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**THE CONTRIBUTION OF TRADITIONAL SCHOOLING TO THE EDUCATION
OF THE ARTIST IN SIERRA LEONE**

Caesar Amandus Malcolm Coker

A Thesis

in

The Department

of

Art Education

**Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at
Concordia University
Montreal, Quebec, Canada**

June 2001

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ABSTRACT

THE CONTRIBUTION OF TRADITIONAL SCHOOLING TO THE EDUCATION OF THE ARTIST IN SIERRA LEONE

Caesar Amandus Malcolm Coker, Ph.D.
Concordia University, 2001

This study focuses on the education and work of indigenous Sierra Leonean visual artists. It examines the traditional artistic training processes, the nature of the artists' work, the place of the artists in their communities and their contributions to our national development. In order to address these four issues, answers to the following questions were sought: In what ways have traditional educational processes contributed to the education of our artists in Sierra Leone? How important is the input of ethnic associations to the process of education? Is the quality of the education offered to trainees compatible with their roles in the community? How or why do some of these traditionally trained artists shift their production emphasis from ritual objects to tourist art?

This study also evaluates the development of different educational/training institutions within the context of Sierra Leone's colonial history. It also examines how the changes in the country's educational system have influenced the position and status of indigenous artists and their training processes.

The study is based largely on data collected through in-depth interviews conducted with twelve indigenous Sierra Leonean artists, (seven male and five female). Also, it relies on relevant literature on "traditional" African education, as well as secondary literature on education and the training of artists generally.

This study suggests that traditional artistic education makes an important contribution to national development. Traditional artistic education clearly contributes to a vibrant social life as well as about 2 Million US Dollars annually to the national economy. Likewise, traditional artistic education helps to shape popular culture and national identity.

Findings from this study suggest that the Sierra Leone government should support the development of indigenous artistic training processes, and that use be made of the artists and their work to elevate the national ethos of our country. Most importantly, this research suggests that youths be given the opportunity to participate in traditional art activities. Such involvement will be meaningful and useful to our youth, especially considering the interrelation of art and other subjects in the school curriculum.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Research Problem and the Significance of the Study

I

One of the most profound challenges facing the African continent today is the education and training of its population to meet the tasks of economic and social development. Many developing countries in Africa have depended heavily on Western systems of education without paying much attention to indigenous educational systems and training processes (as a means to meet the tasks of economic and social development.)

Before its colonization by Britain in 1787, Sierra Leone, like other African nations had developed a network of educational institutions which supervised the education of all youths and provided schooling for them after puberty. Such education could last up to seven years, depending on the ethnic group that organized it. Because of the distinctive role of the sexes within the culture, males and females were educated in sex-segregated institutions. One exception was the Sherbro ethnic group who educated their youths in either segregated or co-educational institutions. The curriculum covered the following components: occupational skills

development, and physical, social and cultural education. Instructors, all former graduates of such institutions, supervised the training of students to a high standard. Further, artistic training through apprenticeships was provided for students with artistic capability, and prepared them to produce artifacts for community rituals. Due to the acceptance of Western educational, religious and cultural values some of these rituals are no longer practiced today. As a result, the function of the traditionally trained artist has shifted from producing ritualistic art to touristic art. Because of the present demand for their work these artists are now able to earn a decent living, producing work for local patrons and tourists.

According to the Bank of Sierra Leone Bulletin, for 1997 the Per Capita Income for Sierra Leone is 540 US Dollars (1997:SA2). Its Gross Domestic Product is 2.5 Billion US Dollars (1997:SA2). Its growth rate is 27% while inflation is 40% (1997:SA3). Its exports are about 47 Million US Dollars and its imports are about 211 Million US Dollars. (Coker, 1997:SA2). The Estimated Average Per Capita Income for the artists interviewed is about 5000 US Dollars.

Dependence on Western systems of education has understandably led to the decline of indigenous educational systems in many African countries. Indigenous educational

systems, however, have not lost their importance or relevance. In some cases, especially in parts of the world that are plagued with financial difficulties for managing Western educational systems, but that are keen to develop a sense of national autonomy, indigenous educational systems have become complementary to western educational systems.

This dissertation shows that in Sierra Leone, as in other regions of West Africa, artists are still being trained through indigenous educational processes. Apprenticeship training schemes supervised by indigenously trained professional artists still remain the most popular system. The apprenticeship system has had a long history in the training of artists and artisans in many cultures. In 15th Century Europe, for example, many aspiring artists, "would enlist in the workshop, *bottega* or *atelier*, of a practicing artist" for an extensive period of training which commenced with the trainee undertaking "menial tasks" such as "fetching and carrying, and acting as general dogsbody," (Ashwin, 1994:39).

Although outside the purview of government, (i.e., non-regulated. No government ministry control,) traditional artist training institutions remain a vibrant and productive aspect of Sierra Leonean life. These institutions have produced and continue to produce artists who derive their

livelihood from art. An interesting development is that lately, these institutions have been training women in larger numbers. The women who have become practicing artists are now venturing into fields that were previously dominated by men. These traditionally trained artists work full time to meet local as well as international demands for their productions. Through their work, these indigenous Sierra Leonean artists, male and female, have contributed greatly to the economic and social enhancement of their communities.

The history of the training and work of local artists counters the assumption of Western educators that indigenous African education before European colonization of Africa was informal. This mis-characterization of African indigenous educational systems as not meeting the criteria of Western-defined education, grossly undervalues them and limits their potential to contribute to national development.

Another important reason for doing this research involves the matter of changes currently taking place in African art education. It is worth observing that the training of artists in most regions of Africa is gradually shifting from the traditional method to one that is Western in orientation. The study is useful because at this stage of our economic and social development we are made to believe by the powerful Western media that we can accelerate our pace of development

by adopting Western systems--including the educational and cultural aspects. Although I am not disputing the validity of this assumption, I believe that there are aspects of our educational and cultural systems which are very relevant to our way of life and therefore worth preserving and merging with not only Western ideas, but any other system that has relevance to ours. Since African art has been appreciated and appropriated by Western artists, then there must be some value in it. For further study of the value of African art, one might evaluate the present interest shown into by Western collectors. The interest may be classified as only economic but this could be open to further examination and debate. Although the fact that there are many art schools in Nigeria modeled on the Western system of education, the work of the traditionally trained artist is still relevant to their culture. Because of this the traditionally trained artist is held in high esteem, and so is his or her work. In extolling the importance of African art Emmanuel Nyarkoh has commented that:

...Perhaps the greatest contribution Africa has made so far to the cultural heritage of mankind is its richly varied arts, especially in sculpture...
(1984:187)

African artists, who for a long period of time had been denied recognition from the Western world, are now receiving more and more acknowledgment. This recognition coincided with a period of change the African artist's reality. Africa is

socially and culturally changing due to factors beyond her control. Therefore, it is vital that immediate steps be taken to record some of the positive African artistic phenomena that are now receiving acclaim from art educators and other enthusiasts around the world. Finally, this dissertation provides the impetus for other researchers, especially in Africa, to venture into the realm of African arts research. Researchers must investigate more fully the work of African artists, especially at this time when their role is changing. Understanding what artists in any culture do is a major step in comprehending that culture (Boyer, 1987:95).

Reflecting on his belief that "the arts and culture are an important resource for Sierra Leone to preserve and develop," the former vice-chancellor of the University of Sierra Leone, Professor Kosonike Koso-Thomas, a renowned academic and artist, addressed a forum at the University of Sierra Leone senate in June, 1992. He spoke of the concern that Africa had failed to make her mark in the international field of science due to stiff competition from the west. He suggested that since we still have a rich cultural heritage, steps should be taken through research and other means to preserve what is left (1992:77-78). For me, such a statement from the vice-chancellor of one of Africa's oldest institutions of higher learning is an indication that the university is concerned and that the matter should be treated

with some urgency. In this dissertation I suggest that government recognition of and support for local artists and indigenous educational systems can greatly enhance Sierra Leone's capacity to meet current developmental challenges.

II

Despite their considerable contribution to the development of African art over a period of two centuries, the education of Sierra Leonean visual artists has not been studied. Unlike the artistic production and organization of some African states (Nigeria or Ghana for example), Sierra Leonean art forms and their creators have not received any substantial academic attention. The few studies that do exist on Sierra Leonean art forms (for example Philips, (1973); Boone, (1975), (1986); Cannizzo, (1976); Nunley, (1977); Richards, (1977); Reinhardt, (1978); Ottenberg, (1978), (1992); Hart, (1990,1993); Perani & Smith, (1998)) have focused on the ritualistic aspect of ethnic associations (wrongly classified as "secret societies" by Butt-Thompson, 1929:13), while neglecting the training of the artists who produced the artifacts that are crucial to the performance of the rituals.

This oversight could be attributed to the fact that until very recently the work produced by African artists--including the Sierra Leonean--was not validated or valued in the same

way as art forms from the Western world. In the opinion of Ulli Beier, the delay in the recognition of African art was based on a number of factors, the most important being the idea that the work was produced "by the savage and inferior native." (1968:4) This belief devalued the status of the Africans who produced the work and diminished their credibility as artists. Up until the mid 20th century African art was mostly seen as primarily functional folk art--and as such not in the same category as the high modern art that dominated Western artistic production. Except for its inclusion as an exotic source in high art--as for example in the appropriation by Picasso and other modern artists, African art was of primary interest to Western anthropologists and ethnographers.

At the end of the century, African artists are now gaining global recognition as artists in their own right--rather than as makers of ritual objects. Art educators and art historians as well as ethnographers in the West have begun to acknowledge the fact that African art shares qualities that can be found in art from all over the world. In the late 1960s, Ulli Beier noted that African artists from varying backgrounds were helping to expand "our vision and...aesthetic experience" (1968:169). He maintained that African artists were at the point of creating an impact in the international sphere of art (1968:169). By the 1990s, "African art objects"

were no longer being categorized "as inept and crude (raw, lacking finish, grace, taste, uncultured, not carefully made or unadorned)," (Chanda, 1992:61). Many African "art pieces" are now accepted by present day "scholars" as being of a "very high quality" (1992:61). Nunely has confirmed that art produced by traditionally trained Sierra Leonean artists is of a high aesthetic quality (1992:103-104).

The shift in attitude makes it possible for fresher and less biased investigations into the training of African artists and their work. This study, situated within this new framework, investigates the process of art education organized by indigenous schools in Sierra Leone. It also examines the perceptions of some indigenously trained artists and assesses the relevance of indigenous artistic training to the development of contemporary art education in Sierra Leone.

This study focuses on the education and work of indigenous Sierra Leonean visual artists. It examines "traditional" artistic training processes, the nature of the artists' work, the place of the artists in their communities and their contributions to our national development. In order to address these issues, answers to the following questions will be sought: In what ways have traditional educational processes contributed to the education of artists in Sierra Leone? How important is the input of ethnic associations to

this process? Is the quality of education offered to trainees suitable for their role in the community? How or why do traditionally trained artists shift their production emphasis from ritual objects to "tourist art?"

This study also evaluates the development of different educational/training institutions within the context of Sierra Leone's colonial history. It also examines how the changes in the country's educational system have influenced the position and status of indigenous artists and their training processes.

The study is based largely on data collected from indigenous training institutions and from in-depth interviews conducted in Sierra Leone with twelve indigenous Sierra Leonean artists, seven male and five female. It also relies on relevant ethnographical literature, and on "traditional" African education as well as secondary literature on education and artistic training generally.

The dissertation contains seven chapters. The first chapter discusses the central focus and significance of the study. The second chapter reviews relevant literature on the theory and practice of African traditional education. It also examines the concept and role of an educated person in African societies and discusses indigenous methods used to educate African artists.

The third chapter focuses specifically on Sierra Leone. It looks at the historical development of educational institutions in Sierra Leone, the different indigenous training institutions, and the impact of colonization on indigenous education. Furthermore it briefly looks at how the changes in the country's educational system has influenced the position and value of indigenous artists and their training processes.

The fourth chapter describes the genesis and the methodology of the study. It also discusses the key techniques of participant observation and oral interviews used in collecting data for the dissertation. The advantages and disadvantages of the methodology are examined. As well, a list of questions used in the interviews is included.

The fifth chapter presents the biographical data of the twelve respondents, highlighting some of their unique characteristics. A synopsis of the researcher's biographical data is also included. The sixth chapter analyzes and discusses the responses the respondents gave to the questions as well as discussions re shared and contrasting findings among the individual interviewees. The seventh chapter examines the possibility of integrating traditional art education with contemporary methods and offers suggestions for future research. The result of the interviews with the twelve

respondents is appended as an appendix.

Terms and Definitions

For reasons of clarity a number of terms are used throughout the study. I will present the ethnic groups in order of population size, starting with the largest. They are defined as follows:

Mende: The Mende ethnic group occupies the southern and eastern regions of Sierra Leone. They form the largest and most economically productive ethnic group, about 35% of the population of 4.5 million (Thomas, 1984:28). Their culture is shared extensively by smaller ethnic groups such as the Kissi and the Kono who inhabit adjacent areas.

As a group the Mende are the most culturally productive. Their art forms include sculpture in wood and fibre, pottery, weaving, tie dyeing and gold smithing which are either admired or imitated by other ethnic groups (1967:69). In the field of agriculture they are very advanced and produce enough food to meet their needs (1967:77-78). After the age of puberty their youths are educated in segregated and well-structured institutions. Such institutions adequately prepare these youths, both male and female, for community living (1967:117-130). Their system of government is based on chieftaincy rule, which unlike some of the other ethnic groups, is open to women. The only condition women have to fulfill, just like

the men, is that it is necessary that a parent must be born into a ruling house (1967:175-176). In fact, this ethnic group is historically known for some of their progressive female Paramount Chiefs who reigned with distinction during and after the colonial period (Little,1967:195-196; Kup,1975:91).

