to be a threat to the British *pax*. Indirect Rule, which so dominated British colonial thinking, aimed at keeping Africans within their socio-cultural environment. Edward Blyden, the great pan-Negro patriot, argued that Africa could not be developed by Western Christian evangelization and education, since it alienated its converts from their cultural roots. On the contrary, he preached the use of Islam as the best tool, since it did not alienate its converts.

Creating an élite after its own image was bound to threaten the colonial establishment. The main purpose of official education was to make the African a pliable tool of the administration in his own chiefdom and able to assist in its development according to his ability. In 1924, the famous Phelps-Stokes Commission recommended much the same ideas as Lord Lugard—to revive African culture, and in particular some traditions and customs, in the schools. Early instruction was carried out in the local languages.

This policy was carried on, although it was discovered that once a man had received some measure of Western education it was difficult to pin him down in his locality. As early as 1916 graduates of Bo School in Sierra Leone were allowed to join the lower ranks of the Colonial Service. But the official policy continued to encourage graduates to keep ties with their cultural roots. No religious instruction was given, and by the post-war period the protectorate élites had Western education but were still part of their traditional culture, going through all the same rites, ceremonies, etc., as their brethren.

Despite official efforts (by no means motivated by the highest of considerations), the school systems changed to inculcate classical Western education. According to Sifuna, 'the school remains strictly literary and Etonian in outlook: all that it is achieving is to make pupils strangers among the common mass of the population. . . . There are just too many examples of African leaders who extol the values of a strictly African curriculum while making every effort to take their own offspring to academic Etons.'

However, the majority of people from the rural areas who acquire Western education today are in many instances the first generation to do so in their respective families. The pull of the rural traditional culture ensures that while a small percentage of the total rural population receives Western education, and invariably works in towns, these new élites do not become completely alienated from their people. Membership of traditional cultural associations, participation in traditional cultural festivals and activities still ensure that the new élite retains its cultural roots. The problem, however, remains for those who have migrated permanently to the towns, as they are bound to remain alienated; the same can be said of those who have accumulated wealth through the 'modern sector', the urban bourgeoisie, who can afford, and prefer, to give their children the kind of education that alienates them completely.

Paradoxically, African culture and customs, despite several vicissitudes, survive today with great vitality, if not among the educated urban élites, then among the rural dwellers who form the great majority of our population. The only problem now is to bring cultural awareness and self-consciousness to the alienated.

Existing organization and financing

Although there is a recently created Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, there is no comprehensive policy statement on cultural development. In his annual Presidential Address of 1976, however, the President stated that 'my Government realizes the significance of culture as a unifying force in the process of national development and continues to place great emphasis on cultural development'. Even the comprehensive National Development Plan 1974/75–1978/79, while devoting a whole chapter to tourism, is silent on culture. In the chapter on education where the only passage of relevance to cultural development appears, the 285-page document states:

Education should take into account the 'social environment of the child'. It includes the patterns of social behaviour and values of the traditional Sierra Leonean or African communities where most children are expected to live and work. An education which tends to break up the cohesion of these communities by rapidly introducing modern, predominantly western, ways of life and values may do more harm than good even if it provides certain knowledge. It may lead to excessive rural-to-urban migration and urbanization with all its undesirable effects in the form of urban congestion, unemployment, slums and crime. Unless the content of education is carefully tailored to the society which it serves, rapid educational expansion may result in urban pockets of extreme economic and cultural poverty combined with continuous social unrest. . . . In order to reduce the gap between school, on the one hand, and community life and work . . . the development of vernacular languages as means of instruction in the first years of basic education should form an integral part in this effort.

What the document states as being problems of future development are not new phenomena, but have been in evidence since missionary education and colonialism were introduced. The fears expressed of the undesirable consequences of urbanization are real facts of life today. Cultural education as a way of partly solving these problems is hardly mentioned.

About four or five ministries perform duties that are directly related to cultural development, including the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs itself.

Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs

This ministry was created in 1973 with the following responsibilities: tourism, the Hotels and Tourist Board, cultural affairs, monuments and relics, the Sierra Leone National Dance Troupe, museums, entertainment clubs and organizations. In the first year of its existence, this ministry received only 0.4 per cent of the annual national budget. The ministry is professionally divided into two departments—Cultural Affairs and Tourism, each headed by a Director.

The Director of Culture is entrusted with the following duties:

- To recruit, train, direct, and present the Sierra Leone National Dance Troupe at home and abroad.
- To maintain discipline and seek the general welfare of the members of the Troupe.
- To be responsible to the Permanent Secretary for the general administration, programme planning and the presentation of draft estimates for and in respect of the Troupe.
- To seek and negotiate local and overseas contracts in respect of the performance of the Troupe for approval by the Minister of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.
- To advise the Permanent Secretary on such cultural matters as may be referred to him.
- To advise on, plan and co-ordinate the performances of visiting foreign cultural groups sponsored by the Government through the ministry.
- To study, correlate and reflect the various cultural partners of the country in the performance of the Troupe.

From the foregoing, it can be seen that the Director of Culture has a very limited range of functions, almost all centring around the National Dance Troupe. He is assisted by three assistant directors, responsible respectively for administration, the cultural village where the Dance Troupe is camped, and publicity.

This Cultural Division commenced activities with a very small budget. In 1974/75, its approved estimates were just a little under Le7,000, mainly for salaries of senior officials. This figure, however, jumped to Le67,874 in the 1975/76 approved estimates because a number of junior officials and the actual Dance Troupe were provided for—the last taking something a little under Le50,000. For the year 1976/77 the estimated figure was Le70,647. This shows that the ministry, and the Cultural Division in particular, are now well established. But this sum is still an infinitesimal fraction of the national budget.

Cultural agreements

Although the external aspects of these agreements are handled by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it is the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs that concludes cultural contracts. Cultural contracts exist with a number of countries such as the U.S.S.R., the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Brazil, etc. and most recently with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Cuba.

With regard to recent contracts, a cultural agreement was signed with Cuba with the view to 'promote, strengthen, and develop the co-operation and exchange of experience between their cultural, scientific, educational, artistic, literary and social institutions and organizations, based on the mutual respect for national sovereignty and equality'. Each country undertook to promote the study of the other country's culture, literature, history and geography in the appropriate educational institutions.

The U.S.S.R. signed an Agreement on Cultural Co-operation in 1965, and a protocol on cultural co-operation was reached in Freetown for the years 1976 and 1977. In 1976, Sierra Leone was to send forty-three students to study in Soviet higher institutions of learning while three representatives of the Ministry of Education were to 'study the system of higher and secondary special education of the U.S.S.R.'. For 1977, forty-five students were to study in the U.S.S.R. on the same terms as those of 1976. In addition, representatives were to be sent from the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Libraries and Museums, and the Freetown City Council, to study the functioning of their counterpart institutions.

Sierra Leone agreed to let one or two teachers of socio-economic sciences lecture for a period of two years at an institution of higher learning (at the expense of the U.S.S.R.). In addition, the U.S.S.R. undertook to supply six doctors to work on a contract basis at Sierra Leone hospitals, and Soviet artists, musicians and sportsmen would make visits to Sierra Leone. For 1977, two Soviet cameramen were to shoot a film on Sierra Leone for twenty days.

The National Dance Troupe

The National Dance Troupe was founded shortly after independence with a view to 'put Sierra Leone on the map'. It was then under the Hotels and Tourist Board, a quasi-independent body financed from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, which voted Le2,000 for the first time in 1961 to promote tourism. Later, it was put under the Ministry of Social Welfare. The Dance Troupe was organized and directed by the late John Akar, who was also Director of Broadcasting. It had initially about forty members. John Akar led the troupe on many successful performances around the world. After participating in the 1964 New York World's Fair the following report was made: 'This talented folk-dance troupe imposed a vivid image

of Sierra Leone on the minds of thousands of Americans when it took the New York World's Fair by storm in 1964 and where, in the final analysis, it was voted the best dance ensemble at the Fair and was presented with a gold plaque.' In 1965, the troupe performed in the Commonwealth Festival in the Albert Hall, London, where they had a great success.

Following ministerial re-organizations in 1973, the Dance Troupe was transferred to the newly created Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. At present the troupe is camped in the Cultural Village at Aberdeen, a few miles from Freetown. The village is under the control of an administrative officer. Other officials include a stage manager, chaperons and stage attendants. The troupe itself, comprising at present eighty-nine dancers, is directly under a troupe leader. It is divided into dancers, with senior dancers and a head dancer; singers, with senior singers and a head singer; drummers, senior drummers and a head drummer. When performing, however, this division is not apparent. The troupe performs at state functions and at cultural and charity organizations when authorized to do so by the Director of Culture. It can also be hired to perform on any other occasion. The troupe won world renown during the 1960s, and won a number of international contracts to perform in overseas countries.

The Cultural Village also has a crafts section with carvers, weavers, and leather-workers. It is expected that this section will soon be augmented with other specialists in mat- and basket-making, pottery, and gara dyeing.

Festac

Sierra Leone registered to participate in the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (Festac) which the Nigerian Government planned to organize in 1975, but which for various reasons was postponed to early January 1977.

Preparations for Sierra Leone's participation were handled by the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. A Festival Secretariat was set up, with a National Festival Committee to co-ordinate the efforts of the Ministry in organizing and selecting the best artists to represent the country. A talent-spotting tour was taken round the whole country to discover the best artists. Local cultural performances were organized to assist the selection. Those selected were invited to come to Freetown (the ministry taking care of their travelling expenses and subsistence) to take part in the ten-day National Festival organized by the Festival Committee, on central Government funds. There were subcommittees on dance, drama, music, arts and crafts, and costumes. There was also a pre-colloquium at the university, where papers were read, and representatives selected. All the groups taken to Lagos to participate in Festac vindicated the efforts of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs as well as the expense. No report, however, has yet been prepared on Sierra Leone's participation in Festac.

Monuments and relics

In 1946 an ordinance was passed 'to provide for the preservation of Ancient, Historical, and Natural Monuments, Relics, and other objects of Archaeological, Ethnographical, Historical or other Scientific Interest'. This ordinance set up the Monuments and Relics Commission as a corporate body. The members, appointed by the government, receive no salaries, but only reasonable travelling expenses and subsistence; they elect one of their number as chairman. All ethnographical items can be exported only by the express permission of the commission. By an amendment of 1962, 'ethnographical article' was taken to mean any item 'made or fashioned before the year 1937'.

In the early days, the commission's source of revenue consisted of grants, donations, fees and subscriptions. In 1967 the commission was placed under the direction of the Minister of Education, who granted it an annual subvention to carry on its work.

Under powers granted to it by the 1947 ordinance, the commission identified and declared a series of national monuments and relics, including Bunce Island, St. John's Maroon Church, the De Ruyter Stone of 1664, Old Fourah Bay College building and several others.¹

One of the most important changes that the 1967 amendment made was to give power to the Monuments and Relics Commission to 'acquire, maintain and administer the Sierra Leone Museum founded by the Sierra Leone Society and all things immovable thereunto pertaining, including the land and building situate at the Lucien Genet Gardens, Pademba Road, Freetown'. With the reorganization of ministries in 1973, both 'Monuments and Relics' and 'Museums' were placed under the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs.

The Sierra Leone National Museum

The founding of the Sierra Leone National Museum was due to the initiative of two colonial governors. In 1954 Sir Robert de Zouche Hall suggested to the Sierra Leone Society, a cultural and historical organization, that a museum 'can contribute towards the growth of a national pride in what is past and what is traditional, by collecting and preserving objects and making them available for contemplation and study'. Consequently the old cotton-tree railway station was acquired for the purpose. On 10 December 1957 the new governor, Sir Maurice Dorman, officially opened it as the Sierra Leone Museum. Outlining the objectives, he stated that the Sierra Leone Society 'wanted to collect, to put in order and to preserve the work of men's hands, both what remains of the records of the past, what is disappearing from our lives now, and what is the common artefact of today'.

1. See Appendix I.

He stressed that the museum should be a place 'where an illiterate man can be inspired by the display of what is best in his culture both in the past and in the present. We want not only to delve into the past but we want to keep for our children a record of this rapidly developing Sierra Leone'.

The Sierra Leone Society formed a Museum Committee (subcommittee) with the late Dr M. C. F. Easmon as the first Chairman and Curator. By 1964 the Sierra Leone Society had become defunct, and in 1967 the Monuments and Relics (Amendment) Act took over the museum.

The main force behind the museum was Dr Easmon, and when he fell ill in the late 1960s, finally dying in 1972, he gave up active interest in the museum, which has always had a precarious existence. It has always been run on a shoe-string budget, from Le4,260 in 1971/72 to Le7,000 in the 1976/77 estimates. In 1972 the museum was invited to the Triennial General Conference of the International Council of Museums, but failed to be represented because of a total lack of funds.

Present needs and financial constraints make the museum inadequate. With only 1,059 square feet of floor space, there is insufficient room for any kind of acquisitions expansion. The tiny rudimentary library is located in the Curator's office, which has also become partly a store room. There is no laboratory. Three attempts to obtain a new museum building have failed.

Nevertheless, the museum is a member of three professional bodies: the British Museums Association, since 1957; the Association de Musées d'Afrique Tropicale (Museums Association of Tropical Africa, AMAT or MATA), since 1959; and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), since 1964.

The desperate financial plight of the museum has not, however, prevented it from rendering useful functions to the public and the international community at large. The museum's collection of historic, ethnographic and archaeological items, some purchased, some donated, daily attracts people from all walks of life. A sample attendance taken for the year 1975/76 showed an average number of 143 visitors per hour and 858 per day. Annual attendance is estimated at over 309,000. Schoolchildren are allowed to visit the museum one hour before it is open to the public. For the same 1975/76 year, 1,784 foreign visitors from 61 countries signed the visitors' book. The museum has also recorded a few researchers at home and from abroad, who use its available (though meagre) facilities every year.

Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources

The Forestry Department of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources is responsible under the Wild Life Conservation Act of 1972 for the control of the fauna and flora of Sierra Leone. This section is headed by the Chief Conservator of Forests. The ministry can declare a National

Park, Strict Natural Reserve or Game Reserve. Anyone interfering with these reserves without authority is liable to prosecution. Four non-hunting forest reserves have been declared, and twelve types of bird and sixteen types of mammal and reptile have been proclaimed prohibited animals. Five animals are listed as 'genera of which the young are specifically protected'.

Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which was first created in 1958, has three departments: Government Information Services, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service/TV, and the Government Printing Department. The first two departments perform several cultural functions.

Government Information Services.

First set up as a Public Relations Office during the Second World War to keep the public informed about news of the war, the Government Information Services were constituted to continue to inform the public. A Publication Unit was established to print and distribute posters, books, pamphlets, maps, calendars, periodicals, etc.

The Chief Information Officer is the professional head of this department, whose main functions are to interpret and explain the policies and programmes of the Government and communicate feed-back results; to mobilize, encourage and assist the people of Sierra Leone to take an increasing interest in cultural, economic and political developments in their country; and to keep the world informed about the country and to help create the right atmosphere for development, external trade and investments as well as to maintain friendly international relations. To achieve these goals, the department is divided into eight principal divisions:

The Headquarters Division is responsible for collecting the work of all the other divisions. It mounts exhibitions and arranges for press accreditation and press conferences. It has also spearheaded such national campaigns as the change-over to decimal currency and the change-over to right-hand traffic, etc.

The Newsroom Division is the official mouthpiece of all governments and as such prepares news bulletins for broadcast over SLBS(TV). It also keeps the press abreast of all government measures.

The Publications Division prepares and produces all publicity material for distribution at home and abroad—pamphlets, postcards, magazines, the *Trade Journal* and its advertisements.

The Photographic Division covers all photographic services of the entire department.

The Overseas Division supplies information to the information attachés of all Sierra Leone foreign missions abroad, who keep the world informed

about the country, and checks on overseas press reports on Sierra Leone. A weekly newsletter is produced for distribution. The information attachés also performed the functions of cultural attachés, publicizing Sierra Leone's culture abroad. In 1975, however, all information attachés were recalled, and none have been replaced to date.

The Film Production Unit has produced black-and-white and colour films of all descriptions, including over fifteen films of cultural, educational and political significance.

The Cinema Division provides various groups throughout the country with over 300 cinema shows each year. It also provides public-address equipment at state functions.

The Provincial Division extends the services offered by all the other divisions to the provinces. It has provincial centres in the three provincial headquarters.

The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service and Television

In 1934 the Freetown Rediffusion System was set up as the first wired Broadcasting Service in English-speaking West Africa, under the Public Relations Office. In 1955 the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) was inaugurated, broadcasting four hours a day, one hour devoted to local programmes. In 1959, two transmitters were set up, one of 10 kW for medium-wave and one of 10 kW for short-wave broadcasts, but these proved insufficient to cover the whole country. In 1974 a new 250-kW short-wave transmitter was installed for nation-wide and extended coverage.

The Sierra Leone radio is not a public corporation. It is directly under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, which prepares news bulletins to be broadcast to the nation. This makes it very difficult for the radio to be objective and responsible in news presentation.

With the new transmitter, the SLBS broadcasts about sixteen hours daily except on Sundays, when broadcasting is over eighteen hours, and public holidays, when the broadcast time is twenty-four hours.

The SLBS is a one-channel, domestic, public broadcasting service. There is no external service, and the single channel is evidently overloaded, since it tries to provide all the multifarious programmes the nation needs. About two-thirds of the programming is in English, the rest in the four most important local languages—Mende, Temne, Limba and Krio. About four hours a day are spent on cultural programmes, while the other languages not covered in the major broadcasts are allocated weekly newsletter programmes.

SLBS programmes include Farm Broadcasting, Schools Broadcast (a little over an hour a day during term-time), Health Education Broadcasts, Social and Community Related Broadcasts, Religious Broadcasts, Commercial Broadcasts, Musical Broadcasts, and a very limited 45-minute-a-week external broadcast in French to neighbouring countries.

The Sierra Leone Television (SLTV) was set up by Pye TVT in 1963 as a small pilot station. It has a 100-W transmitter with a coverage radius of fifteen miles. It is severely limited technically and financially, televising about five hours a day with about 80 per cent foreign films and programmes, despite the transfer of the Film Unit from the Government Information Services to SLBS. It has three film crews. Live programmes and local cultural programmes are negligible, and official sources admit that 'the Television Service . . . cannot be regarded as a truly national service'.

The Ministries of Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development

The Ministry of Education was enlarged in 1976 to take over the functions of Social Welfare and Rural Development, and on 20 May 1977 the two ministries were again separated. The Ministry of education alone has usually taken a lion's share of the national budget, increasing from 17.1 per cent in 1961/62 to 22.5 per cent in 1970/71. Apart from the very obvious responsibility for formal education in the entire nation, from infant to university level, there are certain areas of cultural or culturally related activity that can be readily identified.

Arts Education

The Arts Education Division was created in 1974 with the appointment of an Education Officer in charge of the Arts Education programme at national level. The division is responsible for the development and propagation of cultural education through the disciplines of music, dance and drama, visual art, folklore and literature, and crafts at all levels in the nation's educational institutions. This division also helps to prepare, in co-operation with the University of Sierra Leone Institute of Education, which formally absorbed the former Audio-Visual Unit of the Ministry of Education, curriculum materials, handbooks, guides, an *Arts Education Newsletter*, and research monographs for regular classroom teachers and teacher educators.

This unit has hardly got off the ground, suffering as usual from the teething problem of severe staff shortage. It has only two senior staff members. Yet it has made laudable strides in initiating and sustaining several programmes, including research, the most important of which are the Arts Education Association of Sierra Leone (AEASL), and the organization of a Schools and Colleges Annual Festival of Arts (SCAFA) at national level.

The main objectives of the AEASL are to promote interest and understanding in the indigenous works of art as a non-profit-making educational association, to encourage and promote research and creativity in the arts, and to protect the nation's cultural heritage. The association receives an

annual subvention from the ministry for its various activities. It holds two general meetings a year, one of which is the General Convention, although there is provision for *ad hoc* meetings as circumstances dictate.

There are four regional branches representing the three provinces and the Western Area. Each branch holds monthly meetings at which a distinguished educator or scholar presents a paper on some aspect of culture or cultural education.

The Sierra Leone Library Board

This board was set up in 1959, before which time the only public library service in the country was operated by the British Council. The main objective of the board has been to set up a nation-wide public library service. It has regional libraries in the three provincial capitals headed by professional librarians, as well as branch libraries in some district headquarters.

In 1961 the Primary School Service was inaugurated. It is a mobile library service that caters for areas that are not served by existing libraries. Each district is visited once a year, and over 730 primary schools benefit from this service.

The 1962 Publications (Amendment) Act made the library a depository library. Under this act, three copies of every document published in Sierra Leone should be deposited with the library.

The library is funded by the Government through the Ministry of Education. The annual grants have risen generously from Le28,500 for 1961/62 to Le130,000 for 1976/77.

Physical-education unit

This unit was set up to supervise the teaching of physical education in schools and colleges all over the country. To this end, it runs workshops for primary- and secondary-school physical education teachers, and co-operates with the National Sports Council at national competitions.

Headed by a Senior Education Officer who is directly responsible to the Assistant Chief Education Officer, the unit has a football coach, athletics and cricket coach, and regional and assistant regional supervisors of physical education in each province.

Film Censorship Board

There is a Censorship Board that vets all films before permission is granted to have them screened. The main aim has been to guard the young against exposure to undesirable cultural influences. However, the decision of the board is subject to a veto by the Minister of Education, who has exercised this power in the recent past. The board has received over Le20,000 annually since 1974/75.

Sierra Leone Studies

This publication was begun in 1919 and was under the Colonial Secretary's office. It was culturally oriented and continued publication until 1939, when it was interrupted by World War II. Republication was started as the New Series in 1952, which ran uninterruptedly until 1970, since when no issue has appeared. It received an annual subvention from the Ministry of Education, for which paradoxically provision was still being made in the estimates of 1976/77.

Prison industries

This unit was established under the Ministry of Social Welfare for the purpose of teaching prisoners basic trades and crafts as a method of rehabilitation so that upon discharge they would not revert to criminal activities. The establishment comprises two officers-in-charge (technical and industries), a Technical Instructor, an Assistant Technical Instructor, a Chief Officer for Agriculture and a Physical Training Instructor. It obtains a regular vote in the estimates, receiving Le28,068 in 1971/72 and about Le38,000 in 1972/73.

The industries produce all kinds of furniture, shoes, decorative crafts, mats and several other items that are on sale to the public.

The National Sports Council

This is a corporate body created by an act in 1965 that repealed the Sierra Leone Amateur Sport Council Act. Originally under the Ministry of Social Welfare, the Council was later under the combined Ministry of Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development.

The council was set up 'to do all such things as it may consider necessary or expedient for the promotion, encouragement, development or control of sports in Sierra Leone and formulate policies for sport applicable to the whole country'. The council comprises seventeen members, with the Prime Minister as president and the minister as chairman. The executive body, however, is the Management Committee. Four regional sports committees for the three provinces and the western area carry out the functions of the council at the local level. The Director of Sports is the chief executive officer, responsible for the day-to-day affairs of the council.

The council receives funds from a variety of sources, but the largest source is a Government grant, which has increased steadily from Le26,000 in the 1967/68 estimates to Le103,193 in the 1976/77 estimates.