Religion for this ethnic group centres on the existence and worship of the Supreme God. Another aspect of their system of religion is the worshipping of Ancestral Spirits who, although not as highly ranked as the Supreme Being, are nevertheless revered by individuals who regard such spirits as a link between them and their dead relatives (Kenneth Little,1967:216-221). Acceptance of the western type of education by this ethnic group on the invitation of their colonizer, at a period when the other ethnic groups rejected such invitation, has increased their capacity in a western oriented society to compete for key positions in the professional, governmental and commercial institutions (1967:115-116). Politically they have also been participative and active (Kup, 1975:203-205).

Temne: This ethnic group occupies vast areas of the northern and northwestern regions of Sierra Leone. They constitute about 30% of the estimated population of 4.5 million people (Thomas, 1984:28). Their system of government although

similar to the Mende is closely linked with Islam. They also practise a form of religion based on the worshipping of inanimate objects such as stones and trees. Education which was originally administered by the Poro and Bondu traditional institutions was eventually dropped by the majority in favor of Islam.

Although their agricultural system is not the most advanced they are able to feed their communities adequately. Some of the groups who live close to the sea harness the resources of the sea to supplement their food supply. As an ethnic group they are known for their tenacity and zeal in defending their territory from intruders, including the British who colonized them. This desire to muster a strongly defensive capability in support of their territory has helped to consolidate them into closely bonded communities (Fyfe, 1962:89-92). Although they are not as artistically creative as the Mende they have very skillfully adopted the art forms of other artistically creative ethnic groups. Their embrace of Islam has no doubt contributed to their artistic decline.

With the acquisition of western education, (for which they were not initially enthusiastic to accept) they are presently making inroads into the professions, government services and commerce. They are well known as managers for

small scale family enterprises (Fyfe,1962:125).

Limba: This ethnic group occupies areas of the Northern regions of Sierra Leone with the Temne and the Kuranko ethnic groups as their neighbors. Numerically they are about 5% of the population (Finnegan, 1965: 10-11). Although they claim to be one of the original ethnic groups to have settled in Sierra Leone, their relatively small population must have made it difficult for them to expand, considering that they were surrounded by more aggressive ethnic groups such as the Temne. Linguistically they share some similarities with other ethnic groups like the Lokko and the Temne (1965:10). Their youth, especially the boys, are educated by the Gbangbani educational institution which is structurally different from the other educational institutions and lacks the sophistication of the Poro (1965:77-78) Despite this drawback the educational system provides the social, cultural and ethnic identity that aids them through nationhood. The girls are educated through the Bondo educational institution. Despite the difference in name, the methodology and curriculum is not very different from that of the other ethnic groups that educate their women in a similar institution. The similarity in the structure of the institution did not prevent this ethnic group from developing aspects of the curriculum that reflected certain characteristics which are unique to them (1965:78).

Agriculturally, they have concentrated on growing rice which is their staple food, supplemented by sweet potatoes and cassava. As skilled game hunters they enjoy the art of hunting, using such skill to provide animal meat which is "almost their sole source of animal protein" (Little,1965:81-87). Although they lack the artistic sophistication of the Mende, their sculptural production in wood, which is used in rituals associated with their educational institution for men, reflects a simplicity of form (Hart,1990:47). They are also skilled in weaving and leatherwork (Little,1965:98)

Although Islam is practiced by a small section of the population, the majority practice a type of religion based on animism (1965:106-107). Due to their unwillingness to accept western education, not many of them have qualified for employment in the professional, commercial and government institutions. They occupy mostly artisanal and other blue collar jobs which are not comparatively well paid (1965:143). Susu: This ethnic group occupies the Northwestern region of Sierra Leone. Numerically they are about 1.5% of the population. They are neighbors of the Temne and Limba ethnic groups. Their location is partly surrounded by the sea. This factor has helped them to harness the sea for food purposes. Agriculturally they have concentrated on the production of rice and thus have utilized the swamps and marshlands.

Like the other ethnic groups both male and female youths are educated through traditional schools similar to the Temne. Their enthusiasm for this type of education has declined due to their involvement with Islam. Instead, some of their youths spend more time receiving Islamic education and less time receiving traditional education. Because of this religious connection, their capacity and interest to produce art classified as "graven image" by Islam hindered their production of sculpture. Their production in the other areas such as pottery, weaving, tie-dyeing and goldsmithery continues to benefit due to a higher standard of production.

Their system of government, like those with an Islamic connection, have had closer ties with religion. The chief who is the political leader of the community is usually a high ranking Islamic leader. Because of their long connection with Islam, not much is known about their earlier forms of worship. It is believed that this ethnic group first settled in neighboring Guinea followed by a smaller group that later moved to Sierra Leone. The group that settled in Sierra Leone did not expand, but kept cultural ties with their counterpart in Guinea. However, despite their small population, they are culturally unique.

Krio: Krio constitute about 2-3% of Sierra Leone's population of 4.5 million people (Thomas, 1984:28). The majority of the

Krio can be found in the Western Area peninsula of Sierra Leone. Although they live mainly in Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone, many Krio's live in villages and small towns on the coastal reaches of the peninsula. They are employed mainly in the professional, commercial, and government institutions. Some are small farmers, traders and artisans. They are mainly Christians, although a small segment of the population follow Islam (Spitzer, 1974:27).

The Krio emerged as a distinct cultural and ethnic group within Sierra Leone, deriving over two centuries from a diverse mixture of people which included formerly enslaved and free Africans from Britain, United States, Canada, Jamaica and Africa. These people have been grouped into four different communities based on the source of origin and their date of joining the developing Krio namely, the Black Poor, the Nova Scotians, the Maroons of Jamaica and the Recaptives (1974:10-11). The Black Poor were freed Africans who were repatriated to Sierra Leone in 1787. In 1792, they were joined by the "Nova Scotians," another group of Africans who had fought as Black Loyalists on the side of the British during the American War of Independence in 1776. The Maroons were added to the growing Krio population in 1800. The Maroons were enslaved Africans of Asante origin who were repatriated to Sierra Leone via Nova Scotia after rebelling against British rule and plantation slavery in Jamaica. (Wyse, 1989:1-2)

From the 1840's onwards, as the British enforced the ban against the Atlantic Slave Trade, thousands of African captives were rescued from slave ships bound for the Americas and taken to Sierra Leone for resettlement (Fyfe, 1962; Peterson, 1969; Wyse, 1989).

During the 1840's these different groups developed a culture which contained elements of European, Oriental and African cultures. The Church, the Women's Auxiliary Organizations, the Schools and the Freemason Lodges became central to the life of the Christian Krios. For the small Muslim complement of the population, the Mosques and Arabic Schools became the central focus of their community life. However, the African component of their culture and language united both Christian and Muslim Krios. The African ceremonial rites and practices around birth, adolescence, marriage and death, derived mainly from the myriad of African cultures and ethnicities of the "Recaptives" also became an integral part of Krio culture and identity (Wyse, 1989:11-12). So did the secret societies and masquerades like Ojeh, Hunting, Geledih and Gunugu, which were drawn mainly from the Yoruba and Igbos of Nigeria (Wyse, 1989:53). Since the Krio ethnic group needed artifacts for use by their ethnic associations, these were produced by artists from the other ethnic groups such as the Mende. The language spoken by the group, Krio, also represented the diverse cultural and ethnic

origins of the group. The language is composed of an African linguistic structure with words derived from English and many other African languages including Yoruba and Igbo (Wyse, 1985,12-13). Today, this language is no longer exclusive to the Krio ethnic group but has become a lingua franca for Sierra Leone (Hardin, 1987:13).

Mandingo: Numerically this ethnic group is so small that they cannot be located in any specific region. Instead they could be located in pockets of the Eastern region of Sierra Leone. As a group they are well represented in neighboring Guinea. Linguistically they are closer to the Susu who also share strong ethnic connection with their counterpart in Guinea. Their numerical weakness has made it difficult for them to develop as a group. As a means of survival they have fostered closer links with other ethnic groups such as the Mende with whom they have inter-married.

Their connection with Islam has affected their artistic development especially in the field of sculpture. They excel in other fields such as cloth weaving, tie-dying and goldsmithery (Little, 1967:290). Instead of developing an educational system that reflected their way of life, they have opted for an Arabic education which helped them in their knowledge of the Quoran. Because of their close link with the other ethnic groups such as the Mende, some of their youths

are now training as traditional artists in a field like sculpture under the supervision of experienced instructors.

Despite the fact their groups were numerically small, they have been able to set up a rulership within each community based on their tradition. Through this system they have been able to maintain a cultural base that is unique to them. Despite their late acceptance of western education the recipients of such education have started competing for employment in government and commerce. The others who are not qualified for such positions are running small scale businesses successfully.

Sherbro: The Sherbro ethnic group is located southwesterly off the Atlantic ocean. They are neighbors of the Mende with whom they share certain linguistic similarities. They make up about 3% of the population of the country. As one of the early settlers, they inherited a culture that is unique. Their early art forms, especially the nomoli carved from steatite, portrayed expressive and grotesque features of the human figure (Little:1967;223). The original function of these figures is still a mystery to art historians and anthropologists. This and other factors may have contributed to the high artistic value that is placed on these art forms by international art collectors. Their participation in the Poro and Sande educational institutions for their youths in

gender-segregated institutions did not deter them from developing Thoma, a co-educational institution, at which some of their youths are educated collectively. The instructors are both male and female alumni of the institution. Admission is restricted to members of this particular ethnic group. Similar, to the other ethnic groups, this institution is sited away from the town so as to create an environment that is conducive to learning. The decision to educate their children in any of these institutions is a matter for the parents to decide. If there are at least three children in the family they will be allocated one each to the three institutions.

The Shebro's proximity to the sea has aided their expertise as fishermen. They are also farmers competent in swamp land farming (Fyfe,1962:4). Like the Mende their rulers are selected from both sexes. As a prerequisite they must be born into regal families (Kup,1975:91-92).

Lokko: They occupy the northwestern area of Sierra Leone with the Limba and Temne ethnic groups as their neighbors. Numerically they are about 2% of the population. Although they were originally a larger ethnic group, through protracted wars with more powerful groups including the Mende, their size and capability were substantially reduced (Kup, 1975:28-29). Not much is known about their artistic development. The only art form they seem to excell in is blacksmithery. Their

youths are educated in an institution identical to that of the Limba. They have not been either enthusiastic in embracing western education, Christianity or Islam. Instead they practise a form of ancestor worship. As farmers they produce enough food to feed their communities. Like the other ethnic groups located in the northern regions, the appointment of their political head (Paramount Chief) is restricted to men only, who must hail from a ruling family.

Traditional school: An institution in Sierra Leone and other parts of West, Central and East Africa which provides education for post-pubescent boys and girls. The institution is managed by both male and female local elders who were themselves educated at such institutions. Western educators refer to such an institution as a "secret society" because of their location and other factors, such as closed exclusive membership and admission to members of the community.

Traditional education: Education provided for the indigenous peoples of Africa by community based institutions. In many cases, such education predated European presence on the continent. During the colonial period i.e. from the (1830's to the 1960's) Western educators referred to this type of education as "informal" education, because it did not conform to western standards of schooling. Traditional education encompasses the traditional schools and apprenticeships.

Secret society: The term used by Western educators and anthropologists to describe an indigenous educational institution or ethnic association in some areas of Africa including Sierra Leone, which supervises the education and socialization of African youth in preparation for adulthood.

Poro: An indigenous educational institution or ethnic association of the Mende, Temne and other ethnic groups in Sierra Leone and other regions of West Africa. It supervises the education of boys in preparation for adulthood. Such institutions are located on the outskirts of the community, usually in an environment with lush vegetation. Because of the curriculum activities such as agriculture, hunting, physical education, the visual and performing arts, it is necessary that the institutions be located away from the community.

The institution is staffed by a team of dedicated elders who through the years had served the institution and community admirably. In some cases younger members of the community are appointed to serve as instructors because of the important roles they had played in fields such as the arts. Training which lasts for three or more years was once mandatory for all male youth after the age of puberty. This period has been drastically reduced due to western cultural influence. During

their training the students are expected to follow a curriculum that prepares them to serve in various community oriented roles. According to Kenneth Little, the training may include "native law and custom," supported by "mock courts and trials" at which the "roles of their elders" were acted out (1967:121). Other components of the training are farming, road construction, self defence, visual and performing arts. He further explained that although the boys are not taught the art of cooking they were still compelled to prepare their own meals throughout the period of training. In his assessment of the training he argues that such "experiences produce a strong sense of comradeship" (1967:121). Like western educational institutions, graduation from the institution is marked by an elaborate ceremony which is celebrated by graduates and the local community. Because of the way the system of tuition is structured, it is rare for students not to complete the program and graduate. After graduation some of the students embark on an apprenticeship in the visual and performing arts or return to their homes to assist in farming or other various pursuits in which their families are involved (Kenneth Little, 1967:131).

Poro is also a well established educational institution in Liberia, Guinea and the Ivory Coast, enjoying the support of the respective governments.

Gbangbani: An indigenous educational institution of the Limba and Loko ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. It supervises the education of boys in preparation for adulthood (Finnegan, 1965:77-78). Although the functions of this institution are similar to that of the Poro the curriculum is not as elaborate (1965:77). The instructors are all elders who had served the community with distinction. The campus setting and location is similar to the Poro. The students spend a similar period of time just like the Poro to complete the program. The performing arts is a strong component of the curriculum (1965:77). Other subjects covered include basic medical training using local herbs, community defence, and agriculture. The blacksmith, usually a male, performs the central role in the institution's activities and "ritually washes those who have erred against its rule" (Finnegan, 1965:78).

Sande: An indigenous educational institution of the Mende ethnic group in Sierra Leone. It supervises the education of girls in preparation for adulthood. Entry to this institution was mandatory for all girls in a community (Kenneth Little, 1967:126). Before their enrolment these students must have reached the age of puberty. Instruction provided by female elders was planned to equip the students with the requisite background to function in roles that are community oriented. Unlike the Poro, the curriculum for the Sande educational

institution prepared the students to perform initially the role of home-maker and mother. The curriculum also covered farming, house wifery, and the visual and performing arts (1967:127).