Soon after taking office as first Director of Sports, T. K. Bindi put forward a National Sports Programme within the terms of reference of the act, which included plans for training Sierra Leoneans in various sports activities, formation of Sports Clubs and of National Standing Teams in

the major sports, and the establishment of a Schools and Colleges Sports Federation. The council has been represented in international sports meetings and has taken part in international games. Various football clubs were formed, and the need for a Standing National Team gave birth to the Leone Stars, Sierra Leone's national football team, whose players are drawn from various clubs.

The director also put forward proposals for increasing the general calibre of national sports and sportsmen. Competitions are held regularly and international matches played. Cricket, boxing, lawn tennis, etc. are also national sports, but football remains by far the most popular.

Regular sports features are covered by the national press, radio and television. In 1969 the council secretariat began the publication of a Monthly Sports Bulletin to give readers information on the activities of the council, news of sports activities in Sierra Leone, Africa and the world, and of recent developments and new sports techniques.

Quite recently, the Chinese Government undertook to construct a national stadium and sports complex which is now nearing completion. As local costs towards the National Sports Stadium, the Government voted Le400,000 in 1975/76, while sports shop equipment received over Le180,000 in the same year.

Although the council has striven hard to achieve many things to its credit, there are still many difficulties to be overcome. 'The attitude of our youths to sports', reported the Director in his Five-Year Report (1965-1970) 'when they leave educational institutions leaves much to be desired. It is generally but unfortunately felt that participation in active sports is for the boy or girl in school and the student in college.' And for those who enter University Colleges, their standards of performance have declined considerably. There is also the perennial problem of inadequate funds, but this is so everywhere. The council lacks sufficient transportation means. More fundamentally, some sports-governing bodies have failed to respect the authority of the Sports Council and 'there have been frequent clashes of authority'. Future development should aim, *inter alia*, at solving some of these problems.

Public archives

The Sierra Leone Government Archives were moved from the Colonial Secretariat to Fourah Bay College by Christopher Fyfe while he was Government Archivist, from 1950 to 1952. Since he left, there has been no full-time archivist, and to date Sierra Leone has not trained any archivists.

A Public Archives Act was passed in 1965, and the archives are now housed in the Archives Repository at Fourah Bay College.

The Act of 1965 made provision for the appointment of a Director of Archives whose duty shall be to 'make provision for the custody, preservation, arrangement, repair, rehabilitation, and for such duplication,

reproduction, description and exhibition of archives . . . including the preservation and publication of inventories, indexes, catalogues and other finding aids or guides facilitating their use'. No director has since been appointed, and an honorary Government Archivist has been performing the duties. The act further stipulated the setting up of a Public Archives Committee for the purpose of 'permanent preservation' of important archives, comprising 'an eminent historian' as chairman, the director and not more than seven other persons.

In 1966, Unesco undertook a study of the organization of the National Archives and a report was published. A number of recommendations were made to prevent the records (already in a not very good state) from deteriorating further. Nothing seems to have been done since, except that in 1970 photographing of the archives began with the assistance of a Unesco microfilm unit.

The archivist is supposed to prepare an annual report but none seems to be extant. Government grants to the public archives have been Le21,740 in the 1974/75 estimates, Le23,000 in the 1975/76, and the same figure for 1976/77.

Voluntary agencies of cultural transmission

Apart from Government establishments that serve cultural functions, there are a number of non-governmental voluntary agencies, some purely local, others national, that serve as transmitters of culture. The following is by no means an exhaustive inventory, but an index of the most important.

The Provincial Literature Bureau and Bunumbu Press

In 1933 the Methodist Mission in Bunumbu, Kailahun district, began a press for printing educational matter in the Mende language. In 1945 it moved to Bo but carried with it the press, which retained its original name. The following year, with the assistance of the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, a Protectorate Literature Bureau was set up, Bunumbu Press being the printing wing. This bureau was under the aegis of the United Christian Council, a new structure that embraced the Methodist Church.

The main aim of this bureau was to publish material in the vernacular languages, mainly Mende, Temne, Limba, Koranko, Kono and Yalunka, and a little in Mandinka, this last shared with the Gambia. The whole philosophy behind this exercise was predicated upon the fact that if literacy was the objective, then knowledge of reading and writing of the mother tongue first was essential as a transitional stage to reading and writing English.

The bureau emphasized creative writing and launched a functional-literacy campaign, publishing many primers, over 100,000 in the Mende language alone. Follow-up publications were issued related directly to the farming community—about agriculture, village life, court matters, health, etc. The main aim here was to help in community development by developing the individual, who would then turn spontaneously to improving roads, sanitation, etc., as a result of his literacy. A monthly news-sheet was

also produced in Mende and in Temne, to keep readers in touch with the main political events at home and abroad, prices of produce, investment, agricultural forecasts, farming timetables, etc.

It was hoped that the vernacular would be retained as a subject in the curriculum of the schools so as to act as a vehicle of cultural preservation—to let the students retain the cultural as well as the thought forms of the community. However, in the mid-1950s, a Unesco-sponsored experiment in direct English teaching in the Teacher Training Colleges was started. This process was then extended to the primary schools, and culturally has had disappointing consequences. At this time, adult literacy was the work of the Ministry of Social Welfare; the bureau was only to concentrate on printing and distributing the publications.

Today, the bureau is technically and mechanically well equipped but suffers from shortage of working capital. There is not much community-based field work—i.e. adult literacy classes conducted by educators paid by and responsible to the community. This means that the journalistic staff in the several languages must be increased. On the whole adult literacy has declined in recent years, even though it has had a whole establishment within the Ministry of Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development.

The Provincial Literature Bureau (as it came to be called after independence in 1961) has been funded mostly by the Church and the Government, which has granted an annual subvention over the past years rising to Le6,000 in 1974/75 and to Le12,000 in the following year.

Kenema Show and Trade Fair

The Kenema Show was started in 1949 to stimulate producers into growing more cash crops, especially cacao beans; hence initially it was called the Cacao Show. It was organized by the Kenema District Council, which awarded prizes to the best farmers. This competitive element was meant to create a stimulus as well as to impart education on how best to grow and produce the crops.

Like all traditional fiestas, the Cacao Show was accompanied by cultural festivals lasting a few days. Village groups organized masked dances peculiar to their own areas, brought out their best artists—singers, drummers, craftsmen, etc.—and this created a festival spirit. The best artists also received prizes.

As a response to the growth of the economy and incipient industrialization, not only was the range of agricultural produce increased, but other areas in industry and commerce competed to demonstrate their contribution to the growth of the national economy. Forest Industries and the Diamond Corporation became important competitors, while commercial firms with stocks of insecticides etc. regularly took part. The name was thus changed to the Kenema Show and Trade Fair in 1963.

In 1971 District Councils as local government bodies were dissolved. But because of the dimension, significance and importance of the Kenema Show, the Government created a Show Committee, comprising the Resident Minister as chairman, the Provincial Secretary as vice-chairman, and the Senior District Officer as secretary. Other heads of departments such as the Principal Agricultural Officer of the province, representatives from quasi-governmental corporations and other eminent individuals formed the rest of the committee. This committee was too unwieldy for efficient administration and quick decision-making; so it had to be reduced.

An important development in recent years has been a tendency to commercialize the show. Many people buy stands at the show grounds only to promote the sales of cigarettes and liquor. This is in fact the most dominant aspect of the show nowadays. A gate fee has also been levied by the show committee since 1973, and this has led to a reduction in the number of potential participants and observers.

True, the cultural element is still there. Many indigenous cultural activities can be witnessed at today's show, but commercialization is the dominant ethos. So that even through the cacao-show virus spread to Kabala and Bo quite recently, they are just microcosms of the present Kenema Show and Trade Fair.

The Daily Mail Trade Fair

This started in 1969 as an exhibition of 'Made in Sierra Leone Products'. The name was officially changed to Daily Mail Trade Fair in 1971. This fair, which takes place every year around March or April, is organized on a competitive basis, mostly among commercial and industrial concerns. Prisons Industries have won the Fair Prize over the past few years.

However, non-commercial and non-industrial concerns such as the Planned Parenthood Association, Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission, etc., take part in the fair. It is self-financing, mostly through payment for stands at the grounds and gate fees. But it also receives donations or prizes from well-wishers such as the Diamond Corporation of West Africa, the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board, etc.

Tabule Experimental Theatre

This is one of the two main drama groups in the country. It was founded in 1968 by Dele Charlie and Adeyemi Meheux as an amateur drama group. It does not comprise full-time dramatists but part-time people who do other work for a living. Since its foundation, the group has performed an average of four plays a year. Although non-local plays like Wole Soyinka's *The Lion and the Jewel* have been acted, the group has written, produced

and acted its own plays, the most important being *Titi Shine Shine* (1970), *The Gods Are Not to Blame* (1971), and, by far the most popular, Dele Charlie's, *The Blood of a Stranger*, performed at least twenty times between 1975 and 1977 and also at the Festac in Lagos.

Facilities for encouraging development of drama are meagre; school or church halls have been popular venues of performances, as only the British Council and the Institute of African Studies of Fourah Bay College have the halls and lighting system necessary for play acting.

Gbakada Tiata

This drama group was founded by Yulisa Amadu Mahdi in 1969, but never really started operations till 1974. It has performed several plays, most of them written, produced and directed by Mahdi himself, including *Big Berring*, *Big Breeze Blow*, and *Nar We Yone Den See*. This group suffers the same difficulties as its sister group Tabule, but both groups have contributed to creating an interest in drama, constrained though they are by lack of funds and official sponsorship, a proper theatre for performances, and training facilities.

Moa Barracks Cultural Show

The Advance Training Centre of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces at Daru organizes a cultural show every 26 December as part of the Christmas celebrations. The officers invite participants from the fourteen chiefdoms that comprise the Kailahun district, and provide transport to convey them. This cultural show comprises mostly masked dances, music, and acrobatic displays. Prizes are offered to the best group out of the gate fees collected.

Vai Cultural Show

The Vai Cultural Show is an annual event organized by Vai youth of both Sierra Leone and Liberia. It usually comprises dance, music, drama and characteristic Vai cultural displays as a way of maintaining and preserving Vai culture and cultural awareness among its members.

Dicorwaf Arts Competition

With the approval of the Ministry of Education, Social Welfare and Rural Development and the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, the Diamond Corporation of West Africa Ltd organizes a National Schools and Colleges Arts Competition. A panel of judges is selected from the ministries concerned, whose decision is final. Pupils of all primary and secondary schools and teacher-training colleges are qualified to submit entries.

Art and craft shops

There are at least five art and craft shops in Freetown and one in Bo, which specialize in procuring and selling various masks, hammocks, locally dyed gara cloths, leather bags and sandals, country-cloth, musical instruments, raffia handbags and several other items. These are mainly aimed at the tourist market, but serve a useful cultural function in informing the foreign observer of the range of culturally oriented local products.

Arab Republic of Egypt Cultural Centre

This centre was opened in 1964 following a cultural contract between the Ministries of Education of Sierra Leone and Egypt, with a view to strengthening relations. Under this arrangement, there are about 250 Sierra Leoneans studying in Egypt.

The centres produces a monthly cultural magazine (distributed free) to inform the public of Egyptian cultural or culturally related matters and developments. It has a library with total holdings of over 35,000 books in Arabic and English. The centre also organizes film shows, lectures, seminars and exhibitions, and provides a reading room for the public interested in reading books or the several newspapers provided by the library. In addition, the centre runs Arabic classes free.

The British Council

The British Council was established in the early 1930s in order to represent British culture overseas. The major aim has been educational—providing a library and books, films and two categories of teachers on request: contract teachers and Voluntary Service teachers.

The council administers various scholarship programmes both from the British Council in London and the British Ministry of Overseas Development. It runs a refresher course for all those going to the United Kingdom for the first time. It also arranges cultural exchanges to visit various establishments in the United Kingdom.