The graduation exercise for this institution is community organized with all the women alumni actively participating. The ceremony also alerts the single men in the community and their parents to the realization that some of these ladies are prospective brides (1967:144). The duration of their training was between two to three years. In his summation of the functions of the institution, Little has stated that such institutions compare favorably with the "European type of finishing school" (1967:127). Like Poro, Sande educational institution enjoyed governmental support in neighboring states of Liberia and the Ivory Coast.

Bondo: An indigenous educational institution of the Limba and Temne ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. It supervises the education of girls in preparation for adulthood. The roles and functions are similar to those of Sande indigenous schools of the Mende ethnic group (Finnegan, 1966:78).

Wunde: An indigenous institution of the Mende ethnic group "concerned largely with military training...among the Kpaa Mende," (one of the four sub-groups of the Mende ethnic group)

(Little, 1967:240). Admission to this elite institution does not preclude its students from receiving traditional education from the Poro indigenous school. In fact, admission is based on the student's performance during attendance at Poro indigenous school. Graduates from this institution are held in high esteem in the community due to their military role. Apart from military service this institution organizes spectacular tattoo parades and other nightly performances using lighted fire torches and drumming. (Little: 1967,67)

Thoma: An indigenous educational institution of the Sherbro ethnic group. Unlike the other institutions such as Poro or Bundo, Thoma is co-educational. The administrative and other officials are of both sexes. The training program is educational, social and ritualistic.

Apart from supervising the education of the youths for adulthood it also prepares them for partnership as husband and wife. With this role in view the students are arranged in male and female working pairs, an indication that in normal life both sexes co-exist in pairs.

Njavei: An indigenous institution of the Mende ethnic group "concerned with the cure of certain mental conditions and the propagation of agricultural fertility" (Little, 1967:240). Although admission is only open to both sexes of this ethnic

group those selected for training are usually from a select group of families who are well known for their expertise in the health-care field. The instructors--both male and female graduates of this institution--are distinguished health-care providers within the community. As a rule the institution is normally headed by elderly women who are experts in the health-care field (Little,1967:164). It is believed that their power to heal the sick is bestowed upon them through divine intervention. Because of the high quality of health services that they provide, their services are widely sought after within and beyond the community. As part of the healing process they organize ritual performances led by a masquerade similar to that of the Sande educational institution. (1967:240)

Humui: An indigenous institution of the Mende ethnic group that is responsible for controlling and regulating "sexual conduct" in a community through the administration of "moral laws" (Little, 1967:145-149).

Membership of this institution is restricted to male and female elders of this ethnic group who have served the community with dignity and respect. Like Njaye, the headship of this institution is traditionally assigned to a respectable elderly woman who has helped to enhance the dignity of the institution through positive contribution. (1967:164). Members

of the community found guilty of violating the sexual code of the community are punished by this institution through the imposition of a fine or public disgrace. (Little, 1967:145-149)

Tourist Art: Is produced for sale to tourists at hotels, airports, curio stalls and artist studios in African countries. (Jules-Rosette, 1989:37). In his evaluation of tourist art Nelson Graburn (1976) has noted that:

When the profit motive or the economic competition of poverty override aesthetic standards, satisfying the consumer becomes more important than pleasing the artist. These are often called "tourist" arts or "airport" arts and may bear little relation to the traditional arts of the creator culture or to those of any other group.(6)

The production of art for the tourist market in Sierra Leone may soon get to the stage that is synonymous with Graburn's evaluation. This to a certain extent would depend on whether there is a sudden expansion of the tourist art market. In Sierra Leone tourist art is produced by traditionally trained artists who have served an apprenticeship under an experienced traditionally trained artist (Nunley, 1987:139-141). These artists originally produced artifacts for rituals in their communities. Due to western influence some of the artists, especially the sculptors, are not regularly commissioned to produce work for rituals (Jules-Rosette, 1989:37).

The production of artifacts for the tourist market by these traditionally trained artists has increased due to the demand by art collectors and dealers. In fact, the increase in demand has attracted a large number of youths who would have opted to be trained for technically skilled jobs to now train as visual artists. Although the majority of buyers of tourist art are tourists and expatriates, some Sierra Leonean intellectuals are demonstrating their "Africaness" by collecting the work of traditionally trained Sierra Leonean artists. Similarly, Harry Silver has explained that the "Western educated Ewe" (an ethnic group of Ghana) will "proudly display an Ashanti stool or *akuaba* doll" at home to visitors as a sign of his or her "Africaness" without "appearing overtly provincial" (1979:301). Jules-Rosette has contended that since "art is a surplus commodity, its display among African elite" signifies "affluence and status" (1984:210).

Art Education: The term is used to describe activities which are carried out through a school or similar institution. Such a school or institution uses art as the basis for promoting its activities. In developed countries, the machinery for organizing art education programs has gone through an appreciable period of experimentation while, in the developing countries, the ability to organize such programs has been hampered by many factors such as the imposition of colonial

rule, low funding and unavailability of qualified personnel. Despite the disparity in organizational factors, the basic aim of art education programs everywhere has always been to "create socially responsible artists". This conception is acknowledged by art educators including Barkan, (1955); Munro, (1956); Read, (1956); Eisner, (1991).

Apprenticeship: A scheme for training young people to become proficient in a trade or profession. This scheme was used by both the developed and developing nations to prepare their youth for professions ranging from the arts, commerce and engineering. Explaining some of the peculiarities of earlier apprenticeship schemes in Britain Joan Lane (1996) writes:

Exactly how an apprentice was taught varied considerably even within one occupation, for curricula did not exist; however, there was in all skills a corpus of knowledge to which each master would add his [her] own "tricks" and personal innovations. (76)

In Sierra Leone apprenticeship schemes that are presently organized bear similarities to Lane's explanation. In most regions of Africa the organization of such schemes were planned by the head of a family for the benefit of his or her children and other relatives. In some cases non-relatives with the right aptitude were also trained. In Sierra Leone apprenticeship training schemes were not only beneficial to the trainees but to the instructors who use the trainees to increase their production.

CHART IDENTIFYING INSTITUTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH ETHNIC GROUPS			
Ethnic Group	Institution	Sex	Function
Mende	Poros Sande Wunde Njaye Humui	Male Female Male M\F M\F	Educational Educational Military Training Medical\Agricultural SexualConduct
Temne	Poros Bondo	Male Female	Educational Educational
Limba	Gbangbani Bondo	Male Female	Educational Educational
Loko	Gbangbani Bondo	Male Female	Educational Educational
Sherbro	Poros Sande Thoma	Male Female M\F	Educational Educational Educational
Mandingo	Poros Bondo	Male Female	Educational Educational
Krio	None	M/F	Western-type Education

Fig 1a. Chart identifying institutions associated with ethnic groups.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION, ART AND SOCIETY IN AFRICA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Despite their creative skills and exquisite productions, West African artists and their indigenous training processes still remain grossly undervalued by Western art educators. West African artists are rarely seen by such educators as educated people. The training processes of West African artists are seen as "informal" and belonging to "preliterate cultures." Many western scholars and educators see preliterate cultures as lacking in formal educational structures. This perception raises fundamental questions such as: (covered below) How do we categorize the educational processes of indigenous artists? Who is an educated person? What constitutes "education" and an "educational" institution? What is "formal" education? What is "informal" education? In what ways indigenously trained artists "educated" people?

This chapter uses these questions to critically discuss the nature of indigenous education in West Africa. It looks at the concept of an "educated person" within the West African context, and investigates the different methods used to educate the West African artist.

The Concept of Education and an Educated Person

If we read the works of many African educators, especially those South of the Sahara, the aims of indigenous African education were not radically different from the aims of education elsewhere in the world. According to Jackayo Peter Occitti, the ultimate goal of African education was to produce people who can "live and function positively, usefully and happily" within the society (Ocitti, 1988:348). Indigenous education linked the development of the individual to the maintenance and enhancement of the material and spiritual welfare of the community. It stimulated and nurtured the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional capacities of people, and helped develop their skills and aptitude to enable them to become active, capable and fully functional members of their societies (Ocitti, 1988:349-357).

Abdou Moumouni, a Pan-African educator who has closely studied indigenous African education in the pre-colonial and colonial periods, emphasizes that African education embraced "character-building," the development of "physical aptitudes," and the acquisition of "knowledge and techniques" vital to active participation in all social activities (1968:15). Moumouni indicates that from childhood, the community collectively shared the responsibility of educating the child, carefully and constantly combining physical with "intellectual activity" (Moumouni, 1968:24).

The views of Moumouni and Ocitti are shared by A. Babs Fafunwa who states that the "purpose of African education was clear: functionalism was its main guiding principle. African societies regarded education as a means to an end, not as an end in itself." He asserts that "social responsibility, job orientation, political participation and spiritual and moral values" were stressed. Through engagement with adults, the learners improved their skills in "practical farming, fishing, weaving, cooking, carving, recreational subjects, and intellectual training including the study of local history, legends," and the "environment" (Fafunwa, 1982:9-10). These educational objectives were realized through different curricula with such components as occupational skills development, social, cultural, physical and environmental education (Forde, 1975:70-71).

Having shown the conceptual framework of the intent of African education based on African educators' viewpoints, I will now examine a Western educators' perspective of African education with a view to establishing that there is a close link between the two viewpoints.

James Mulhern, in describing the educational system of the African people, categorized the educational practice into informal and formal systems (1946:24-59). He stated that the purpose of education in these societies was to provide the

child with the skills that are necessary for economic survival within the community. In the process of acquiring education, the child is introduced to religious and social factors which are important to his/her existence (1946:25-35). Informal education, he contends, is implemented chiefly by the parents. Although the curriculum is unwritten, steps are taken to include religious, social and physical education as components of the training (1946:35-45).

Formal education, from Mulhern's perspective, has more relevance for the child because it aids him\her to understand the phenomena of the "mysterious forces and the entire spiritual world" of which he\she is a part (1946:40-41). In assessing the methodology used to achieve their educational aims, Mulhern stated that the "imitative educational procedures, the method of learning to do by actually doing those things demanded by the needs of life itself", played a useful role in the system. He further stated that Plato advocated the utilization of a similar method "among the Greeks for vocational groups," a method which was later adopted by Western educational theorists (1946:56).

An examination of the two viewpoints by an African and a Western educator has confirmed that the African conception of 'education' and an 'educated person shares similar characteristics with education concepts accepted in cultures

of the developed and developing world. These characteristics are: the stimulation of physical, mental, spiritual and emotional development of the individual, which prepares him or her to serve as a functional citizen (Ocitti, 1988:349-357). It is unfortunate that certain factors militate against the Western educators' understanding of the principles that govern the educational systems of African countries.

Concepts and Purposes of Art Education

In his book *Education Through Art*, Herbert Read defined his vision of education as "the cultivation of modes of expression--it is teaching children and adults" to express themselves through the production of "sounds, images, movements, tools and utensils." He concluded that anyone capable of performing any of these tasks to a high standard "is a well educated" person in the arts (1956:1-11). Read's conception prompted me to examine the position of the Sierra Leonean artist educated under the traditional school system.

Thomas Munro envisioned a positive goal for art education, contending that it should be used for "developing constructive, co-operative citizenship." He also perceives the use of art education as a "powerful means of developing a sense of respect and understanding toward persons of other groups " (1956:9-11).

Focusing on the cultural importance of African art, Erny points out that it is "not something added to life as an embellishment." It is readily seen "everywhere-in funeral masks, in small statues" and other artifacts. Through this exposure the child "acquires a very keen aesthetic sense" in the execution of "techniques traditionally practiced by his [her] ethnic group" (1981:98).

Read's assertion that the "aim of education is...the creation of artists--of people efficient in the various modes of expression" (1956:9-11) agrees with Munro's perception and ties in with the goals of art education as practiced through the traditional system in Sierra Leone. The primary aim of the system is to train artists to function successfully within their cultural milieu (Marah, 1989:24-25).

In an examination of arts in cultures, including African cultures, Manuel Barkan has observed that outstanding artists-sculptors, potters and storytellers-lead artistic pursuits in their communities. He added that the others who are not artistically outstanding still performed collaborative roles in the arts (1955:25-26). It is clear from Barkan's observations of African arts that the arts in Africa are not divorced from daily activities. Nyarkoh has confirmed Barkan's observation by contending that:

Art is considered [to be] one of the most important components of the culture of the traditional African society. In fact, traditional arts form an integral part of the citizen's social, religious, and political life. To the African, "art is for life"; it is not merely "for art's sake." (1984:187)

Edmund Burke Feldman maintains that in cultures where there is "no artificial separation between art and life," such societies are regarded as "humanist." He explains the humanistic theory of art education is a doctrine which helps us to study "who and what man is." He contends that such study is useful throughout the individual's life, beginning during the early stage of life and continuing after he or she is capable of earning a living (1970: 174). Margaret Diblasio has identified the "attainment of genuine personhood, empathetic understanding, self-realization, and self-actualization" as humanistic educational values. These words she explains are an "equivalent description of a greater development of human potential or...of becoming more human" (1975:11). In support of these assertions Irving Kaufman (1966) has noted that the "self-actualizing" individual, may not produce "any singularly significant achievements in particular areas of endeavor," yet through his or her interaction with others will contribute positively to an improvement of the society (258). Similarly, Anna Craft (2000) has argued that the introduction of students to the "existing domains of artistic expression is an important part of developing their own creativity and appreciation of others"

(72). These comments concur with the aims of art education in Africa as stated by African educators and researchers.

Herbert Spencer has defined education as preparation for "complete living "(1963:6). According to John Dewey, education is more than a preparation for "complete living," it is "life itself "(1915:12-15). Dewey also points out that the primary function of the school is to train children to live cooperatively and mutually (1915:12-15).