The British Council Centre in Freetown, which has seminar and conference rooms, cinema halls, a theatre, etc., provides a forum for various artistic and cultural groups, drama performances, exhibitions, etc.

The African Cultural Centre

This centre was opened in 1976 by a Sierra Leonean who had been a diplomat, author and lecturer in the United States of America. The centre

issues a cultural magazine and holds a stock of books, some written by the proprietor, George Cox, whose basic theme is black cultural awareness. It has a small reading room where the public can read newspapers and magazines about the black world. There are also printing facilities and a publications branch—the Sierra Leone Publishing Company.

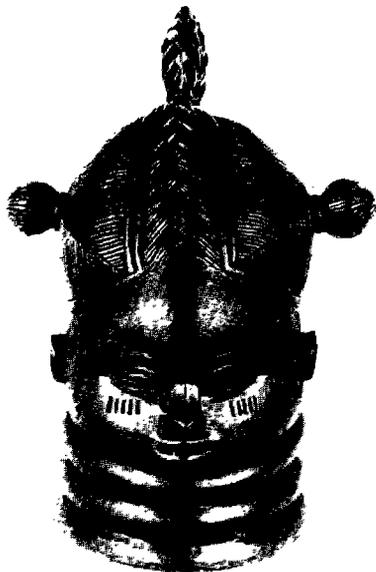
The United States Information Service

The primary mission of the USIS is to present to the world reliable information about the United States and its affairs. When the law was passed in 1948 to establish this institution, it was with the objective of enabling ‘the Government of the United States to promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries . . . and to increase mutual understanding between the people of the U.S. and the people of other countries’. It is thus the information, educational and cultural arm of the United States of America.

USIS provides a library with specialized books on American government, economy, foreign policy, etc. It distributes free books and pamphlets about the United States to institutions and individuals, and arranges American-oriented and local exhibits. It has a motion-picture lending library and also provides student counselling and vocational guidance.

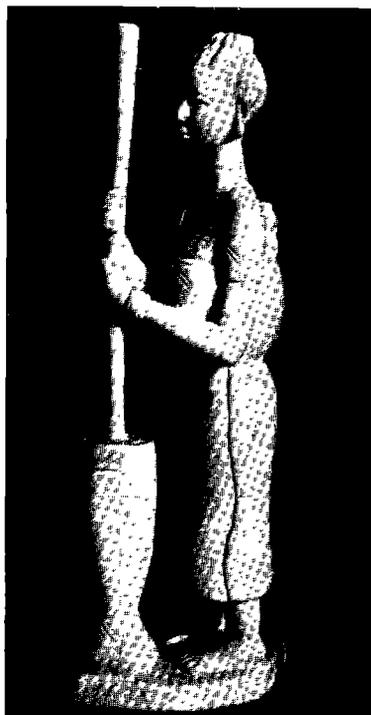


Kongoli mask. [Courtesy: Sierra Leone Museum]



Bondo mask, Sherbro.
[Photo: Sierra Leone Museum]

Housewife,
ivory carving.
[Courtesy: Sierra Leone Museum]



Mathoma
(harvest dance devil),
Limba.
[Photo: Christo Greene]

Preservation of the cultural heritage

Cultural education

Although there are many official and voluntary agencies of cultural significance that help to preserve the national cultural heritage, it is nevertheless apparent that there is need for a more concerted, more intensified effort to preserve our cultural heritage in a more positive way and thus raise the level of cultural consciousness through the harmonization, co-ordination and rehabilitation of cultural practices. This in turn will make culture an integral part of national development. It seems as if the most sensible place to begin is in the schools and colleges, where cultural education must be made a compulsory and integral part of the curriculum. By this means, a sufficient sense of cultural identity will have been developed in the pupils by the time they approach school-leaving age to ensure their spontaneous identification with, support of and participation in the national cultural activities outside the strict school curriculum. Thus a kind of self-generating mechanism will be created to ensure not only the preservation of cultural practices but the development and evolution of a national cultural system consistent with the pursuit of scientific and technological development.

The Arts Education Association of Sierra Leone

This association, barely getting off the ground, is hampered by its infancy, lack of sufficient publicity, insufficient funds, etc. Yet, as already noted, it has scored remarkable successes, and hopes to score even more in the future, if its proposals are not only accepted but implemented with full vigour. The Senior Education Officer in charge of the Arts Education Division of the Ministry of Education, E. F. M. Margai, has concerned himself mostly with research into the needs, methods and implementation of cultural programmes in school and college curricula. The result has been a series of AEASL monographs, of which there are five at present. Thus,

having succeeded in organizing at national and regional levels, the most pressing need is to extend the AEASL programmes to the grass-roots level, i.e. by adopting its arts education curricula in schools and colleges.

In its schedule of activities, the AEASL proposes research into the effect of the environment on children's visual art work; perceptual development in Sierra Leone children with special reference to performance in the visual arts; the nature and quality of creative expression in a controlled and a non-controlled atmosphere; the use of music as a therapy in indigenous society; and a survey of the types of indigenous musical instruments and areas of predominance. The results should be made available and accessible to the public through exhibitions, publication of a regular bulletin, organization of 'seminars, week-end forums and case studies dealing with the development of indigenous culture and local economy'.

Philosophy of the AEASL

The philosophy of the AEASL is very laudable, and is expressed well in a 'position statement' on art-education programmes for schools and colleges. The association realizes that 'general standards of aesthetic and cultural tastes among the general public . . . are getting deteriorated very fast . . . immediate steps should be taken on all fronts to raise the cultural standards in the schools and colleges, and the environment of such institutions should be made aesthetically stimulating through the competent assistance and technical advice of experts in various fields such as environmental architecture, aesthetic design, horticultural practice, etc.'. Dance and drama, being part of everyday cultural life, are, apart from their artistic attributes, methods of entertainment, media of self-expression, criticism, public information, and above all education. The arts are seen as veritable media through which learners normally express their various internal pressures, such as love, hatred, anger, fear, jealousy, acceptance, admiration, etc., in tangible actions and forms. This makes it imperative to introduce art education at all levels of the formal educational structure. It must be organically related to the environment so as to create a sense of civic responsibility towards the community which the learner is being prepared to serve. Traditional approaches, which introduce particular techniques and pre-conceived stereotypes existing in the mind of the teacher, merely serve to arrest creativity and to distort the distinctive personality and individual development of the child, which can best be obtained by allowing free self-expression. Thus the arts become effective instruments of knowledge as well as ways of creating and communicating sensitive experiences and insights through authentic self-expression. The learner is consequently helped to develop intellectually, socially and emotionally—in short, to develop as a whole person through the opportunity to study his own culture and the cultures of other peoples.

The primary stage

The arts are a natural discipline that forms the very first method of communication in the child. Thus it is against the general principles and psychology of creative education to proceed at this stage by 'painting-by-numbers drawing books', 'cut-out-figure drawing books', etc. Emphasis being on creativity and productivity, opportunities should be provided for the study, understanding and appreciation of local arts and crafts, objects of material culture, folklore, etc.

Since formal lessons bore the child easily at this level, formal 'techniques' should be avoided and every encouragement given to the development of imagination, freedom to express ideas, etc. The teacher must therefore be aware of the various stages of creative growth in the child and provide him with motivation and stimulation. A wide selection of easily obtainable materials should be made available to the child as well as a wide ambit of choice. Even at this stage, the child should be made aware of the close relationship between visual arts and other subjects in the curriculum. An effective drama course, for instance, has of necessity to have an interdisciplinary approach that stresses integration with, and relationship between, visual arts, music, dance and social studies. A proposed syllabus has already been prepared in the AEASL monograph series for dance and drama, which stresses that at the secondary level the students should be encouraged to build up their own plays from a number of suggested plots, whereas at the primary level the teacher has to assist the children in this. The document warns that 'moral lessons are to be taught indirectly. . . . Avoid plays that make evil virtuous.'

The secondary level

At this level, the AEASL recommends that 'all syllabuses . . . should emphasize comprehensive courses of work in two-dimensional and three-dimensional areas, general indigenous crafts, aesthetic appreciation, including historical studies with special reference to Sierra Leone cultural history, west Africa and Africa as a whole'. Adequate facilities need to be provided, including well-trained and qualified staff. A detailed syllabus also needs to be worked out, but in any scheme of the curriculum, art education should carry an equal status with all other subjects. However, a start has already been made by R. A. Mansell, who has produced a proposed draft syllabus for traditional dances in secondary schools in Sierra Leone, which seems to have received little attention to date. He argues that traditional dances everywhere are one of the avenues of cultural portrayal, and in our present context must carry a healthy entertainment underpinning to restrain 'the youths who, at the moment, create for themselves unhealthy and dangerous forms of entertainment such as drug taking, alcoholic drinking . . .'

Teacher-training-college level

This is one of the crucial areas for implementing an art education programme, for these colleges train the teachers who in turn promote cultural education through the effective teaching of the various syllabuses in school. Quite apart from this, sound general training in the visual arts will provide added advantages in effectively teaching other subjects such as social studies, rural and agricultural sciences, vocational courses, etc., not only because of their interrelationships, but because art equips the teacher with basic techniques for preparing suitable visual teaching aids or instructional materials. It is thus not surprising that the AEASL has produced a draft new syllabus for arts and crafts in teacher-training colleges. The existing programme is clearly inadequate because of its very limited scope and purpose. The proposed syllabus is more comprehensive, including 'studio experiments and investigations, field work and original research, theoretical work consisting of lectures on art education with main emphasis on developing art-education philosophy relevant to our national development, art and cultural history and appreciation, methodology relating to detailed understanding of the development and behaviour of children and how this affects art education in general'.

The university level

At present there is absolutely no provision for any sort of cultural education through any systematic course of instruction in the University of Sierra Leone, despite the existence of an Education Department and an Institute of African Studies at Fourah Bay College and a Faculty of Education at Njala University College, the two constituent colleges of the University. Ideally, it is desirable, as already obtains in many African universities, to have a department of art with a chair that would offer undergraduate and post-graduate courses in the fine arts, architecture, etc., and thus provide further training for art-education teachers at university level. Before this ideal can be achieved, however, certain intermediate steps could be introduced. First, the existing Foundation Course compulsory for all freshmen might include an art-education content. This would assist greatly in developing cultural awareness among the students, stimulate private drama clubs, and a general appreciation of cultural values as a whole. Second, an integrated programme in art-education should be formulated and made compulsory for all students reading education at undergraduate level in Njala University College, and in the post-graduate diploma in education course at Fourah Bay College. It should, however, allow students to pursue their individual interests by presenting them with a good choice of subjects.

Instructional materials

Instructional materials are books and printed matter, and all other aids used to enhance student learning in the classroom. There is thus a serious demand for instructional materials of all kinds and at all levels. This demand is always growing, and although there are distributing centres from which instructional materials are supplied, there have been serious shortages, even in primary schools, which are at present the best served. Perhaps it might be better if distribution centres were created or located at district and subdistrict levels.

The situation is even worse in secondary schools. There is no general system of distribution. When furnished with book lists, pupils can be seen with their parents searching for the relevant books and equipment, like mathematical sets. It might be better, in the particular case of secondary schools; if a central source of supply were created and some form of uniformity imposed.

Teachers' colleges fair better than the schools, as they are supplied with the basic prescribed subject textbooks, while the cost of other materials has to be met by the students. At university level, students are provided with an annual book allowance to meet the cost of educational materials, but the amount is usually insufficient to meet the increasing cost of imported books and materials. The usual complaints are that the materials are not always available, and where available the costs are prohibitive.

It seems advisable, in view of the existing difficulties, particularly the increasing cost of imported materials, to have a major establishment devoted to producing instructional materials locally. In the University, for instance, faculties should be able to publish in cyclostyled forms works produced by lecturers geared to student needs. The advantages would be immense. The lecturers would be able to provide the students with the most up-to-date information as contained in journals and books not readily available in sufficient quantities for all students, and at an enticingly low cost. Njala University College has an Educational Services Centre, but it does not seem to be wholly engaged in producing materials locally for the use of students.