Focusing on the role of the teacher in African traditional education, Pierre Ermy states that the teacher "avoids giving an answer before the child's question has crystallized, and...does not communicate knowledge ahead of experience." He explains that this helps the child to discover knowledge that is salient to his or her development (1981:100). Similarly, Feldman asserts that in Western education "a teacher does not so much motivate him [her] to create art as help the child discover a good reason for creating art." (1970:174-175) There is a link between the two assertions by Ermy and Feldman. In both cases the child is encouraged to create artistically using his or her own intuition and later is guided by the teacher as a form of reinforcement.

Education in Preliterate Africa

From the above discussion, there is no doubt that African societies had modes of education before they had any contact with Europeans and that art was an integral part of the educational process. A. G. Hilliard III explaining the importance of African education has commented that during the "first few years of life, the [African] child was the constant companion of its mother." Depending on her schedule, relatives and older siblings helped with the caring of the child (1992:10). Because of the activities taking place within the environment, the "child was immersed in the day-to-day activity of adults." As a "secure and protected observer", the child along with some limitations, had the "opportunity to explore and to socialize." Through careful support of those within the community the "child gradually learned through observation, imitation, and participation." This community intervention does not discourage the child from developing "its own initiative." Hilliard has intimated further that "through play, participation in the rich community environment of work, ceremonies, proverbs, stories songs and dances...the young child developed in a secure, loving, and purposeful way" (1992:11). "African people regarded the education and social development of their children as central to their group's survival." On the issue of educating the adult the goals he contends were "either spiritual or political leadership" (1992:11).

Marah (1989) in discussing the introduction of Western-type education into the African school system, comments that while the rate of failure (those who complete the traditional education program) was minimal in traditional education, the introduction of Western education with "various grades and types of tests" accelerated the rate of failure (which is about 30% of those who attend western type of schooling) (Marah, 1989:117). Although Marah did not use any Western form of measurement to determine the failure rate in African traditional education, it is assumed that his experiences during his formative years in Sierra Leone would have aided him to arrive at that conclusion. Other researchers such as Watkins (1943); Ocitti (1973) have commented on the minimal failure rate and other aspects of African education.

In evaluating the salient features of African educational systems, Hilliard has concluded that:

African education systems can be viewed today through the study of the ancient African cultures of Kemet (Egypt), Cush (Nubia and Ethiopia), Punt (Somaliland), Kenya, Mali, and many others. All share similar systems of formal and informal education and socialization. These were open enrollment systems built on universal primary and secondary schooling... African people regarded the education and social development of their children as central to their group's survival (1992:11).

Based on Hilliard's explanation, the key problem is how to classify precolonial African education. Should these modes of education be seen only as "informal" and unstructured?

Some African scholars see the identification of education in preliterate African societies as "informal" as a narrow-minded, Eurocentric classification. In his book, *Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* (1978) Arthur Abraham, challenges the division of education into "informal" and "formal" categories, and the classification of African education as "informal." He counters the assumption that formal education was introduced in Sierra Leone by Christian missionaries. Abraham clearly demonstrates that societies in pre-colonial Africa, including Sierra Leone, had a longstanding tradition of structured education organized for boys and girls, usually in separate institutions. The duration of such training for boys organized by the Poro or Gbangbani educational institution was from one to seven years with curricula similar to those of schools in developed countries (1978:24). Through the Sande or Bondo traditional schools, girls were educated under a similar structure, though their training was physically less rigorous than the training for boys (Lemuel Forde, 1975:70-71). Apart from Poro or Sande, the Sherbro ethnic group educated their youths in a co-educational institution called "Thoma". This institution is still the only co-educational institution offering traditional education in Sierra Leone.

Apart from having a coherent structure, traditional African education systems also had clear-cut principles,

objectives and curricula. Babs Fafunwa identifies and outlines seven principal goals which underlay indigenous African educational systems. These goals include the development of the child's latent physical ability, character, intellect, vocational skills, respect for authority, sense of belonging and appreciation of his\her cultural heritage (1982:11-12). These are clearly reflected in the meaning of education for the Limba ethnic group in Sierra Leone. For them, education means "the body of skills, knowledge and techniques required for the practical business of living." Education should also "maintain and preserve the identity" and "culture," and ensure "solidarity and self-reliance." Limba traditional education is closely linked with the "socialization processes of society" as well as to daily life (Mbade Soko Bangura, 1987:51-53).

In support of his argument that the "education and social development" of African children is "central to their group's survival," A. G. Hilliard III (1992) commented that: Serious students of African educational systems only now are beginning to appreciate the profound complexity and powerful consequences of traditional African education. In fact, we now see some of the more important elements of African systems in some of the systems of the Western world. For example, cooperative learning and strategies that support bonding and attachment are very close to African systems (1992:11).

"Secret Societies" or Schools for Life?

How were African educational processes organized? Two interlinked models of organization have been identified by Western authors, "secret societies" and apprenticeship. In studying secret societies, emphasis has been on the exotic rather than the pedagogical functions of the societies. This was evident in the study of "secret societies" done by Captain F.W.Butt-Thompson (1929), a British Government anthropologist. Butt-Thompson investigated about one hundred and fifty African "ethnic associations." In Sierra Leone, he recorded over twenty associations, the most popular being the Poro, the Sande, the Wonde, the Gbangbani, the Bondo and the Humoi. He examined their diverse religious, political and social functions and emphasized their importance to the structure of the various associations in which they were found. Even though it was a pioneering study into African institutions, Butt-Thompson did not really address the pedagogical aspects of these institutions.

Initiation Rituals

For the communities in which they existed, these "secret societies" were much less exotic or restrictive. They served very utilitarian functions, providing vocational, spiritual and moral training, as well as general communal socialization. (Little 1969:200; Forde (1975:70-71); Abraham (1978:24). Finnegan has confirmed that "Limba societies are in general

not secret societies in the sense of having a concealed or limited membership" (1965:77). Membership in these associations was open to the community in which they were established and entrants were required to go through an initiation process (Tamuno & Horton, 1969:36). As explained by Lemuel Forde, this could include a test of wisdom, knowledge, and skill, as well as instruction in the behaviour and duties associated with membership (1975:68). Frequently, it included a rite of passage at which the prospective student-initiate vowed loyalty to the institution (Forde, 1975:68).

On the basis of Forde's work I will briefly discuss the stages of a Poro traditional school initiation ceremony. This all male institution generally admits their students at the age of fourteen years or older. Such a ceremony is conducted in the institution's campus located away from the town. As explained by Kenneth Little, senior officials of the institution inaugurate the session by "offering a sacrifice" to obtain the goodwill of the "(Poro spirits)". A gift is then offered to the Paramount Chief seeking his or her "approval and patronage" for the session (1969:118). After receiving the approval from the Paramount Chief, the senior officials organize a staff meeting at a special location in the centre of town. The end of the meeting is punctuated by an official proclamation from the marshal that "we will dance

tonight" (1969:118). The session commences with the institution's masquerader leading the dancing procession. During the parade, the prospective students are collected from their homes by the parade marshals and taken to the campus where the initiation and training takes place (1969:118-119). On arrival the students are met at the entrance of the institution by senior officials. They are then individually asked a set of questions for which the expected reply is "always yes". An example of such a question, explains Little, is, "Could you carry water in a basket?" On completion of that test the students are allowed into the school's reception area. Their admittance is heralded by drumming and shouting from officials and alumni. To confirm the admission of the students, the treasurer demands their "initiation fee" which is about 5 US Dollars (1969:119).

As a condition for the initiation to proceed every boy admitted must be already circumcised. Those who do not meet this requirement are circumcised on the spot by qualified officials of the institution. Despite this requirement, Little contends that "circumcision plays no part in the initiation rite" (1967:119). Once the circumcision requirement is met the initiates are "stripped naked" by officials who administer the "marks of membership" on their backs with a metal hook or razor. (1969:119-120)

After this initial but important phase of their program the initiates settles down to the theoretical and practical aspects of the training under the supervision of their instructors (1969: 120). As confirmed by Little, the curriculum of the Poro educational institution encompasses an array of subjects including native law and customs, farming operations, animal trapping, bridge building and road construction. On the social side they are instructed in drumming, singing and acrobatics. Specialists in weaving, basketry, netmaking and sculpting organize art courses for them (1969:120). Those who excel in these art related courses are given the opportunity to receive further training through an apprenticeship, when they complete the traditional school training. Part of the function of traditional school training explained by Little is to expose the students to hardship without them complaining. Even though boys are not usually taught at home to cook by their mothers-because it is traditionally a function for women-during this period of their training they are expected to prepare their own meals even though the authorities are aware that the boys are not capable of performing such tasks. They are also forced to sleep on beds without mattress, and use wet "covering cloths" and remain outdoors when it rains (1967:120).

At the completion of the training program with a likely success rate of 100%, a graduation ceremony with feasting,

drumming and dancing is organized by the school in collaboration with the community to celebrate the students transition into manhood and readiness to be as prospective candidates for high office in the community (1967:120). This period away from parental care, notes Little, marks a "transition from boyhood to manhood, and as a result of the experience he emerges a fully fledged member" of his community (1967:120).

In assessing the value of initiation rites and traditional education in the context of Sierra Leone Little has noted that:

the training...is symbolical as well as practical. It inculcates him [her] with the deeper implications as well as the rules of the part he [she] has to play as a man [woman]. It aims at teaching him [her] self-discipline, and to rely on himself [herself]. He [she] learns how to work co-operatively and to take orders from others. (1967:120).

Little also perceives such initiation ceremonies as a symbolic change of status and rebirth (1967:120-121). Indeed, Erny suggests that "life's mysteries, benevolent powers, eloquency, secret language, ritualism," and the "rites of passage," prepares the student to receive knowledge, and to "understand the significance of the passage from the profane world to...the initiated" (Erny, 1981:142-143). This is important in many preliterate African communities because, as it was in medieval Europe, there was very little distinction

between the secular and the sacred. Thus, apart from affirming institutional and communal loyalty, the initiation was also important for the transmission of esoteric social knowledge and cultural identity (Little, 1967:125).

The student-initiate learned and participated in the ritual functions of the institutions, including the placating of revered spiritual beings on behalf of the community. These spiritual beings could be ancestors or a supernatural being who, at some point in the history of the community, were believed to have performed some miracle which enhanced reality. Representation of these revered spiritual beings was usually in the form of a masked dancer performing at graduation ceremonies for students or at festivals organized on behalf of the community to commemorate specific events (Abraham, 1978:25-26).

The structure of the curricula and the teaching instructors were unknown to the uninitiated, but they were well-known to the student-initiates. Abraham explains that the planned curriculum for boys encompassed basic cultural norms, local history, acrobatics, hunting and the arts. For girls the emphasis was on beauty culture, motherhood and child welfare, home economics and the arts, (which was different from the curriculum for boys). (Abraham, 1978:25). Jakayo Peter Ocitti intimated that the curriculum "was the whole

culture--the whole life of a society. Life was education and education was life, as sanctioned by society," (Ocitti, 1988:348-349). For its teaching personnel, the "secret societies" drew from hereditary officials, elders, masked spirits and other experts in the society. Through practical training exercises and rituals, these officials transmitted the different aspects of communal knowledge and life-skills to the student-initiate. The instructors, all experienced in their areas of specialization, ensured that by the completion of their training students were capable of performing the tasks required of them (Abraham, 1978:25).

Many "secret societies" or traditional schools organized for the purpose of educating youths within the community were located away from the community's populated areas. Most observers, especially those from the developed countries who could not locate any recognizable school buildings, referred to indigenous societies as "bush schools," (Little, 1943:666-675) because they were located away from the centre of town. The use of "bush" was partly to impress and heighten the esoteric value of the education. A more practical consideration, however, was the very environment where preliterate communities were located. Many were located in rural areas. Many of the skills imparted to the initiates in these institutions related to the harnessing of the environment for economic or social utilization, such as

agricultural development. For such reasons it was inevitable that the institution was appropriately sited.

As Fafunwa observed, the same Western educators who referred to indigenous educational institutions as "bush schools", were those talking "about universities without walls, schools without classes, and subject without grades" in the 1970's and 1980's (Fafunwa, 1982:10). This suggests that the Western educational evaluator was not capable of noting important similarities between Western and African schools. In "evaluating any educational system," as Fafunwa maintained, the extent to which a particular institution is meeting the needs of the society must be considered; the institution should not be judged by a "foreign yardstick" (Fafunwa, 1982:11).

The Atelier of the Artist: Western and African Art Educators Agree on the Excellence of this Educational Institution

Butt-Thompson (1929); Sawyerr (1975) and Abraham (1978); affirmed that a vital component of the curricula of ethnic associations is linked with training in the arts. d'Azevedo (1973), Vansina (1984), and Nunley (1987) categorized the methodology used by these institutions as the "atelier" or apprenticeship system. Discussing the methodologies used in various cultures in artistic training James K. Feibleman stated that the best art school was still the "atelier" of the

artist, and the best system, the apprentice system (1968:187). An advantage of the "atelier" system noted by Fiebleman was that the master could ensure that the apprentice would be trained purposely to serve the community with "dignity and respect" (1968:187). The African "artist is...a well adjusted individual who understands his [her] society and works in harmony with it" Nunley noted (1987:139).

Moumouni noted as well that learning through apprenticeship was similarly patterned in most regions of Africa (1968:27). Depending on the occupation, it was not unusual for young married men to continue serving their apprenticeships after marriage, in the hope of perfecting their skills for a lucrative career (1968:27). Neperud noted that in some regions of West Africa, "the financial returns of the carver" were so lucrative that it was unthinkable for the apprentice to fail during the training (1969:17).

Reviewing the importance of vocational training in African traditional education, Brown and Hiskett observed that "aspects of more formal education were provided by apprenticeship schemes which have much in common with the technician's apprenticeship concept" of the European medieval guilds (1975:23). Callaway (1964) explained that apprenticeship schemes in Africa not only prepared youths for artistic and other offices in the community, but that such

schemes were also being carried over "into the modern sector of the community" (1964:20). In evaluating indigenous African education, Ocitti explained that "initiation into the social world-the socio-moral domain" was not the only concern of such education. Of equal importance was "initiation into the world of work-the techno-occupational domain" which are connected with "the acquisition of practical survival skills" and are developed through organized apprenticeship programs (1988:350-351).