It must be remembered, however, that Unesco and other agencies assist with instructional materials, although there is a serious anomaly. Some of the equipment is very sophisticated, and there are no comparably qualified personnel to handle it effectively. As a consequence, most of the tools and equipment fall into decay either through misuse or disuse. Thus when some agency is donating free materials, it should be made aware of our priorities; the latest development in certain equipment might be fascinating as a mere innovation, but totally unrelated to the needs and reference frames of both the educator and the learner. For this reason, while donations are always welcome, it is desirable to emphasize local production of educational materials within our culture context and national aspirations.

Economic benefits

Cultural education is not just an esoteric idea; it is practical as well. Teachers who have had a sound cultural education can always use their resources to produce locally instructional materials drawn from the environment. This will serve to reduce the existing dependence on imported materials as well as assist in conserving much needed foreign exchange. Moreover, since only a small fraction of those who enter schools succeed in obtaining tertiary education, cultural education can provide them with useful skills they can use to make a living. A large number of art-and-craft materials of common utility in the home, school and office, such as table-mats, school-bags, table-lamps, decorative art objects, etc., are regularly being imported, especially from the Far East. A proportion of our foreign exchange could be conserved if school-leavers who have gone through the mill of cultural education, but are not otherwise qualified for tertiary education, could form syndicates to produce these common materials for internal consumption. This need not be a mechanized industry at all in the first instance, but could become so if demand and profits so dictate. The main point is that the school-leaver with a sound cultural education need not be unemployed if he uses his skill and cultivates habits of industry, which must be given every encouragement.

Cultural creation and dissemination

National Arts Council of Sierra Leone

At present no such institution exists in Sierra Leone, but it would be desirable to organize one, and the AEASL has suggested so a few times. Although it did not make very detailed proposals, the AEASL seems to have been mainly inspired by the model of the Nigerian Arts Council, which has been in existence since 1959. The objectives, as set out below, are very appropriate in the context of cultural creation and dissemination:

The Council shall work towards the promotion, revival, development, and encouragement of literary, visual and performing arts . . . by: (a) assisting and encouraging deserving . . . artists and craftsmen; (b) initiating and participating in the revival, organization and conduct of cultural festivals, exhibitions, concerts and displays; (c) promoting and publicizing [national arts in and out of the country]; (d) advising in the acquisition and preservation of art and cultural monuments; (e) fostering appreciation and pride in local tradition and culture by encouraging the compilation of publications on local history and monuments, the giving of lectures on local history and by education in the value of their artistic heritage; (f) encouraging the performance and exhibition of the forms of non-[national] cultural activities in [the country] with indigenous arts by the impact of international culture.

Such a council should be a corporate body which, in view of its objectives, should be Government-supported/financed and in turn should advise the Government on cultural matters, plan, organize and execute national and international cultural programmes in order to promote arts and culture, and finally, to secure funds for cultural programmes. Membership of the council would comprise Government-nominated officials, representatives of schools and colleges, the AEASL, the university colleges, the museum, and co-opted members.

All existing associations and organizations concerned with the promotion of visual arts, music, dance, drama, folklore, local history, literature, etc., should be affiliated with the council, e.g. the AEASL, the drama groups, Gbakanda Tiata and Tabule Experimental Theatre, etc. In this way, not only would recognition of such existing organizations be a great encouragement to their continued performances, but purposive methods would then be worked out for training specialists in cultural educational work and non-teaching professional artists, such as painters, sculptors, designers, musicians, dramatists, theatre directors, composers, conductors, etc.

To carry out such multifarious and important functions, the National Arts Council should have an Executive Council and five standing committees, viz: Art and Gallery Committee, Music Committee, Festival Committee, Dance and Drama Committee, and Research Committee. The Executive Council, to be made up of elected and Government-nominated members, should consider the reports and recommendations of the five standing committees, and at the same time execute and implement the decisions of the National Council. In addition, there should be a General Purpose Committee to supervise the National Council's secretariat and gallery, as well as take urgent decisions on behalf of the National Council.

Cultural troupes

As at present constituted, the single National Dance Troupe may not meet the requirements of all national performances as well as touristic demands and international engagements. Ideally, there should be three troupes: one for external engagements, one for internal engagements, and one always at base.

Training, as at present, should be done at base, i.e. the central Cultural Village in Freetown. As a way of rehearsal, a troupe will then tour the provinces, and after a successful performance will qualify for international engagements. Thus at any one time there will be a troupe doing in-service training at base and a travelling troupe performing as a way of rehearsal in the provinces. When there are international engagements, there should be a troupe on the alert, ready to move at any time.

This arrangement would not only offer a way of promoting internal cultural exchanges at district and provincial levels, but during the tourist

season would keep tourists on the move around the country as well. The travelling troupe would also give the officials an opportunity to conduct talent-spotting, which would facilitate recruitment and training.

Above all, there is a sore need for a modern African Ballet Group.

Cultural centres

As a long-term aim, it would be desirable to have twelve specially designed cultural centres serving each of the districts in the country. But for a start it would be sufficient to have three located in the three provincial capitals—Bo, Makeni and Kenema. These centres should be so planned as to use local materials to reflect the architectural designs of the locality in construction, house-size, furniture, etc. In short, the centre must be a microcosm of the particular African architecture of the locality.

Each cultural centre should provide a number of facilities, such as a multi-purpose theatre, gallery, meeting rooms, offices, etc. Most important, however, should be the provision of a museum attached to each centre. The museum should reflect the material culture of the locality, and be in a position to acquire art-and-craft material, rare manuscripts, archaeological and ethnographic matter and data. It might also have a curio shop where modern art-and-craft material could be bought by tourists and the public.

Where possible, some important cultural industry of the locality might be revived and publicized by hiring a skilled person to carry out the art of his vocation. For instance, the Kenema cultural centre could hire a competent weaver and a skilled blacksmith to produce country cloth and iron implements for the curio shop, while the Makeni centre could have a potter and a gara tie-dyer to produce pots and gara cloths for its own curio shop. Since wickerwork is very widespread in Sierra Leone, and the environment provides abundant raw materials in the form of raffia, reeds, palm fibre, etc., the centres should give much encouragement to the production of the variety of objects to be obtained therefrom (mats, handbags, bracelets, baskets, fishing nets, hammocks, etc.) by hiring a number of skilled craftsmen in the art. As long as there is a central pool from which these objects can be bought, it will reduce the dependence on foreign imitation imports, which are invariably more expensive.

It would also be a good idea to start zoos, on a moderate scale, attached to the cultural centres, especially as there is no national zoo in Sierra Leone. This need not be an elaborate programme, aiming at having specimens of all existing animals. Hunters or farmers in particular areas often catch quite interesting animals, which for one reason or another they would like to dispose of by way of sale. Usually foreigners show more interest in buying these animals and eventually export them. If the zoo idea is put in practice protective legislation might be necessary to stop the country supplying zoos in developed countries. Then the local zoos themselves might

serve not only as tourist attractions, but as visual educators to the local population about the fauna of their locality—the range, habits, etc.

Rural theatres

In the normal traditional setting, formal theatres are not necessary, as most cultural activities or festivals take place in the open or in special quarters of the town or village, or in the bush. These festivals are linked with the so-called secret societies, annual harvest, or other ceremonies, which give a special place to music and dance as a focus of general community participation. However, because of the wealth and diversity of Sierra Leone's cultural heritage, specific festivals and dances are identified with particular localities. 'Rural theatres' could thus be declared in suitable places in specific areas with their own specific cultural functions. For instance, 'rural theatres' could be declared for the Matoma, Yereng, and Sokobana activities/dances of the Northern Province, and for the Wonde, Humoi, Jamba Poro, Gbeni and Sumoi dances of the Southern and Eastern Provinces. In effect, this would enable these major cultural activities based on traditional associations as a living force to be seen by Sierra Leoneans who have not had the opportunity to witness such activities because they belong to different localities, and would increase the excitement and mobility of the tourist season.

Festivals

Festivals have been organized by the AEASL and the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. The AEASL organizes annually the regional and national Schools and Colleges Festival of the Arts (SCAFA). The Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs organizes a National Festival of Arts and Culture every two years with the aim of reviewing and celebrating achievements in the arts. It usually has a comprehensive coverage, featuring traditional and contemporary music, traditional dances, drama, traditional and popular dress, exhibitions of arts, crafts, costumes, etc.

The AEASL SCAFA means that several festivals are organized annually, since regional branches organize regional festivals before the national festival takes place. On the other hand, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs National Festival of Arts and Culture should be held annually at least, since it caters for general public participation and is competitive. The more frequent this event, the greater the impact it will have in regenerating cultural awareness. But as at present constituted it cannot provide, for the general population, what the AEASL SCAFA provides for schools and colleges. It will be necessary, therefore, to make more provision for popular participation in national cultural affairs by increasing the frequency of the National Festival of Arts and Culture.

Mass media

At present, Sierra Leone Television is not very useful in increasing cultural awareness or in assisting in the preservation of Sierra Leone's cultural heritage because of its severe technical limitations. True, because of its visual quality, television can have a more lasting and effective impact. But the capital outlay necessary to make SLTV a nation-wide system would seem to suggest that this be left for a long-term project. In contrast, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service has gradually increased the scope of its cultural and vernacular programmes, but it is still short of being one of the most important vehicles for increasing cultural awareness. One sympathizes with the usual excuse advanced, namely, that it is a single-channel broadcasting system. But it must be remembered that the Republic of Guinea with a single-channel broadcasting system has succeeded in using Radio Guinea to make the country one of the most culturally aware in Africa. And this has been done by conscious effort since independence. Thus, it may be possible, without extensive technical development (with its concomitant capital outlay) to make more use of SLBS as a vehicle for transmitting culture and raising the level of cultural consciousness by a serious reorganization and rescheduling of programmes. The experience of countries like Guinea may not be irrelevant to the achievement of this purpose.

Libraries seem to be doing a good job, but for the present they seem geared towards the needs of strict school curricula (which have very little cultural orientation) and syllabuses for public examinations. Perhaps, when cultural education becomes a major orientation in the educational system, libraries will respond similarly. But unfortunately most of the existing books are foreign, written and published abroad and reflecting old ideas belonging to the colonial school, quite unsuited to present needs. In social studies particularly most of the facts are erroneous; literary authors, who should be producing works reflecting Sierra Leonean life and culture, are few. One of the greatest needs is to encourage writers, and to give the widest publicity to the fruits of research conducted by Sierra Leoneans in an effort to portray our cultural life and history correctly.

As for cinema, only a few documentary films have been produced in Sierra Leone, each of less than an hour's duration. These are not the targets of commercial cinemas, which always show foreign films. Although there is a Film Censorship Board to protect the country from undesirable cultural influences, it has not always been moved by the highest of national motives in its decisions. Hopefully, when television has developed fully with a good coverage of cultural and live programmes, the popularity of commercial cinemas might well diminish. For the time being, however, a strict control of commercial films shown is very necessary.

Administration of cultural affairs

As demonstrated in this monograph, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs actually carries out only a small proportion of all the Government's official cultural functions. In view of this, it might not be remiss to draw attention to a few desirable organizational changes without actually advancing a dogmatic scheme or format.

It is essential to look into the question of whether tourism should remain part of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, or whether it should be transferred to another ministry, while cultural functions of other ministries or whole ministries such as that of Information could be amalgamated with the Ministry of Cultural Affairs. The decision, however, is for the Government to take.

Antiquities and research

A Director of Antiquities and Research is evidently desirable; his rank and status should be equivalent to that of a Permanent Secretary. He should have in his control the National Museum, the Monuments and Relics Commission (if it continues to have any *raison d'être*) and the National Archives. As already noted, these institutions are decaying within their present structure of organization.

The archives are disorganized, and at the time of writing, Sierra Leone cannot boast of one trained archivist. Consequently, proper care and maintenance are not exercised, and records are quite often missing. Above all, it has been difficult either to organize local provincial archives, or to acquire more documents for the archives.

The Museum is very neglected, and yet it manages to fulfil civic obligations on a shoe-string budget. Evidently, a new Museum with modern museum facilities—library, ethnography and archaeology laboratory, proper galleries, research facilities, etc.—is an urgent necessity.

The Director of Antiquities and Research should be a professional historian of good standing, with sufficient research experience. The Archivist and the Curator of the Museum should come directly under him. The Director should liaise with the research committee of the National Council of Arts and the relevant professionals in the Ministry of Education, the AEASL and the universities, to commission research and direct publication of the fruits of such research in an effort to recapture the true facts of our national culture and history. Such works used in the schools, colleges and universities would assist greatly in the developing of the young in the right direction. No effort should be spared in disseminating this information to the general public via the mass media.

Inventory and documentation of cultural resources

A nation-wide survey should be carried out to identify the main cultural resources of the country, to be classified under the following heads:

Historical: monuments, relics, regal dresses and ornaments, oral traditions, rare manuscripts, etc.

Religious: shrines, sacred bushes, mosques, sacred trees and rivers, etc.

Natural: caves, beaches, zoos, parks, etc.

Artistic: music, dance, drama, craft, etc.

Sociological: various associations or institutions such as the so-called secret societies, represented by their own special and particular masks; languages spoken over small limited areas only, etc.

Full documentation on these resources on tapes, slides and films, in photographs and descriptions, should then be preserved in the research library of the Museum.

Culture and national development

The importance of culture in national development has been mentioned occasionally, but the idea does not seem to appeal particularly to the economists and planners, who are more concerned with mathematical formulas and projections to the almost total exclusion of sociological theory and needs. Yet one of the explanations for the many failures in 'development planning' in developing countries is that it ignores the culture context of the people as the framework within which any new measures, innovations, etc., are to be implemented. As Prem Kirpal has said:

The neglect of culture in the developing societies threatens to undermine and corrode the very process of development. Plans of economic and social development are often left to economists whose horizons are limited by the out-dated notions derived from the West and their implementation becomes the responsibility of rather stuffy and timid bureaucrats, steeped in the habit and traditions of the colonial past. The result is that the immense potentialities of indigenous cultures to rouse the people to action, cement national unity, and to open out to the wonderful realities of our times lie dormant and the process of development continues to be slow and stagnant.¹

Perhaps one can say with a good degree of confidence that an important key to productivity and awakening consciousness among rural as well as urban populations is active participation in cultural life derived from spontaneous community action. Yet because planners for developing countries are either foreign experts, totally ignorant of the socio-cultural setting of the society they are planning for, or élites of that society but alienated from the needs and aspirations of the masses of the people, very little attention (if any at all) has been paid to cultures in national development plans.

1. Prem Kirpal, 'Culture and Development—the Incipient Crisis', *Cultures*, Vol. III, No. 4, 1976, p. 87-8.

Planning, which is seen as the guide to development, has often been imposed from the top. This means that many measures are thrust upon the broad masses of the people without reference to their socio-cultural needs and aspirations, by an élite completely enmeshed in theories of Western development, many of which, if closely scrutinized against the history of post-colonial Africa, seem totally irrelevant. The assumptions behind most of these plans are wrong, for they are based on capitalist experience and particularly on obsession with unlimited growth and consumption. Yet a proper socio-cultural historical interpretation of many developing societies abundantly controverts theories of capitalist development. Above all, the élite planners have seemed to ignore the sentiments of over three-quarters of the populations of developing societies, and simply assume that all that is needed to boost agricultural production, for instance, is the importation of tractors and consequent mechanization, because this is what obtains in the developed world.

Tractorization policies have usually ended in a dismal fiasco. This can be partly interpreted from a cultural standpoint. The majority of the population are farmers and rural-dwelling. The method of agriculture adopted and adapted by them over centuries, with all its ritual aspects, is an integral part of the culture of the people. Besides, they have neither accumulated enough money to invest in mechanical ploughing, nor been sufficiently educated in Western ways to appreciate the need for tractorization as a method of increasing agricultural production. But even assuming that a particular state grants tractor services free to its rural population, there will hardly be a spontaneous welcome and immediate appreciation of the benefits, because the tractor will invariably violate a number of religious practices related to farming. It is precisely for this reason that tractors have failed to produce the magic-wand effect in many developing societies.

An important question that arises now is how then are we going to implement development plans so as to ensure their success? It must be mentioned at once that development itself is not a single-dimensional phenomenon. It presupposes a holistic phenomenon—economic, religious/spiritual, social, moral, intellectual, political, etc. The successful implementation of any innovation in any one of these spheres will invariably have spill-over effects into other spheres, usually in ways not originally foreseen.

Thus to plan and implement successfully, the first logical step is to recognize the importance of the culture of the people, whose lives are supposed to be improved by the development projects to be initiated. And any study of their culture must take cognizance of their prejudices as well as their aspirations, which the people must be encouraged to express freely. The next step should be mass literacy campaigns to assist in widening the horizons of the people, so that they can gradually grow to accept technological innovations as part of the process of modern development. In the meantime, it would be foolish to introduce them to the most sophisticated technologies; they must be gradually prepared for them. This

means that while science is universal, technology must take into account the specific cultural and material conditions in which it has to be applied. So that instead of a frog-leap from slash-and-burn agriculture to tractors and combine harvesters, which will eventually lead to a Humpty-Dumpty fall, more sensible intermediate and quite simple technologies, well within the cultural grasp of the traditional masses, suggest themselves as the most rational solution. These might range from oxen to small manual diesel-operated ploughs.

This pattern (i.e. recognizing culture as an integral part of development, popular literacy campaigns, introduction of simple intermediate technologies) could be applied to many rural sectors in a drive to increase output and productivity. Much-needed development capital, time and effort would be saved, if planners realized that the capitalist path is one of several ways to development, and that development itself is not only growth and consumption. Innovation does not consist merely in importing high-yielding seed varieties and fertilizers, but more important, successful implementation, i.e. by adopting a policy that would make the farmers accept this innovation as necessary. Herbicides and fertilizers are all generically known as 'medicines', and since ritual and medicine constitute an important aspect of the people's religion and culture, they will be more readily accepted as they fit perfectly into their cultural frame of reference. Thus, instead of the wholesale introduction of improved varieties of seed and so on, old varieties could be kept healthy—even though they might yield less than the improved varieties—by the use of herbicides and fertilizers, while the new high-yielding variety is gradually introduced. Eventually, the farmer will opt for the new breed, but it is unrealistic to assume that the advantages will be obvious and automatic to him. He must be made to learn from experience that the one is better than the other.

All this sounds well and good on paper, but to implement it successfully presupposes a leadership cadre, with a high degree of cultural awareness, and technical skill, ready to spend long periods in the bush, and not the tie-and-jacket bureaucrat idling in an air-conditioned office in the cities. According to Prem Kirpal again:

The arts and crafts are not mere luxuries; they can generate creative work, elevate taste and bring people together in common endeavours. The spread of culture through appropriate policies and instruments of action needs comparatively small cost of money but its returns can be enormous in terms of popular education and the creation of that will to change without which development cannot gather momentum. We need to make culture an integral part of national planning, and this is rarely attempted in the formulation of national development plans by the élitist leadership of developing countries, so sadly estranged from the traditional cultures of their larger community.¹

1. Kirpal, op. cit., p. 88-9.

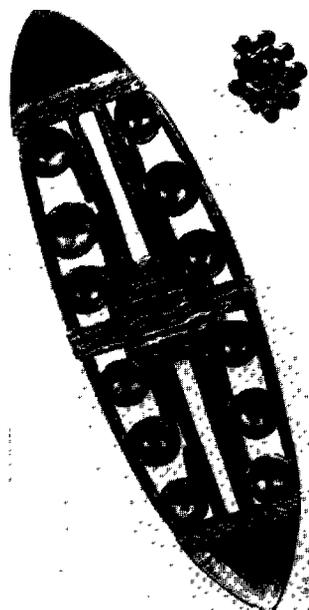
Conclusion

As has been advocated for most other countries, Sierra Leone too needs a comprehensive document on cultural development, integrated into the total national development. In so doing, all the shortcomings identified in this monograph should be taken into account, and a concerted effort made to rectify the mistakes of the past. It is this author's ardent wish that the next National Development Plan should have a chapter on culture, which the present one lacks.

Moreover, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, constituted only in 1975, performs less than 20 per cent of all governmental cultural functions, which are scattered among other ministries. There is a great need for reorganization, a concentration of as many desirable and compatible cultural functions within the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs as possible. Nevertheless, cultural and popular education based on a complete reinterpretation of our national history and culture, so as to create the correct atmosphere for development, remains an urgent priority.



Sampa dancers, Temne.
[Photo: Christo Greene]



Warri game board.
[Courtesy: Sierra Leone Museum]



Fula dancers.
[Photo: Christo Greene]



Alikali Society mask,
Limba.
[Courtesy: Sierra Leone Museum]

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Appendix I Sierra Leone's ancient monuments and relics: their history and location

Founded in 1792, Freetown is a comparatively new city with a few ancient monuments. Little attention was paid to these prior to the passing of Ordinance No. 12 of 1946, which authorized the establishment of the Ancient Monuments and Relics Commission, formed in 1947.

The work of this commission embraces the whole of Sierra Leone, and its first chairman was the late Dr. M. C. F. Easmon, whose invaluable service to this nation accounted for the preservation of our cultural heritage. The dates in parentheses in the following list refer to the proclamation of the items as 'ancient monuments'.

The De Ruyter Stone (1948)

This is Freetown's oldest monument or relic. It lies buried six feet under the ground just above the high-water mark at King Jimmy Market. Mentioned by early travellers, it was rediscovered in 1923 when a concrete drain was being laid beside the new market building to direct the waters of Peter's Brook. This spring, well known to all mariners on the west coast of Africa as the best watering place in the region, was known as King Jimmy Water and is now called Peter's Brook.

During the Dutch Wars the Dutch Admiral De Ruyter, while ravaging English settlements on the west coast, came to Sierra Leone River on his way to destroy Bunce Island and Tassoh Island; he watered here and inscribed his name and that of his second in command on this syenite stone. The inscription reads as follows: 'M. A. Ruyter, I. C. Mellon, Vice Admiralen, West Fries, Vant A.D. 1664.'

After inspection in 1923, the stone was reburied as a protection against vandalism and weathering. Subsequently, in 1948 and 1958, it was again uncovered and reburied until such time as Le2,800 can be obtained to erect a permanent building and protection for it.

The Bastions of Fort Thornton (1949)

The fortification of Smith's Hill went on from 1792 to 1805. Inside the fort were the Governor's House, Government Offices, such as the Post Office, and barracks for the garrison. By the time the construction of the new (present)

State House was started the commission had seen to it that these old bastions were proclaimed 'ancient monuments' and they were incorporated into the new building.

The Gateway to the King's Yard (1949)

After the abolition of the slave trade in 1808, slave ships captured on the high seas, en route to the West Indies and the Americas, were brought into Freetown harbour and, until arrangements could be made for their ultimate disposal, the captives were housed in compounds known as King's Yards; the one at Freetown was the first and the largest, and through it passed the liberated Africans, the immediate ancestors of the bulk of the Creole inhabitants of Freetown today. Some famous people who passed through as boys include Samuel Adjai Crowther, the first African bishop (1863–91) of the Anglican communion; John Ezzidio, the first African elected a member of the Legislative Council (1863), the Honourable Sibyle Boyle, M.L.C., and others. The Gateway, at the end of Lightfoot-Boston Street and the entrance to the Lower Dispensary of the Connaught Hospital, bears this inscription: 'Royal asylum and hospital for the rescued from slavery by British valour and humanity'.