Sierra Leonean artists are trained in traditional schools using the apprentice system, which Callaway described as an educational process used by indigenous groups in Africa to disseminate their cultural heritage throughout generations (1964:22). The initial training was undertaken when the student entered the school after puberty. Selection was based on the student's aptitude. For some artistic activities, the period of training was lengthy and dedication was highly demanded of the student. For others, training could be completed within a short time.

An Example of the Atelier System

Using sculpture as an example of an artistic activity that needs a long training period, I will explain the apprenticeship process. It is traditionally a profession for men only. Jules-Rosette has commented that "prototypical

distinctions between men's and women's activities and social domains emerge boldly through African art" (1984:81). The selection of students is done through observation, screening and a knowledge of the student's family background. If the student comes from a family of sculptors, there is a strong likelihood that he too will become a sculptor; as were two respondents in this study, Sorie Koroma and Alpha Kargbo.

A student accepted for training will become a part of the instructor's family and will be expected to help with domestic chores whenever requested. In return for his services, he is provided with free room and board in the instructor's home. According to d'Azevedo, the student is expected to fulfil the role of child and is the personal property of his new "owner or protector" (1973:289).

During the initial training period the student will observe the instructors's actions and ask questions. The next stage entails gaining knowledge about the procurement and preparation of wood and other raw materials. When the instructor is satisfied that the student is ready to start relating to materials, he is given his own set of sculpting tools. They could either be bought by the student or forged by the student at the local blacksmith's shop.

According to John Messenger who undertook a study of the

training of artists in Nigeria, "the teaching process involves constant interplay between the instructor and apprentice, the former giving verbal and manipulative direction and making criticism, and the latter imitating and posing queries" (1973:104-105).

Once the apprentice develops sufficient skills, he is allowed to produce simple objects or work on the initial stages of a more complex object which will be completed by the instructor. The apprentice is not paid for his contribution or for other pieces that he may produce on his own, which might be sold by the instructor with little or no retouching (1973:104-105).

When the instructor is satisfied that the apprentice is competent to work on his own, he is released from his apprenticeship status. The instructor introduces the new sculptor to some of his patrons in the hope that they will commission him. Such support, argue Perain and Smith, is vital to letting the new artist be "made aware of the society's demand for art" (1998:13). Considering the prospects ahead, it is rare for the apprentice not to complete his training successfully (Messenger, 1973:104-105). Emphasizing the importance of apprenticeship in the arts, Herbert Read posited that "art must be practiced to be appreciated, and must be taught in intimate apprenticeship" (1966:36).

Ashwin said in a recent publication that the function of "the artist as teacher is as old as art itself," but that the nature and structure connected to the "role has changed historically... creating many variations in the forms of interaction between artist and art student" (1994:39).

From his study of traditionally trained sculptors in Freetown, Sierra Leone, Nunley concluded that the training which the instructors offered their apprentices, adequately prepared apprentices to function within the community. (1987:139-140).

Similar claims had been made by David Ames (1973) in a study of Hausa musicians in Nigeria, and John Messenger (1973) who studied sculptors in the Anang society of Nigeria. An examination of both reports revealed a nurturing of the apprentices by their instructors who in most cases are their fathers (1973:104-153). Because of parental connection, I hypothesize that as instructors these artists give a high priority to caring so that their children would enjoy the same privileges that they had enjoyed during their own apprenticeships. Even in the rare instances where the trainees were not tutored by their fathers, they would still be nurtured because they were regarded by the instructors as adopted children (d'Azevedo, 1973:289). Peter Etzkorn (1973) has observed that:

The person-to-person relationship in an artistic subculture (think, for instance, of Bohemian art in the West, i.e., Kaplan's folksingers) is in many ways analogous to primary relations within the apprentice situation of African peoples. Youngsters are apprenticed to some master craftsman; [who could be a parent] they work along with him [her] until they reach a certain level of skill, then they may execute orders that were initially given to the master craftsman and yet get no credit for their performance. Finally, after an extended period of involvement with a master craftsman, they may be permitted to experiment on their own. Thus, there is a long period of personal involvement with some expert. In this socialization process they acquire traditional modes of expression and learn artistic technical skills as well as social skills appropriate to the execution of the role artist....In other words, the artist has acquired the tribal [ethnic] vocabulary of artistic expression, a specific lexicon and syntax, and he [she] has acquired proper aesthetic judgements for combining these artistic elements so that the semantics of his [her] art are communicable to his [her] potential audiences. (1973:374)

Explaining the methodology used to select apprentices for training as sculptors, Messenger stated that the art was usually "passed on from father to son or sons in a family," although the possibility existed for a youth without family ties to "attach himself as an apprentice to an artisan and learn the craft" (1973:104). Furthermore, in cases where a father selected more than one of his offsprings for training as a sculptor, it was because he wanted to preserve "the family tradition on the basis of personal affection, a predilection or marked talent for carving displayed by the youth, or supernatural designation" (1973:104). Jacqueline Chanda observed, as well, that "African artists were trained

and...not naive or ignorant." She also stated that training was through an apprenticeship organized by parents or relatives to a "high level of organization and continuation" (1992:61).

Since traditional schools are initially responsible for identifying students for artistic training/apprenticeship, it is not usual for students who have not completed traditional school education to serve an apprenticeship. In cases where a group of apprentices are training under the same instructor, the same rules would apply. In fact, my field work interview results indicated that some instructors at a certain point of their careers had a large number of apprentices receiving training as a group.

I perceive the phenomenon of nurturing as an important aspect of the training offered to students in traditional schools in Africa. During my experience in Western art schools, I was not privileged to enjoy such nurturing. If my interviews with respondents bring out the fact that nurturing makes them more concerned and involved with their community, it might be worthwhile to propose and evaluate nurturing as part of the training plan for artists in Sierra Leone and other parts of Africa.

The Artist in the Community

In Africa, the role of the artist is not the same in all settings (Chanda, 1992:61). In larger and well-established communities, the artist is a full-time professional who earns a living through art; while in smaller localities, the artist is usually involved in other income-earning activities such as farming, cattle rearing, or divining (Perani & Smith, 1998:13). In some cultures, artists do not earn a living producing art, nor do they enjoy "prestige or authority" as a result of their artistic talent. In some cases artists inherit their position through family ties, while in the case of others, there is no such link (Little, 1969:69; Perani & Smith, 1998:13).

Laude categorized the African artist into two distinct groups. In the first group, the artist was talented and admired but was also a "non-conformist," he was "respected" but scorned by the community because he [she] lacked an "interest in riches and prestige." The artist in the second group enjoyed "certain privileges and honors" and was well respected and regarded as a "royal officer" (1966:121).

A closer examination of the list of artists that I interviewed during my field work in Sierra Leone would indicate that they fit within the second group as described by Laude. John W. Nunley in his book, *Moving with the face of*

the devil-Art and politics in urban West Africa--which he researched in Sierra Leone--identifies Mustapha Kargbo a sculptor who fits into the "non-conformist" group. According to Nunley, Mustapha is well known for producing masks for rituals and other household artifacts "decorated with traditional motifs and innovative forms" which he had developed over a period of time. As a routine, he starts his "working day" by having a "couple of marijuana sticks and one or two small cups of locally distilled gin." With the effect of the drugs in his system "he starts work, usually making masks." Depending on the type of mask he is working on he could have it completed in a day, for which he is paid the equivalent of 20 US Dollars, (presently worth more due to an appreciation of the currency's value) most of which he will use to fuel his drug habit (1987:142-143).

Despite his being "unstable and never predictable", Nunley assesses Mustapha Kargbo as knowledgeable about the intricacies of sculpting and "secret societies" rituals. "He is sensitive to the spiritual realm but can clearly and analytically explain how his creations are constructed" (1987:143). Nunley further explains that although Mustapha is capable of communicating "accurate and useful information", it is not uncommon for him to lapse "into a non-communicative state, muttering to himself." His incapacitation through the effect of drugs and alcohol causes "considerable hardship and

physical affliction." Despite his monthly earning of at least the equivalent of 200 US dollars (presently worth more due to an appreciation of the currency's value)--which is far above the average wage for blue collar workers in Sierra Leone--he fails to respond to the various financial needs of his wife and six children (1987:143-145).

In the second group I have identified Haja Tejan-Kamara, who is a distinguished traditionally-trained Sierra Leonean textile artist. Her work is well known in Sierra Leone, the regions of West Africa, Europe and North America. She has exhibited in Sierra Leone, Britain and North America. As an art instructor she has tutored a large number of local students and some from the developed countries who are now successful textiles artists. She enjoys a higher standard of living as compared to some professionals, such as university instructors in Sierra Leone. Despite her achievement Hajah Tejan-Kamara is modest and unassuming.

Ronald Neperud, in summarizing the status of the African artist, explained that he or she "generally enjoyed a high reputation" within the ethnic group. Because of the artist's contribution to the functioning of the society his (her) financial needs are met by the society. Regarding the quality of training, Neperud believed that the training provided for the artist produced a comparatively impressive level of

achievement. (1969:17-21) As confirmed by Laude, "Africa produces artists in the full sense of the word", who are trained "according to specific rules of an aesthetic as well as a social order" (1966:91).

In Sierra Leone the majority of artists are part-timers who combine their artistic activities with other endeavors such as farming. (1987:55) Due to the now universal acceptance of Western values (even with regard to education), the role of the Sierra Leonean artist is changing. Some Sierra Leonean artists, especially sculptors and potters, have gone from producing a reduced number of artifacts for rituals to producing non-functional art objects. This is because some of the rituals that demanded these artifacts are no longer performed due to factors like the acceptance of western values including education and in some cases through the conversion to Christianity and Islam of the indigenous peoples. Because of their new role and demand for their work, many artists are now working full-time to satisfy Western art dealers and an elite group of Sierra Leonean art collectors, some of whom have been educated in the developed countries. It is also noticeable that more male and female Sierra Leoneans are receiving traditional school training through an apprenticeship in the visual arts. Some of those who, after traditional schooling, had opted to receive western education because their parents and relatives felt it was to their

advantage, are now reverting to serving apprenticeships in the visual arts. The reason for this trend is due to employment prospects for such artists.

The production of tourist art by artists in the regions of Africa including Sierra Leone has prompted Jules-Rosette to explain that such production should not be evaluated as degrading due to the fact that, like other cultures of the developed world who had benefitted from various stages of economic and social development, the peoples in some regions of Africa are likewise going through a phase in their artistic expression. In fact, she sees this transition as advantageous to the artists who can now earn a decent standard of living producing art that is now appreciated locally and internationally (1984:198-199).

This chapter contends that pre-colonial and contemporary African societies, including Sierra Leone, did have recognizable educational processes throughout their history. It also points out that educated persons in those societies were those who had been socialized and trained through indigenous institutions and had attained the necessary skills and ability to function as full members of their communities.

CHAPTER III
HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS
IN SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

Sierra Leone, like other states in West Africa, consists of a number of ethnic groups with distinctive cultural and linguistic backgrounds. There are about thirteen different ethnic groups in the country, the largest of which are the Mende and Temne each of which account for about 30 to 35% of the estimated Sierra Leonean population of 4.5 million (Thomas, 1984:28). The others include Limba, Loko, Kuranko, Bullom, Sherbro, Mandingo, Sosos and Krio and number of fewer people. (see Map). This chapter (1) focuses on the historical development of indigenous educational institutions in Sierra Leone before and during the colonial period. (2) It looks at the evolution and function of different indigenous educational institutions and how they contributed to the training and socialization of artists. (3) It also discusses how colonialism created alternate educational systems which ultimately led to the devaluation of pre-existing institutions. This chapter and the study as a whole limit themselves to institutions and artists of the Mende, Sherbro, Temne, Limba and Susu ethnic groups.

Early Development

The precise origins of the various ethnic groups in Sierra Leone are difficult to trace. However, historians such as Walter Rodney (1970) and Alexander Peter Kup (1975) and anthropologists Northcote Thomas (1919, 1920) and Captain F. W. Butt-Thompson (1929) have indicated that the Limba, Bullom, and Sherbro peoples were the earliest inhabitants of the country. It is believed that the Limbas arrived in the region by the 7th century, if not earlier (Rodney, 1970:9-10), and that the Bullom and Sherbro people followed much later. Historians have suggested that the Bulloms and Sherbros were instrumental in developing some of the earliest "secret societies" or educational institutions, like Poro and Sande, which were later adopted by other ethnic groups that came to settle in Sierra Leone (Butt-Thompson, 1927:17-25; Rodney, 1970:67). These ethnic groups may have also started creating the art pieces known as nomoli or pomdo, small carved steatite (stone) figures whose creators and functions still baffle historians, archaeologists and ethnographers today (Rodney, (1970:63); Kup, (1975:39); Lamp, (1990:48-59,103).

The Temnes, Lokos, and Sosos moved into the Sierra Leone area between the 13th and 15th centuries and such migrations sometimes sparked conflicts between the new arrivals with the older settlers. The Temne and Soso migrated southwards from the Futa Jallon area to the northern portion of Sierra Leone

(Little, 1967:25-28). By the 18th century, Portuguese and other European visitors to the Sierra Leonean coast indicated that the Temne occupied a dominant political and economic position in the region (Fyfe, 1964:2-3). The Mendes, on the other hand, arrived in Sierra Leone around the 15th and 16th century as part of a wider Mande movement, following the disintegration of the great Sahelian Empire of Mali. They moved from the area of Liberia to occupy the eastern and southern parts of present day Sierra Leone (Rodney, 1970:62-67). Like the Temne, these newcomers displaced earlier settlers such as the Sherbro and Bulloms and eventually dominated the eastern and southern regions of Sierra Leone both demographically and linguistically, (Rodney, 1970:50-55). Already adept at developing strong "secret societies" like the Simo society, the Mende adopted the male Poro and female Sande societies (Little, 1967:240-251).

Apart from being the largest group, the Mende were also the most artistically productive and innovative. Mende craftsmen and craftswomen provided a whole array of artistic products for ritual, commercial and everyday use (Little, 1967:69). Kenneth Little has reported that the Mende culture was shared extensively by "peoples living in a wide region around them". (1967:7).

The Temnes and Mendes may have dominated the landscape

linguistically and demographically, but they were themselves greatly influenced by the political, social, and cultural institutions of the earlier settlers (1967:25-27). The Temnes adopted some of the political titles of Bullom and Sherbro rulers and even of the later Mande arrivals (Wyllie, 1977: 8-9). Both the Temnes and Mendes copied some of the institutional arrangements of Bullom and Sherbro associations--the Poro and Sande (called Bundo by the Temnes). As an educational institution, the Poro was intended to provide a viable form of education for boys, and the Sherbros, Bulloms, Mendes, Temnes and Kissis adopted it for the education of their boys (Migeod, 1926:232; Little, 1967:243).

Sande, the female organization, was not as powerful nationally as the Poro but it had similar aims. It provided formal education for girls who had reached the age of puberty and were preparing to serve their community in various capacities which included wifhood and motherhood (Rodney, 1970:66-67). Although the Sande institution was known by different names among various peoples--Bundo by the Temnes, Beri by the Vais, and Biriye by the Kurankos--its basic aim was to serve as an educational institution and a national council for women of the various ethnic groups (Migeod, 1926:232).

In his evaluation of the Sande institution, Little noted

some similarity between the institution and the 'finishing school' in Europe, originally patronized by the daughters of the gentry (1967:126).

Unlike ethnic groups who educated their youths through the well established institutions of Poro for men, the Limba developed their own educational institution known as "Gbangbani". The Gbangbani institution performed a similar educational function as the Poro, but without the sophistication as associated with the latter. In the opinion of Ruth Finnegan, the "Gbangbani society for men" is secret only in the sense that a member of the opposite sex, or a child who is not yet initiated, may not be able to perform some of the rituals or dances (1965:77). As for Limba women, they were educated through the Mende oriented Sande institution which they called Bundo (Finnegan, 1965:77-78).

Apart from their educational functions, the Poro, and Sande institutions, as well as their other variations were used for political and legal mediation, law and order, youth socialization and training among the sexes and ethnic groups. Migeod, (1970:232-258); Hammond, (1971:193-197). Other institutions promoted by the Mende are the "Njaye", concerned with the cure of mental conditions and the propagation of agricultural fertility, the "Humui" mandated to regulate the sexual conduct of the community and the "Wunde, concerned

largely with military training..."(Little, 1967:240).

Institution and Vocational Education Before Colonization

Pre-colonial education in Sierra Leone was fashioned around the different economic, political and social roles people were expected to play, and took into account the different processes and institutions available in the societies. The various kingdoms of Sierra Leone had agrarian economies based on the production of food for subsistence and for local and long-distance trade (Rodney, 1970:204-207). The majority of the population were farmers and most of the others were artisans and traders. The vast majority of the population were therefore trained, socialized, and oriented to pick up agricultural skills (Winterbottom, 1969:46-47). Training as a farmer began at an early age with the learning and performance of simple farming tasks essential to raising a good crop: clearing the bush, sowing, tending the crops, and harvesting, (Paul Richards, 1985:68). Ancilliary skills like basket weaving and house construction were also picked up or, in some cases, taught (Winterbottom, 1969:90-97). In coastal communities where fishing complemented agriculture, other essential skills such as sea-faring, net-casting, and fishing were passed on to successive generations. Since the family was a major unit of production, tutorship for such vocations was usually within the family structure, but there were also wider communal networks (Little, 1967:69).

Nearly all the societies in precolonial Sierra Leone achieved a high level of skill and some developed complex and systematic divisions of labour. However, some vocations, especially artisanal vocations, required more specialized training. Thus carvers, potters, weavers, smiths and boat-builders received training which in organization and structure differed from the training of farmers and fishermen. Before the colonization of Sierra Leone these artisans received training mainly through apprenticeships to master-artisans as well as within different "ethnic associations" and specialized institutions (1967:69). Since their works were devoted to both utilitarian and ritual purposes, their education included ritual aspects that were provided through institutions like the Poro and Sande (1967:120-121).

Poro and Sande (or Bundo) not only served as institutional frameworks for the "purification" or "accreditation" of master craftsmen and women, it also served as a process of "accreditation" for adulthood in the different communities (Perani & Smith, 1998: 87-91). Not only artisans, in fact, every person had to go through these gender segregated institutions to be accepted as an adult in the society or to play any public, social, or political role. As Frederick Migeod (1926) indicated, during the Mende rising in the Bumpé Chiefdom against British colonialism in 1899, "Poro" was a "secret national council and a school for the youth of

the ethnic group," (1926:232-234). In highlighting the functional importance of "Poro", Rodney referred to it as an institution of advanced learning, saying that "the Poro University" was situated just beyond Cape Mount in the sixteenth century. The institution offered a four year program in subjects comparable to modern western academic disciplines of political science, sociology, and anthropology (Rodney, 1970:68-69).

It was falsely assumed by educators in the developed world that education was brought to Sierra Leone by her colonizers. However, this assumption has since been discarded as a result of research done by John Matthews (1788), Frederick Migeod (1926), Christopher Fyfe (1962, 1964), R.H.Finnegan (1965), Walter Rodney (1970), and A.P.Kup (1975). Each of these researchers advanced convincing arguments to the effect that education similar to what existed in the developed countries also existed in Sierra Leone much earlier than colonization. Although a number of educational institutions were highlighted by these researchers, the most prominent was the Poro which was regarded as the mainstay of the Mende and Temne ethnic groups.

A sometimes overlooked advantage of traditional education organized in most parts of Sierra Leone before colonization was its uniformity. Despite the fact that there was a

cultural barrier due to language differences, students who received such education, no matter where the education was received, were able to participate in rituals and other ceremonies connected with their education on the sole condition that they were of the same gender (Bellman, 1984:13-16).

Education During Colonization, 1787-1960

Indigenous pre-colonial education came under pressure from two different influences. The first was Islam which was antagonistic to the Poro society/educational institution and its rituals. However, it should be pointed out that Islam was less hostile and more tolerant of Sande and Bundo since the ritual of female circumcision central to the society was tolerated and even practiced within Islam. The second influence came from European Christianity which included cultural penetration and colonization of the region. Christianity was hostile to both Poro and Sande, and also toward many of the indigenous institutions run by the different ethnic groups in Sierra Leone.

Islam filtered into the Sierra Leone hinterland from the area of present day Guinea from 18th century onwards (Berman, 1975:94-96). It was spread through itinerant traders, missionaries, and warriors who brought with them new religious beliefs, as well as new political and cultural ideas (Fyfe,

1964:3-4). In many areas of northern Sierra Leone, Islam effectively displaced Poro as a viable educational and cultural institution among the Temne. By the end of the 19th century, northern Temne chiefdoms had turned to Islam and totally abandoned Poro. However many of the southern Temne chiefdoms in Sierra Leone continued to cling to Poro for educational and cultural functions. Similarly, many Mende Chiefdoms, despite their conversion to Islam, continued to cling to Poro and other pre-Islamic institutions and belief systems. The influence of Islam may have played a significant role in the decline of representational art in the northern Temne chiefdoms considering that Islam appears to frown on such forms of art.

Christian and European cultural penetration came mainly through the foundation of a settlement on the Sierra Leone coastal peninsula for freed and repatriated Africans from the United Kingdom, North America and the Caribbean in 1787 (Akintola Wyse, 1989:1). The land for the settlement was leased from Temne chiefs. In 1808, the British Crown took over the settlement. The dreams of developing the settlement as a viable agricultural economy failed. In order to survive, the new settlers resorted to trading with merchants who travelled along the coast in ships. That trade continued to grow, amidst difficulties, with the British abolition of the slave trade and its efforts to police the Atlantic Ocean.

European slave ships captured on the Atlantic Ocean were made to empty their human cargo and goods in Freetown, the capital of the new settlement. Between the 1820's and 1880's, the population and settlements of the Freetown colony grew rapidly and, in time, these new arrivals became known as Krio (Wyse, 1989:2).

The relationship between the new settlers and the older inhabitants was tenuous. Efforts to forge a steady and stable relationship between peoples of the Colony and those of the hinterland stumbled until about 1876 (Kenneth Little, 1969:43). Apart from communication difficulties, the other main concern of the new settlers was getting to know the older inhabitants whose languages and cultural systems were so unfamiliar to them. Their efforts were also frustrated because the older inhabitants were very suspicious of the newcomers whose physical features were different from their own.

The new colonists in Sierra Leone stood out for their dedication to Christianity, commerce, and the extension of British cultural influence to the hinterland and the rest of West Africa in the hope of consolidating their position (Kup, 1975:156-158). Krio traders and missionaries from the small coastal Krio population traveled to the Sierra Leone hinterland to convert peoples of the Mende, Temne, Loko and

other ethnic groups to Christianity (Fyfe, 1974:50). The Western religious and cultural ethos of the Krios were reflected in the new religious and educational institutions they created. Virtually every community in the settlement had a school and a church by the end of the 19th century. The Church Mission Society (C.M.S.) Grammar School (1845), The Methodist Boys High School, and The West African Methodist Collegiate School were all built to educate Krio boys, girls and adults. The Annie Walsh Memorial School for girls was built in 1849 and the Methodist Girls High School in 1880. Fourah Bay College, a higher educational institute, was founded in 1827, with the purpose of training priests and teachers (Wyse, 1989:5).

These institutions were initially created to cater to the needs of the Krio population which they did for most of the 19th century. However, in time they also began to cater to people from outside the Freetown colony (Harrell-Bond, Howard, and Skinner, 1978: 179). With the spread of British colonialism to the Sierra Leone hinterland, these Western educational and religious institutions provided an alternative to pre-existing traditional educational institutions. In fact, colonialism redefined the meaning and scope of success, the older indigenous institutions could not adequately prepare boys and girls for participation and success in the new world that was being shaped by colonialism.

One of the by-products of colonization in Sierra Leone was the introduction of community-based services by the Colonial masters as a strategy to convert a cross section of their new subjects from peasantry to a western-oriented way of life. It should not be forgotten that earlier on, the ancestors of these people were serving as slaves in other locations in the British Empire. These services that were introduced had to be manned by qualified staff who had received a western-type education. Those employed to staff the services were paid wages, which served as an incentive to attract them to receive a western education. The system of communication in western education was through the English language which the students had to learn. They also had to learn other subjects that were taught in classrooms and in fact, the classroom setup was new to the students. Because the program was usually conducted in headquarter towns, the students were compelled to move into an environment that was new to them and in some cases to live with relatives who had earlier settled in these new environments. The most disturbing factor was that this type of education somehow gave the impression to the students that they were intellectually superior to their parents and relatives who had not received such education. Because of this impression, some of them found it uncomfortable to return home to an environment which lacked the amenities which were available in the new environment. These and other factors drained off the

population of some communities in the interim to the point of disintegration (Fyfe, 1964:52).

Until the end of the 19th century, Krio and "British territorial expansion from the original area of settlement was gradual but slow" (Little, 1969:44). Through treaties and wars, British jurisdiction extended slowly and steadily from the peninsula to the hinterland. Missionaries and teachers were also sent to the Sierra Leone hinterland and the West African Coast to convert the different groups to Christianity and introduce them to the "blessings" of Western civilization. Not all groups were receptive to the new religious and cultural influences, or to their harmful effects on indigenous institutions. As many missionary efforts in northern Sierra Leone failed to produce meaningful results, more effort was concentrated in the southern and eastern regions of the hinterland where the British were able to establish viable church missions.

Diedrich Westermann commented that "no missionary...[goes] to Africa to study languages, nor is it his [her] chief aim to educate natives. His [her] aim is to evangelize the African and make him [her] Christian" (1937:163). This is an indication of the type of Christianity propagated by the colonialists.

In the last two decades of the 19th century, the process of colonial expansion gained speed with the European scramble for territory in Africa. The British rapidly declared a protectorate over the Sierra Leone hinterland in 1896, effectively assuming jurisdiction over the Mende, Temne and other ethnic groups in Sierra Leone. This triggered a major revolt from the Mendes and Temnes. The Mende Revolt of 1896 was directed at British and Krio officials and missionaries, as well as all traces of European culture and civilization in the country (Christopher Fyfe, 1964:14,271-277). The Temne rebellion, led by Bai Bureh, was less openly culturally driven (Fyfe, 1964:270-271). The Temne spared European and Krio missionaries. Both rebellions were effectively suppressed by the end of 1898, so colonial rule and the spread of European culture became unavoidable for people in the hinterland (1964:271).

The British used three vehicles in their cultural penetration, namely bureaucracy, the church and the school. The penetration of Western political, educational and religious processes and institutions into the hinterland of Sierra Leone slowly eroded the strength and importance of traditional African education. It also called into question the importance and viability of such education. Western education with its propaganda from the colonizer became very attractive to a cross section of the indigenous people. The

achievements of the Krio were analyzed by the other ethnic groups, and prompted some of them, like the Mende and Temne, to redouble their effort to educate their children in western type schools. This move compelled the parents and relatives under strenuous circumstances to provide the funding to sponsor their children. In some cases the burden was on relatives who were already western educated and gainfully employed by government or commercial institutions, to provide the sponsorship. These and other factors signalled a reduction in the leadership of ethnic rulers whose authority was now questioned by those who had acquired the type of education that rendered them more critical of authority. The acceptance of Western education by some ethnic groups, especially the Mende, induced them to become admirers of Europeans who they sometimes referred to as "genii" because they were seen as extremely clever (Little, 1967:73).