Heddle's Farm (1948)

Formerly, off the Leicester Road on the hills to the immediate south of the city and on the Spur Road separated from Mount Aureol by the upper waters of Nicol's Brook, there was a prominent residence now in ruins called Heddle's Farm. This, until its abandonment in about 1832, was in turn a private residence, the country residence of the Governor, a convalescent home, the home of some Commissary Judges (Mrs Melville, the wife of one, wrote *A Residence at Sierra Leone* here), and of the Honourable Charles Heddle. Heddle sold it to the Government and it was last used as the Residence of the Comptroller of Forests.

Bunce Island (1949)

This island played an important part in the earlier history of the Sierra Leone River, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, especially before the formation of the Sierra Leone Company and the beginnings of Sierra Leone as we know it today. The island was successively a general trading factory gradually concentrated on the slave trade, a definite slave depot, a timber warehouse, and a recruiting station for the British Army in West Africa.

In 1664 the Netherlands made war on Great Britain and the Dutch Admiral De Ruyter sailed to West Africa, recaptured Goree, proceeded to Sierra Leone River, carved his name on the stone now termed the De Ruyter Stone at King Jimmy, sailed up the river, and destroyed the Tasso and Bunce forts and factories. In 1792 the Royal African Company rebuilt the fort and factory at Bunce Island, the principal articles of trade at this time being elephant tusks, beeswax, cowhides, gold and Negroes.

The fort was often attacked by hostile warships, pirates and local warriors, e.g. in 1695, 1704, 1728 and 1799.

In the seventeenth century the Temne were pushing down to the coast and

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there was a succession of great Temne kings. During the reign of Farima Borea (1607–30) towns were built on Gambia and Bunce Islands. During the reign of his successor, Borea the Great (1630–64), the third of the chartered English companies trading in West Africa, the Company of Royal Adventurers into Africa (among the founders of which were the mother of Charles II, his wife Catherine of Braganza and his brother James, Duke of York) built factories on Tasso, Bunce and Sherbro Islands.

Bunce has started to attract visitors. Museum excursions to the island are made at intervals. Cape Sierra Hotel and Wilhab organize tourist trips to the island.

Nomoli or stone images (1949)

These steatite or soapstone carvings are peculiar to the Mende provinces of Sierra Leone. Excluding Egypt, stone carvings are rare in Africa. They are said to have two sources, in large numbers from old tumuli or singly when clearing old farms. There is no definite proof that they are of Egyptian origin and they are probably of local manufacture, but it is to be noted that in the Mendeland where they are found at present, stone carving is non-existent and the people carve in wood.

Nomoli are said to come from God and are credited with fertility properties and so are placed on rice farms to ensure a good crop.

Old earthworks at Masakpaidu (1949)

These old earthworks are found on the site of the deserted village of Masakpaidu in the Nimmi Yema (Kono) chiefdom of the Eastern Province, in the fork where the rivers Bafi and Baghwe unite to form the Sewa River; the are on a flat piece of raised ground. The enclosed area has a diameter of about a hundred yards and was surrounded by 8-foot stakes cut from branches of a cotton tree. Some of these took root and the stumps remain. Outside the row of stakes is a ditch about 300 yards long. The depth of the ditch is now 6 feet below the ground level on the inner side, and to the top ramp of the outer wall it is 9 feet; the width at the top is 12 feet. There were originally two entrances, and poles, which were taken up at night or when an attack was expected, were placed across each entrance to form a bridge.

The age of these fortifications can be gauged from the fact that some of the surrounding cotton trees have fallen and the rotting trunks still remain; some having fallen outwards and others inwards. The village was built by Kundina and probably dates from 1800.

Masakpaidu was one of several Kono villages fortified to withstand attacks from the nearby Koranko, Mende and Temne. It was sacked by Alimamy Samory during the Sofa Wars, about 1893, and was never reoccupied. With a view to preserving what remains of these earthworks the District Commissioner Sefadu proposed to have the Rest House erected in the centre of the enclosed area, and so it will be protected from farming operations.

John Newton's house and the slave factory on Plantain Island (1949)

Plantain Island, it is said, was first occupied by one Captain John Plantain and took its name from him and not from the presence of groves of plantains, of which there are none now. Moreover, local tradition confirms there never were any in the past.

Today there is a large fishing village, the headquarters of the local Bonga Industry. The remains of the slave factory on the small peninsula forming the northern tip of the island consist of an L-shaped piece of the outer wall of the compound of embedded broken glass; another small portion of a wall by the side of which is built a depression now silted up, which may be either the entrance to the underground area described by Ross in 1926 or a well; a well-preserved cannon; and the remains of the foundations of a building.

John Newton, the son of a captain in the mercantile marine, was born in London in 1725 and died in December 1807, within a month of the transfer of the colony from the Chartered Company to the Crown.

He frequently went to sea with his father and became a wild and turbulent youth. In his old age, referring to himself from the pulpit of St Mary Woolnoth, London, he spoke of the fact 'that one of the most ignorant, the most miserable, the most abandoned of slaves should be plucked from the forlorn state of exile on the coast of Africa and at length be appointed Minister of the Parish of the first magistrate of the first City in the world'.

Destined by his parents for a post in a merchant's office in Jamaica, he was seized during a drunken orgy by a naval press gang in 1743. His father instead of buying him out had him made a midshipman. His bad behaviour soon caused him to be degraded to the fore-castle and in 1744 he sailed as an ordinary seaman in H.M.S. *Harwich* for Madeira. There the captain, on account of Newton's continued unruly behaviour, gladly exchanged him for a sailor off a Guineaman bound for Sierra Leone and the west coast of Africa.

Arriving in Sierra Leone and seeing the wealth to be made out of the slave trade, Newton obtained his discharge without pay and landed on the Banana Islands, where he entered the services of a white slave trader who soon transferred to Plantain Island. Here he stayed about a year, during which time, in the absence of his master, he was badly treated by the master's wife, who half starved him and in general treated him worse than a slave. However, he managed to smuggle some letters to his father in England. Meanwhile he was able to transfer to another white master on the Boom Kittam River, and here he was rescued by a ship sent out by his father. After a very bad voyage he reached England in 1748. The perils and privations of this last voyage played a large part in turning his thoughts to religion. But the urge of the sea was still in him, and between 1748 and 1754 when he gave up the sea, he made at least three voyages to West Africa as a slave trader, going on with his human cargo to the West Indies and the southern colonies of America. During those voyages, he was noted for strict religious studies and observances.

After leaving the sea, he was a tide-waiter at Liverpool, and continuing his religious studies eventually became a curate at Olney, Bucks. Here he became a friend of the poet Cowper and collaborated with him on the *Olney Hymns*. Newton will perhaps best be remembered by posterity as a hymn writer, for in the current editions of *Hymns Ancient and Modern* there are no less than six of his hymns, the best known of which is perhaps 'How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds'.

He was at Olney for sixteen years and then became the Rector of one of Hawksmoor's City churches, St Mary Woolnoth, Lombard Street. On his death in 1807 he was buried in the churchyard, but his remains were subsequently removed and reburied in the Olney churchyard.

The old Wharf Steps (1953)

The old Wharf Steps, leading from Lightfoot-Boston Street down to the old Custom House between the lower Commissariat and the main French Company building, were constructed in about 1818 by Governor Sir Charles McCarthy. The steps are popularly known as the Portuguese Steps, but they could not possibly have been constructed by the Portuguese, who with the possible exception of Jesuit missionaries left these shores some 300 years before the steps were constructed.

Three old boundary guns (1953)

The first, at the junction of Kissy Road and Blackhall Road, marked the eastern limit of the city in 1800; this is the so-called Kissy Gun. This end of the city was for long known as the 'Gun', and a market was held there regularly until its transfer to the new Kennedy Street Market in 1953.

The second gun is on the Leicester or Mountain Road, adjacent to the first milestone out of Freetown. The third is at the junction of Pademba Road and King Harman Road.

These guns were buried, leaving only two or three feet of the muzzles projecting above the ground. They were all dug up and mounted on stone plinths with explanatory inscriptions in 1953.

*The Cleveland tombstone, Tassoh, Kargboro Chiefdom
Moyamba district (1950)*

The following is a brief historical note as handed down among the Caulker Chiefs at Shenge and as told to Dr M. C. F. Easmon by the Paramount Chief A. T. Caulker and his Chiefdom Clerk, Mr Dillett.

About the middle of the eighteenth century two Europeans arrived in the Kargboro area: James Cleveland, who finally settled on the Banana Islands, and Skinner Caulker, who stayed on the mainland at Tassoh, not far from the present Shenge Town in the Kargboro area. At that time there was already a slave dealer on Plantain Island; whether it was the original Captain John Plantain or a successor I am not sure. Skinner Caulker did business with him.

After the deaths of James Cleveland and Skinner Caulker, their mulatto sons fell out and warred against each other. As he could more easily obtain gunpowder, Thomas Stevens Caulker defeated the Clevelands, took over the Bananas, carried away James Cleveland's tombstone and placed it over his own father's grave at Tassoh. This old town has long ago been abandoned and a sacred bush allowed to grow, and here are still buried all the Caulker Chiefs.

The tombstone in more recent years was taken from the bush and brought into Shenge Town, but it soon had to be taken back to the sacred bush as the neighbours declared it was haunted.

This tombstone is made of the same stone as those on Bunce Island and is of the same period, the date being 1791. But it is in a much better state of preservation, the only damage being a clean break across the upper part caused by a falling tree.

The stone is flat and placed horizontally on a low mound and bears the following inscription: 'Sacred to the memory of Mr. James Cleveland late Proprietor of this Island who departed this life March 24, 1791 in the 37th year

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of his age. His surviving relative William Cleveland has caused this stone to be placed over his grave as a tribute to the Memory of a Worthy Man. Memento.'

The original Fourah Bay College building, Ross Road (1955)

The original red-stone Fourah Bay College building at Cline Town dates from 1845, when Sierra Leone's first coloured Governor, Staff Sergeant Major William Fergusson, laid the foundation stone. It was opened in 1848 and was in regular use till the Second World War, when the college was transferred to Mabang in the then Protectorate. Proclaimed a national monument, the building is now the headquarters of the Sierra Leone Government Railway.

St John's Maroon Church, Freetown (1956)

St John's Maroon Church, standing out prominently on the south side of Siaka Stevens Street, between Liverpool Street and Percival Street, is a small white-washed building. It is not only one of the oldest places of worship but the only one named after one of the three original groups of settlers of the colony: the Maroons (1800). It was erected about 1820 on land given as a government grant.

The Maroons were the third group of the original colonists. The preservation of this building in perpetuity has ensured that the name 'Maroon' will be kept alive in Freetown. The white, picturesque church is in an early colonial architectural style.

The Martello Tower at Tower Hill near Parliament Building (1961)

The erection of this Tower by Governor Day in 1805 caused the name of the hill, formerly Wansey Hill, to be changed to Tower Hill. It is now in danger of being demolished to make way for a car approach-way to the new House of Parliament.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the Temne made frequent attacks on Freetown. Fort Thornton was not yet completed, and so Governor Day had a Martello tower, similar to those being erected in southern England against Napoleon's threatened invasion, erected for the defence of Freetown. When about the year 1870 piped water was first introduced into Freetown, the supply pipe from the upper waters of Nicol Brooks passed through Tower Hill barracks, then down the old Military Hospital and Government House, and on into the town. At this time, the Martello Tower was truncated, and a large iron water tank placed on the top.