From 1906, the British began the development of government institutions which would train Africans for participation in colonial politics and society. Bo School founded in 1906 was first created to train the sons and appointees of chiefs. It complemented other schools which were being set up by different church missions. Despite numerous statements about ingenizing colonial education and the training of Africans to function in their own environment, no attempt was made to weld the newly acquired western

educational system with the traditionally based system which was more relevant and readily available to the community (Sumner, 1963:157-160). Africans were being prepared to function in a new world whose focus and ethos was different from those of the pre-colonial one. Vocation, success, and adulthood were being defined by new institutions and new standards. By 1961 (the date of independence of the country Sierra Leone,) and despite the efforts of first Prime Minister, Dr. Milton Margai, to shore up the Sande traditional school (Kilson 1966: 256), it was clear that new educational institutions introduced by the British had superseded the older forms of indigenous education both in prestige and social recognition (Kilson, 1966: 256-257). Also, by 1961 several Africans had become active agents in the propagation of the British educational system: it no longer depended on European colonizers or missionaries (Kup, 1975:209-210). African teachers and missionaries went to serve in the remote areas of the country, thereby helping to speed up the conversion of their relatives to Christianity and provide the converts with access to basic Western education (Little, 1967:63). Martin Kilson commented that "once attained, [Western] education invariably altered the African's way of life and social position" (Kilson, 1966:39).

In spite of Western colonization, indigenous pre-colonial educational institutions showed remarkable resilience. Part

of the reason was that the colonial state and its successor, and as well, the church missions, could not marshall the necessary resources to provide the entire population with unfettered access to Western education institutions (Fyfe, 1962:122-123). So people continued to rely on and utilize pre-colonial forms of education, either partly or wholly. Many ethnic groups in Sierra Leone effectively synthesized the socialization and training processes of the two educational systems. So their children went to Western schools but also went through Poro or Sande institutions for a shorter period of time at some point in their lives (Kilson, 1966:256-257). At the same time, some artisans would combine both aspects of Western artistic training with Sierra Leonean indigenous training (see interviews of respondents).

This chapter articulated the historical development of education in Sierra Leone, examining the different indigenous training institutions and the impact of colonialism on education.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The study reported in the following chapters was based on a two stage research design--a pilot project and a major investigation designed to observe, study and understand indigenous artistic training processes. The two stages complemented each other. The pilot project offered the opportunity of (1) assessing the viability and value of a larger study, (2) testing and developing clearer, a more detailed and manageable questionnaire and research methodology for the larger project, and (3) framing possible hypotheses for the larger project. The second stage, conducted years after the pilot project, built on the questions and experiences already acquired in the pilot survey.

The Pilot Study

The pilot study was conducted between August, 1989 and July, 1991, under the sponsorship of the Institute of African Studies, University of Sierra Leone. The intent of the study was to collect data which could be used to teach courses in African art history, and cultural studies. The work was undertaken in several regions of Sierra Leone. During this study I interviewed and observed five artists who had served

their apprenticeship in the traditional school system. The study was conducted using participant observation and in-depth interviewing with audio recording. The respondents were asked four basic questions:

1. How did you become an artist?
2. Describe the stages of training that you went through.
2. Why is the position of an artist important to your culture?
4. Why are you as an artist highly respected by members of your community?

Since formal written consent of the respondents was not given, I will have to refrain from using their names in this thesis, in consideration of current research protocols for research with Human Subjects.

Summary of Responses

The data from the pilot study yielded a number of significant preliminary conclusions, many of which were reinforced in the later, larger study.

Manner of Becoming an Artist

Question 1. How did you become an artist?

The majority of the respondents (four out of five) became artists because an immediate family member was already an artist. The popularity of their parents within the community was a clear indication that they would also enjoy such

popularity. One of the respondents indicated that his decision to become an artist was prompted by a dream in which an ancestor revealed to him that if he trained as an artist he would become famous and be honored in his community. After my interview with him, I discovered that although there are other sculptors practicing in his community, he is the most valued and popular. When I made a request to interview an artist in the community, I was directed to him by the chief who made the comment that this sculptor, who was also a blacksmith and dancer, possessed supernatural powers which allowed him to excel in any artistic endeavor he chose to practice.

Stages of Training

Question 2. Describe the stages of training that you went through.

The different artists described their training program as very demanding. They commented that the instructors had forceful methods of getting student artists to adhere to their instructions. Skills were learned through observation of instructors at work. Whether they were happy with the instruction given to them or not, the students were never allowed to object to or disagree with their instructor. Based on responses to my questions, it was clear that instructors were not challenged or questioned.

Because of societal pressure students were very reluctant

to withdraw from training. Becoming an artist was seen by some of the respondents as divinely destined through the ancestor who would protect the student artist throughout the training program. This clearly agreed with d'Azevedo's point to the effect that the decision to train as an artist was not usually made by the student. Therefore it is reasonable to believe that the student felt obliged to stay in the program or withdraw from the training only with the consent of the ancestor, (1973:329-336). Besides, far more serious social implications were couched behind this supernatural justification. Withdrawal from training or failure would be perceived by the family as embarrassing and detrimental to their position within the community, more so because artists in most cultures are highly valued. Wahlman (1974), Vansina (1984), Nunley (1987), and Perani & Smith (1998) have confirmed this to be true in reference to Africa.

Importance of the Position of Artist

Question 3. Why is the position of an artist important to your culture?

In response to this question the artists were unanimous in acknowledging that the work they produced helped to enhance the rituals which were quite important to the life of Sierra Leoneans. "Who else is capable of doing what I am doing?" asked a respondent, who apart from been a popular sculptor and weaver was also a dancer and drummer. Although

all the respondents were able to and did sell their work as tourist art in the market place, they preferred to see it used for its original purposes. In referring to the "original purposes," the artists were attempting to look back on the role they had played when the culture was unsullied by foreign influences. During their training, emphasis is placed on serving the community through the production of artifacts for important rituals. Because this function was no longer being performed by some of the artists, some of those interviewed saw a void in their function in the society. In his study of artists in Nigeria, Bascom argued that the decline in the traditional role of the artist was caused to some extent by the expansion of Christianity and Islam. Because of this decline, the production of sculpture for religious use was cast off as "relics of the superstitions of the past," (1973:66). Christianity and Islam were also strongly against the production of sculpture for ritualistic purposes in Sierra Leone. Although the sculptors I interviewed were not involved in the production of Christian icons, Samuel Marco a traditionally trained sculptor, who unfortunately was not available for my study, was commissioned by the Catholic Arch Diocese of Freetown and Bo to produce a set of sculptures representing the Stations of the Cross for a church that was built at Juba, on the outskirts of Freetown. He also carved a set of doors for this church. He undertook this commission in 1992 during his tenure as Artist-in-Residence at the

Institute of African Studies, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone.

Respect for Artists by the Community

Question 4. Why are you as an artist highly respected by members of your community?

The link between their professional role and their contribution to the community was crucial in determining the artist's identity. It raised the question of, "Who is regarded as and accepted as an artist within a given community?" d'Azevedo, quoted by Etzkorn, pointed out that a Gola artist specializing in the production of art work for foreigners was "not really Gola; he becomes an outsider." This was due to the community assumption that the artist, by producing work "for a non-Gola audience," deviates "from the social situation and tradition," d'Azevedo, (1973:360). From the responses to my last question it was clear that the respondents valued their position within the community and appreciated the respect bestowed upon them.

The material emanating from the preliminary research was used for courses in art history. The two areas that were examined are "The training of artists in Sierra Leone through the traditional school system" and "Traditional artists and their services to the community". As a component of these courses, traditionally trained artists were invited to

demonstrate their techniques.

The pilot study demonstrated that artists were willing to speak about and answer questions about their artistic training processes. It demonstrated that one of the most useful ways to conduct a larger study of the processes was through the documentation and analysis of the life-histories of various artists using a variety of methods. Participant-observation, questionnaires and oral interviews, all of which are examined in more detail below, proved to be most efficacious in providing a qualitative insight into the training and lives of the artists in the pilot study. Based on these findings, I decided that the same approach would be useful in the collection of data on a larger scale project for this dissertation.

The Major Research Project

The major research project design is therefore based primarily on the case studies of selected artists. The pilot study raised some important questions. The second study pursued these questions. The resulting research design was based on the participant observation, in-depth interviewing with audio recording and photography of twelve Sierra Leonean artists. Seven of the artists were males and five were females.

Method: Life History Interviews

As a research strategy, life-history interviews provides the researcher with an insider's view of a culture; it "captures" more than the emergence of the "various cultural patterns" which are linked to the existence of the "individual" (Edgerton and Langness, 1974:76-77). This approach transcends the historical importance of cultural events and customs. It aids the respondents in situating themselves individually within the culture of the society. In reviewing life-history as an ethnographic methodology, however, Edgerton and Langness acknowledge that it can easily be misused, especially if the subject to be interviewed is not properly guided. As a solution they suggest the use of structured questions (1974:37).

Discussing the characteristics of life-history/ethnographic interviews in qualitative research, Bogdan and Bicklen state that the practicability of "life-history case study" is generally decided by the character of the potential subject and whether that individual is articulate and has a good memory (1982:61). This last factor is important to the study, considering that the twelve selected respondents are being relied upon to provide detailed and clear responses. I am also aware that much depends on the quality of the questions asked.

Participant Observation

The second key research strategy, the participant observation methodology, aids the researcher to gain "insights and develop interpersonal relationships" which are not easily achieved by other methods (Borg & Gall, 1989:391). This method also helps to extract from respondents "their definitions of reality and the organizing constructs of their world" (Goetz & LeCompte, 1984:109-110). Thirdly, the researcher is able to access their subject of study in a trustworthy manner, and at the same time keep a detailed written record of what transpired between the two parties (Bogdan & Bicklen, 1982:2).

In assessing the importance of participant-observation, Edgerton and Langness contend that:

As the fieldworker observes and participates, he [she] becomes aware of the complexities and contradictions in what people say and in what they do....Participant-observation permits the fieldworker to balance the real and the ideal in a way that other methods can seldom match...[it] is primarily an indirect, unstructured procedure that is both an art and a science. As such, it must always reflect the personality of the fieldworker and the receptivity of the people he [she] studies (1974:31-33).

They elaborate further that:

Participant-observation also offers safeguards against one of the major problems of anthropology, reactivity. Reactivity refers to the effect that an observer (or any kind of investigator) has upon the phenomenon he is attempting to study (1974:31-32).

Considering how important participant-observation is to my research, it was advantageous that my participation assumed a dual purpose as suggested by Spradley: "to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and...observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation" (1980:54).

Spradley's suggestion was appropriate to that aspect of my fieldwork and helped to shape the results.

Interviewing

In explaining some of the specific characteristics of the interviewing technique, Best and Kahn infer that it is to some extent "an oral questionnaire" in which the interviewee passes on the required "information orally and face-to-face." They also acknowledge that, with skillful handling, interviewing is a "superior" means of gathering data (1989:201-202). Also, in his assessment of the in-depth interviewing technique, Spradley states that it is based on a sequence of amicable conversations during which the investigator is able to introduce "new ethnographic elements" in the hope of securing the desired information (1979:19).

Goetz and LeCompte have identified three forms of interviewing that are applicable to the research initiated by qualitative researchers: they are key informant interviews,

career histories and surveys (1984:119-124). Defending the usefulness of key informant interviews, they argue that there is an assumption that the informants bring special knowledge or perceptions to the study which would not otherwise be available to the researcher (1984:119-120).

Experts agree that the critical importance of framing appropriate questions for qualitative research interviewing cannot be overemphasized (Bogdan & Bicklen, 1982; Goetz & LeCompte, 1984; Best & Kahn, 1989; Borg and Gall, 1989). My questions were focused to elicit specific responses on key aspects of the artist training process. At the same time, they were open enough to give respondents the opportunity to broadly discuss their artistic experiences. Citing some of the advantages of open-ended questions, Cohen & Manion state that, because of their flexibility, they allow the interviewer to explore the possibility of delving deeply into the subject if he or she so chooses. They add that the interviewer is also assisted in the establishment of an accurate evaluation of the respondent's beliefs (1980:247).

For Oppenheim, "the greatest advantage of the interview" conducted by a "skilled interviewer" is "flexibility." It affords the interviewer the opportunity to ascertain that the respondent understands the questions, as well as the "chance to probe further when particular responses are encountered."

Oppenheim also states that the possibility exists for the establishment and maintenance of a rapport between the interviewer and interviewee. On the disadvantages, he notes that the interview could be "fraught with possibilities of bias". Factors including the clothes, tone of voice, accent and the attitude of interviewer might negatively affect the results. Interviews could also be expensive financially and take a lot of time to execute properly (1982:31-32).

All these comments prompted me to scrutinize the questions which were asked during the pilot study I had undertaken in Sierra Leone between August 1989 and July 1991. Appended below are the new questions:

The Interview Questions

1. Why did you become an artist?
2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.
3. How did your instructor organize the training program?
4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?
5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?
6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?
7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.
8. Were you free to abandon your training?
9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist?

10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?
11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?
12. How is your work regarded by your community?
13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?
14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor?
15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?
16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?
17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?
18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

Having formulated the questions I will now explain the procedure that was used for conducting the interviews. A crucial factor which should be carefully evaluated is the relevance of conducting research by interviewing respondents who, according to the Western concept of education, are considered not educated because they are educated in traditional schools. As a matter of fact, Best and Kahn assert that the interview method of conducting research is well-suited for respondents who are not Western educated, (1989:201), inferring that this method is the best for [traditionally educated] respondents like those in my study.

Selection of the respondents for interview was done after a preliminary fact finding visit which culminated in a preliminary interview. One of the factors that was important to the study was meeting artists who were dedicated and committed to producing work for the community. Those selected must be engaged in training others to become artists or they must have been involved in such a pursuit in the past. Some of these artists were well known to the key informants who initially introduced them to me.