Early Victorian fireplace at Waterloo House, 2 Charlotte Street (1961)

Waterloo House, built over 120 years ago, is one of Freetown's oldest houses. At that period, it was usual in the better-class houses to include European-type fireplaces. There was one in Horton Hall, and another in the house in Lamina Sankoh Street now occupied by the American Consulate. These were destroyed when the houses were broken down or altered. The same fate fell on 2 Charlotte Street, which has come down to make way for the new Town Hall, but the fireplace will be preserved somewhere else.

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Graves of Lendy and Maritz, Waiima, Kono District (1965)

Waiima is situated due east of Sefadu in the Fiamsa chiefdom. In 1893 it was the scene of a clash between British and French forces, both pursuing Samory's *sofa* warriors. The British fought the French, each party thinking the other to be the *sofa*. Before the mistake was realized, Captain Lendy on the British side and Lieutenant Maritz on the French side had been killed. Both were buried on the spot, and afterwards their brother officers erected a memorial cross over them.

In 1933, a new and larger memorial incorporating the original cross was erected by the Sierra Leone Government. The Acting Governor, Captain Cookson, performed the unveiling ceremony in the presence of the Acting French Lieutenant-Governor of Conakry, and British and French troops.

The old military butts (1962)

The old butts of the rifle range of the military forces are situated at the junction of Hillcot and King Harman and Merewether Roads. They are the remains of a large military establishment that served British West Africa.

The firing point with four guns near the old wharf and two old tombstones in the cemetery at Dublin, on Banana Island (1959)

Piracy was rife in the eighteenth century. Merchants petitioned the British Government for assistance to stamp it out. Long before the slave trade was abolished and the West African Squadron instituted, a squadron of the British Royal Navy was sent to put down piracy. There was no Freetown then, and the ships were based on Banana Island—hence the firing point and guns.

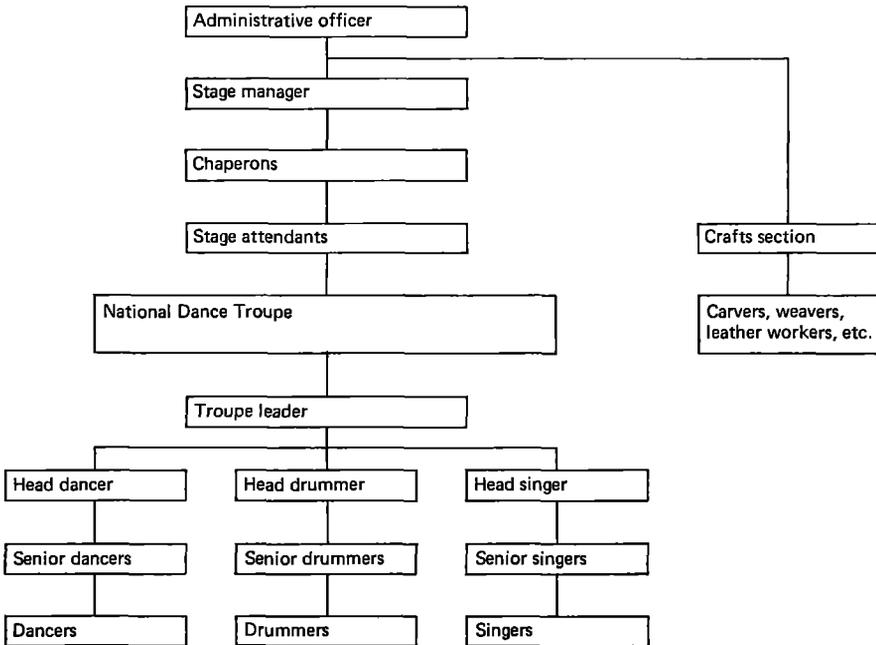
There are two tombstones there. The first, that of Captain Reid, R.N., is dated 1712, and is the earliest tombstone so far found in Sierra Leone, older than the oldest on Bunce Island. The other is that of Lieutenant J. W. Probert, R.N., dated 1847.

St Charles Church (1959)

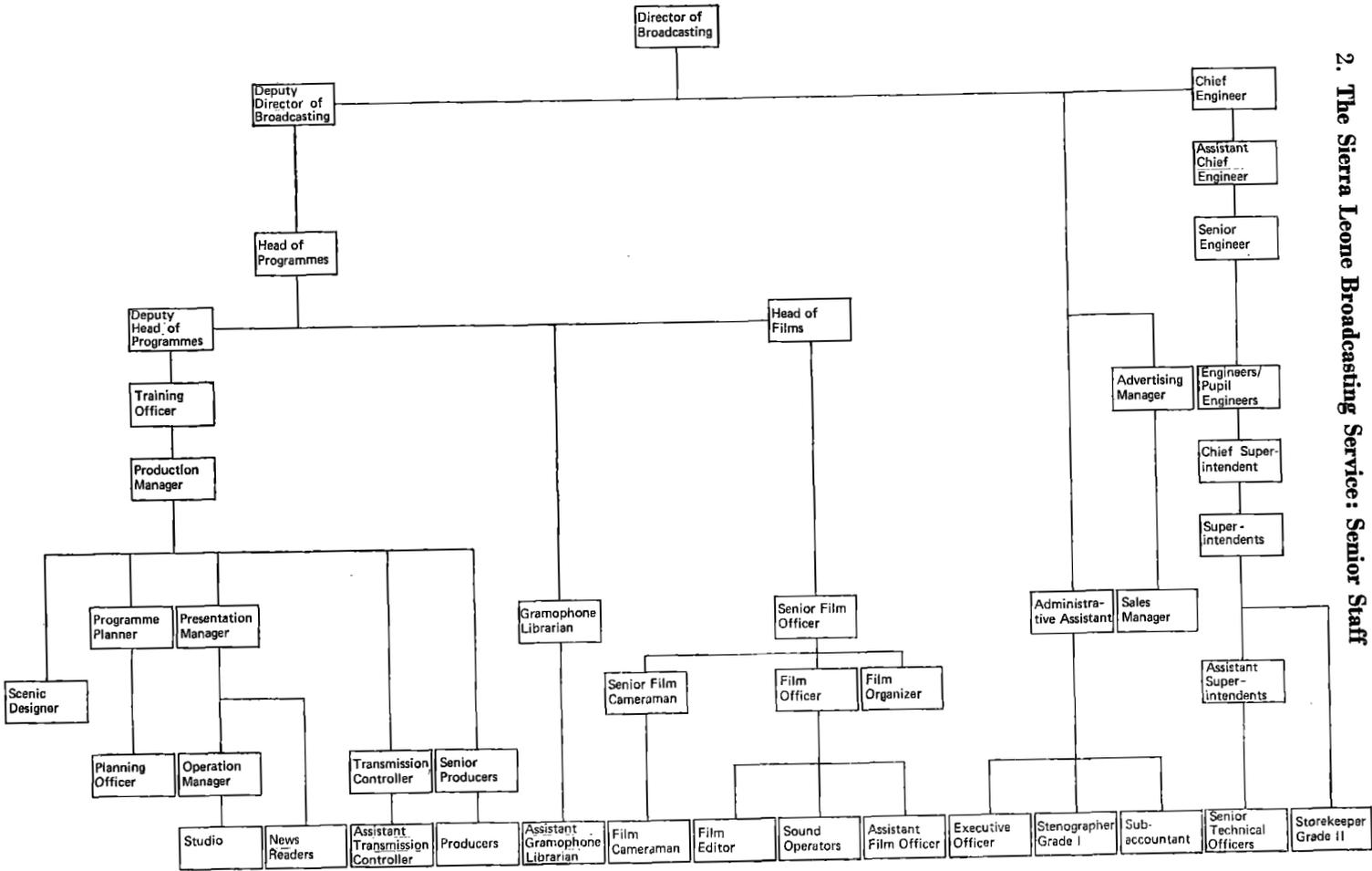
This is the first stone church at Regent dating from 1818. It is near the remains of the wall of the King's Yard at Regent.

Appendix II Organizational charts

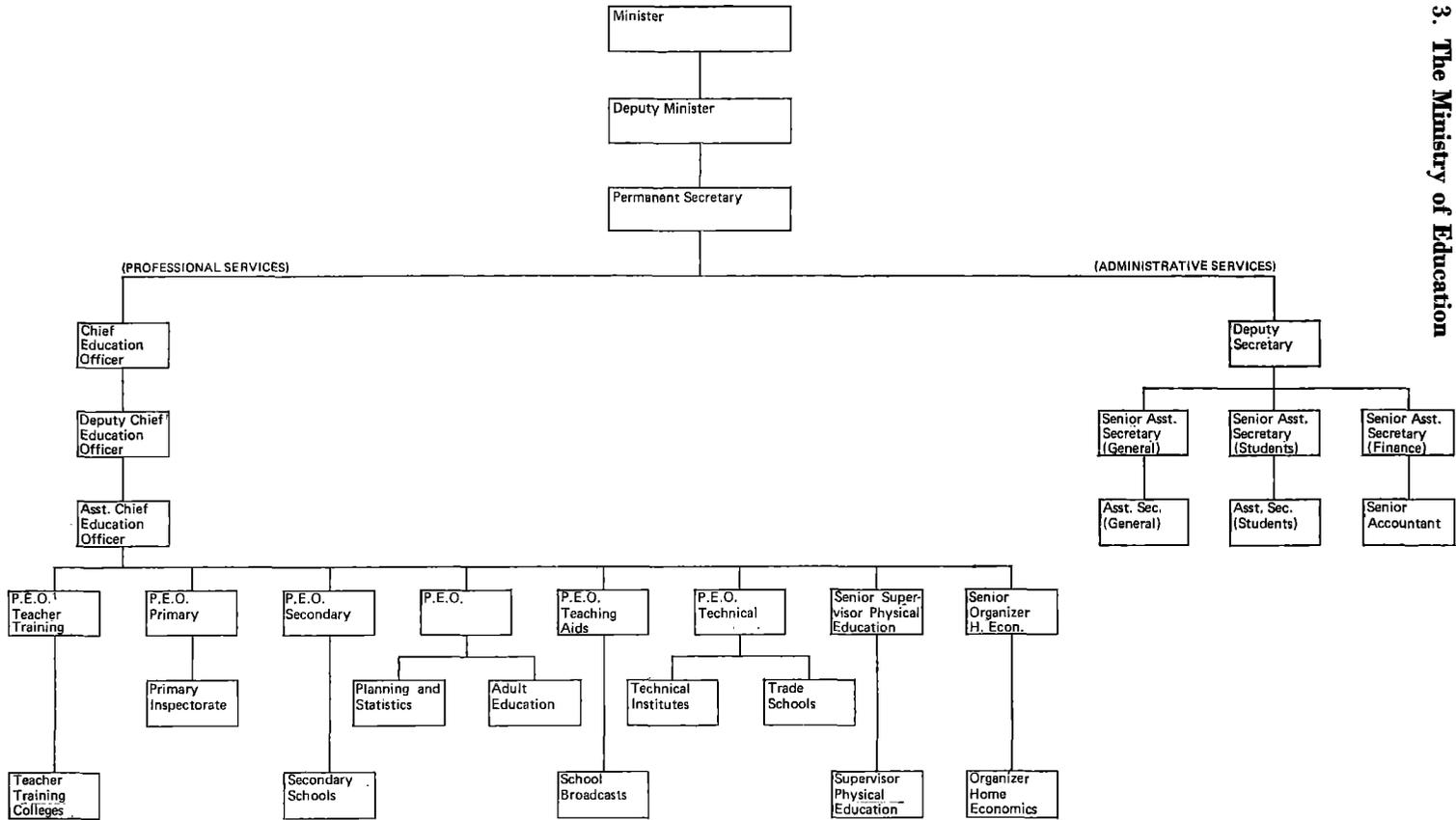
1. Cultural Village



2. The Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service: Senior Staff



3. The Ministry of Education



Source: Ministry of Education

1. Principal Education Officer

Appendix II

4. The National Sports Council