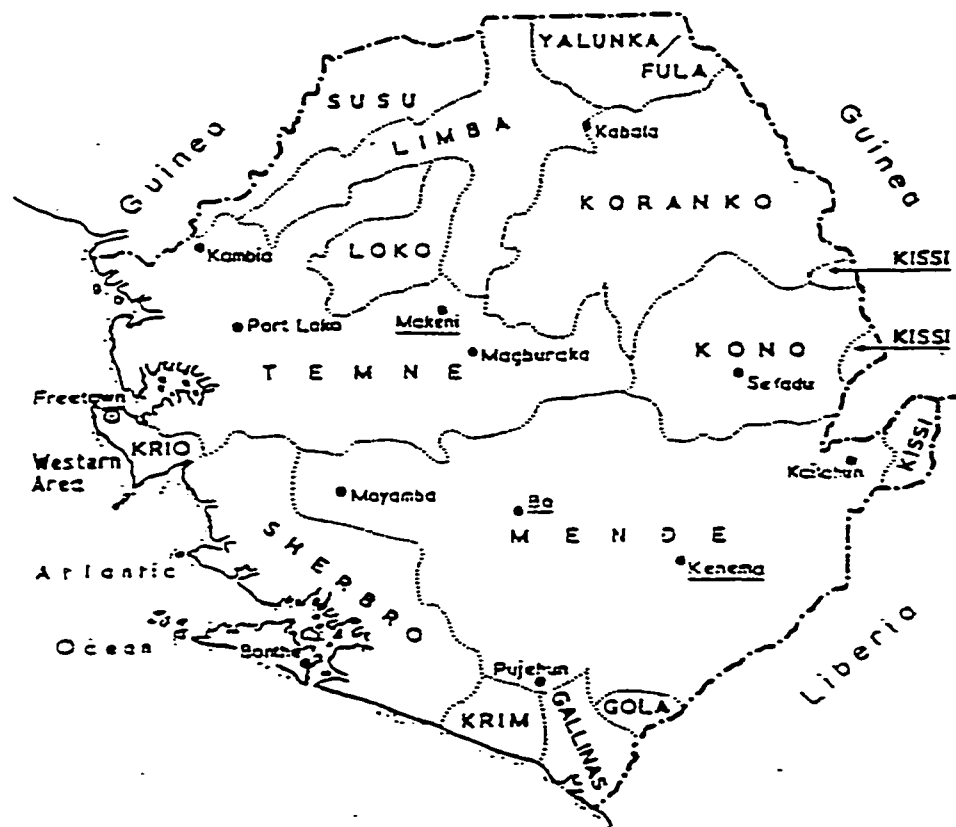
Selection of Respondents

The population studied consisted of twelve indigenous artists, seven males and five females. These artists worked in the following artistic specialities--sculpture, pottery, weaving, textile dyeing and goldsmithery. Although I was assisted by key informants in the selection of the artists, the final decision rested on me. It was my intention to select an equal number of male and female respondents but this was not possible because female artists were not available in the following specialities-- sculpture and goldsmithery. Despite this restriction I am satisfied with my selection because the quality of their contribution will enrich the study.

Fieldwork Problems

All the interviews were conducted in Freetown, in the Western Region of Sierra Leone, although the original

intention was to cover the entire country, the political situation due to the civil war made it impossible for a researcher to freely move around the country. In fact, the majority of the artists who would have contributed to the study were either in Refugee Camps in Freetown or in neighboring Guinea. Despite this setback the respondents selected for the study came from the four regions (Eastern, Southern, Northern and Western) and major ethnic groups (Mende, Shebro, Temne, Limba, Mandingo and Soso) of the country (see Map Fig.1b). Many of them had relocated temporarily to the Western Region due to the civil war which had engulfed the country from 1991. They were interviewed at a Refugee camp at Kissy, Freetown, where the internally displaced Sierra Leonean population had been relocated and organized according to their ethnic origins. The other respondents were already established in the western region for a number of years, although the majority of them had originally trained in their various regions.



Key

- International Boundary.....
- Tribal Boundary.....
- Tribe..... LOKO
- National Capital..... ○
- Provincial Headquarters Pa
- District Headquarters..... ●

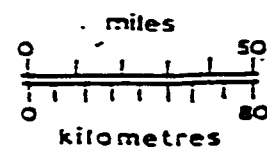


Fig. 1b: Map of Sierra Leone

Key informants, like Professor Arthur Abraham, Director, Institute of African studies, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone; Louise Metzger, Director, Gaga Art Studio, Freetown; and Assan Allie, Teacher, Albert Academy, Freetown, assisted in the selection and location of respondents. These informants had either previously worked with the respondents or knew the different artistic networks. While the process offered quick access to the selected respondents, it also excluded others who may have been equally useful to the research.

Procedure for Data Collection

Interviews for each respondent were conducted over a period of three days. The first day was spent explaining the purpose of the study and learning about the artistic practise of the respondent. Time was also spent observing the respondent and his/her apprentice(s) in a work setting. After certifying the suitability of the respondent and getting his/her consent, interviews were conducted on the second day. The interviews were in two parts. The first part dealt with matters that were not part of the structured interview. It gave the respondents the opportunity to discuss some of the factors that shaped their artistic development. In the structured segment of the interview identical questions were used for each interview. Permission was also requested and received to use the names of the respondents on any reports

emanating from this study. The third day was for photographing the respondents and apprentice(s) at work. The respondents also reviewed the taped interviews on that day.

Language Used for Data Collection

Although the respondents came from varied ethnic and regional backgrounds, interviews and conversations were conducted in Krio, Sierra Leone's *lingua franca*. I have made a written transcript in Krio of these interviews. Afterwards, I have translated from Krio to English, to give the English text of the respondents' answers.

The respondents and apprentice(s) were given the customary gifts in exchange for their hospitality and the time devoted to the interview. They were also promised copies of the photographs taken.

Based on the interview and discussion I had with the twelve artists in this study all of them were engaged in producing ritual objects. Despite this assertion it was also noticeable that they all produced non-ritual objects, which I have referred to as "tourist art", given that the bulk of their production is bought by foreign art collectors. Although it was not statistically possible to calculate the number of ritual objects produced by the three sculptors, I would estimate that Philip Kainyande was the most productive,

followed by Alpha Kargbo who was trained by his father and actually took over the production of ritual objects from him. Considering that Sorie Koroma spent part of his working life as a sculptor in Nigeria, it is possible that he was commissioned to produce ritual objects during this period. During my visit with Sorie he had just completed a mask and staff for a Sande Ethnic Association\traditional school. Although I did not see the production stage of the items, which as a rule should not be shown to non-members of the institution, I was invited to attend a student's graduation ceremony at the Kissy Refugee Camp at which the artifacts were used by the Sande traditional school to celebrate the completion of a traditional education program for girls, the majority of whom were refugees housed at the camp where I had already made contacts to conduct some interviews for this study. I must here comment that it is not usual for sculptors to openly discuss commissions for ritual objects they are producing. For them this is a sacred function which is not discussed with non-members of these institutions.

Ibrahim Kamara, the only Potter in the study, reckoned that his production of ritual objects was about 40% of his total production. The most popular of these ritual objects were large and small pots used for the preparation of herbs for curative purposes and food preparation for ritual functions. Such items were usually commissioned by herbalists

or by families. Other ritual objects he produced were water pots, bowls, incense burners and plates used for food sacrifices. Unlike the sculptors, Ibrahim did not produce such work under secrecy. In fact, he told me that items commissioned for ritualistic purposes were usually purified by the priest or priestess appointed to carry out the prescribed ritual. He also produced large pots for storing grains and large vases for religious ceremonies for the deceased. "Some families no longer attach much importance to the acquisition of pottery objects for ritualistic use because they can buy these artifacts cheaply from the market place and hope they will serve the purpose they are needed for", Ibrahim lamented.

The weavers, both male and female, produced a variety of ritual and non-ritual items for various ceremonies pertaining to birth, and marriage, costumes for hunters or warriors, for graduation from traditional schools, outfits and for rituals of the deceased. About 70% of the work produced by Mohamed Konneh, one of the more experienced weavers in the study, was for ritual purposes. According to him "it was more profitable to produce items for ritual purposes especially for wedding or graduation ceremonies." Production of the other weavers would be similar to Mohamed.

Like the weavers, the textile dyers also indicated that they produced ritual and non-ritual items, similar to those

ceremonies that the weavers are commissioned to produce work for. In my interview with Haja Tejan-Kamara she confirmed that over 60% of her production was for ritualistic use. The ceremonies in most cases are the same that the weavers are commissioned for. When she is commissioned to produce items for a community purification ceremony, she may produce a length of cloth based on the same design for most members of that community. For a Sande traditional school graduation ceremony, she may produce a set of cloth for all the graduates. In the case of a funeral, she may produce a set of cloth of the same design for all those connected with the ceremony. One of the reasons why she is so successful is because she is capable of creating new designs or improving on the already existing ones whenever there is the need.

As a successful goldsmith, Alfred Sesay produces mostly ritual items for weddings, traditional school graduation ceremonies and parents donating jewelry to a daughter's jewelry collection. Due to the high cost of raw materials such as gold and silver--which are vital to his production--he cannot from his own resources afford to produce non-ritual items on a large scale even though there is a ready market for such items. When he is commissioned to produce non-ritual items his clients are usually art collectors or jewelry dealers who could sell such items for a profit. Factors such as the high cost of silver and gold would continue to restrict

his production of non-ritual items until he is able to provide the capital to procure raw materials. Until such time he would have to depend on the goodwill of his clients to continue to commission him. This restriction does not seem to affect his output because he is regularly commissioned by his clients.

This chapter has reviewed the methodology for undertaking the major study and the procedure for data collection. It also highlighted the results of the pilot study.

CHAPTER V

LIFE HISTORIES AND BIOGRAPHICAL DATA OF RESPONDENTS

This chapter presents the life histories and biographical data of the twelve respondents. Respondents are listed alphabetically. Also included is a brief life history of myself as the researcher. The translated responses to the questions for each respondent are appended under the appendix.

1. Mabinty Bangura - Textile Artist

Mabinty Bangura was born in 1947 in Port Loko, Maforki Chiefdom. She is from the Temne ethnic group. Her mother was a well-known textile artist and a traditional school teacher. Her father also was an artist specialized in architecture/building construction and leather work. At an early age, Mabinty manifested a lot of interest in art, especially in textile designing, an area that her mother was already well-established in. After completing her traditional education, she enrolled at her mother's studio to train in tie-dyeing and batik designing. Her training was not limited to her mother's studio: she also received instruction from her aunt whose studio was nearby.

Mabinty completed the training in three eventful years. There were occasions when she nearly gave up, but she was

always encouraged to continue. After her training, she took over the studio of her aunt who became incapacitated. Her aunt was so well known as a textile artist that closing the studio would have been a great disappointment to many of the clients who had depended on her over the years for producing their textile requirements. Mabinty was able to fill in the void. Taking over the running of her aunt's studio did not stop her from helping her mother with her own production whenever the need arose. As demand for her work increased, she took in students for training and that provided badly needed help in the production process. A few years later, she married an entrepreneur in Port Loko from her ethnic group. They now have five children. With the assistance of her husband, she expanded successfully into commerce. This move created an even bigger market for her production. Her clientele increased to include customers overseas.

The high quality of her work attracted the Western type school administrators in the district to invite her to teach tie-dyeing and batik to their high school students. They also commissioned her to design and produce fabric that pupils could use as school uniforms for special school functions. According to her, the idea became so popular that all the schools in the district now wear uniforms made out of fabric designed and produced by local textile artists.

After nearly thirty-five years as a renowned textile artist and entrepreneur in Port Loko, Mabinty moved to Freetown to escape the civil war that had reached her district. She arrived in Freetown in a state of shock and dismay in January, 1996 and was housed in a refugee camp.

Despite her rich artistic background and business experience, she did not find it easy to set up a studio. After working with other textile artists around Freetown, she was recruited to train young people in tie-dyeing and batik productions at the Kissy Refugee Camp. Through this project Mabinty is increasing her clientele and getting to meet others who can help her to get back on track. She is still dreaming of returning home to continue her life as an established artist.

2. Mariama Tuwa Fahmbulleh - Textile Artist

Mariama Tuwa Fahmbulleh was born in 1969 in Madina Sebule, Bonthe District. She is of the Mende ethnic group. She grew up in Madina Sebule and later received traditional education. Her mother was a potter and cotton spinner who spun cotton thread for the only weaver in the town. Through this connection, Mariama became interested in training as a weaver but to her great dismay this was not possible. Attempts to secure an apprenticeship failed because the old man who was the sole weaver in their community always gave the

excuse that he could only train one apprentice at a time. She later found out that the weaver was not disposed to training women due to a long standing taboo in the community. Mariama continued paying regular visits to the weaver's studio to observe him at work. Through her observation she learned a lot about the art of weaving. According to her, she was so obsessed with learning to weave that she attempted to build her own loom but was stopped by her parents who felt she would be cursed.

A few years after her marriage, Mariama and her husband migrated to neighboring Liberia where she attempted, again without success, to train as a weaver. After a couple of years she moved with her husband and two children to Freetown for economic reasons. There, she continued to look into the possibility of entering a training program in weaving. She finally found a program run by an experienced male weaver who willingly trained both men and women and seized the opportunity to enlist.

Once in the program Mariama made desperate efforts to prove that weaving was not a profession for men only. According to her, the instructor was so caring that learning became very easy to her. She is still appalled to know that at her place of birth, women are still not considered for training in an important profession like weaving.

Through determination she completed the training program within two years. She did not see much difference between her performance and that of the men in the program. Training in the city was advantageous for her because she met more clients who demanded a wider range of items which she might not have had the opportunity of learning to produce if she had trained in her home community.

At the completion of her training, she stayed with her instructor because she was not ready to set up a studio since it would entail building her own equipment. Consequently, she did not earn a lot from this arrangement; in fact, she made just enough to contribute to the upkeep of her family. She still works at her instructor's studio and has continued to improve her earnings through contacts with clients who now offer her commissions which she can execute at her instructor's studio. Although she has not had the opportunity of recruiting any apprentices, she plays an active part in the training of those who are being trained by her instructor at the Kissy Refugee Camp.

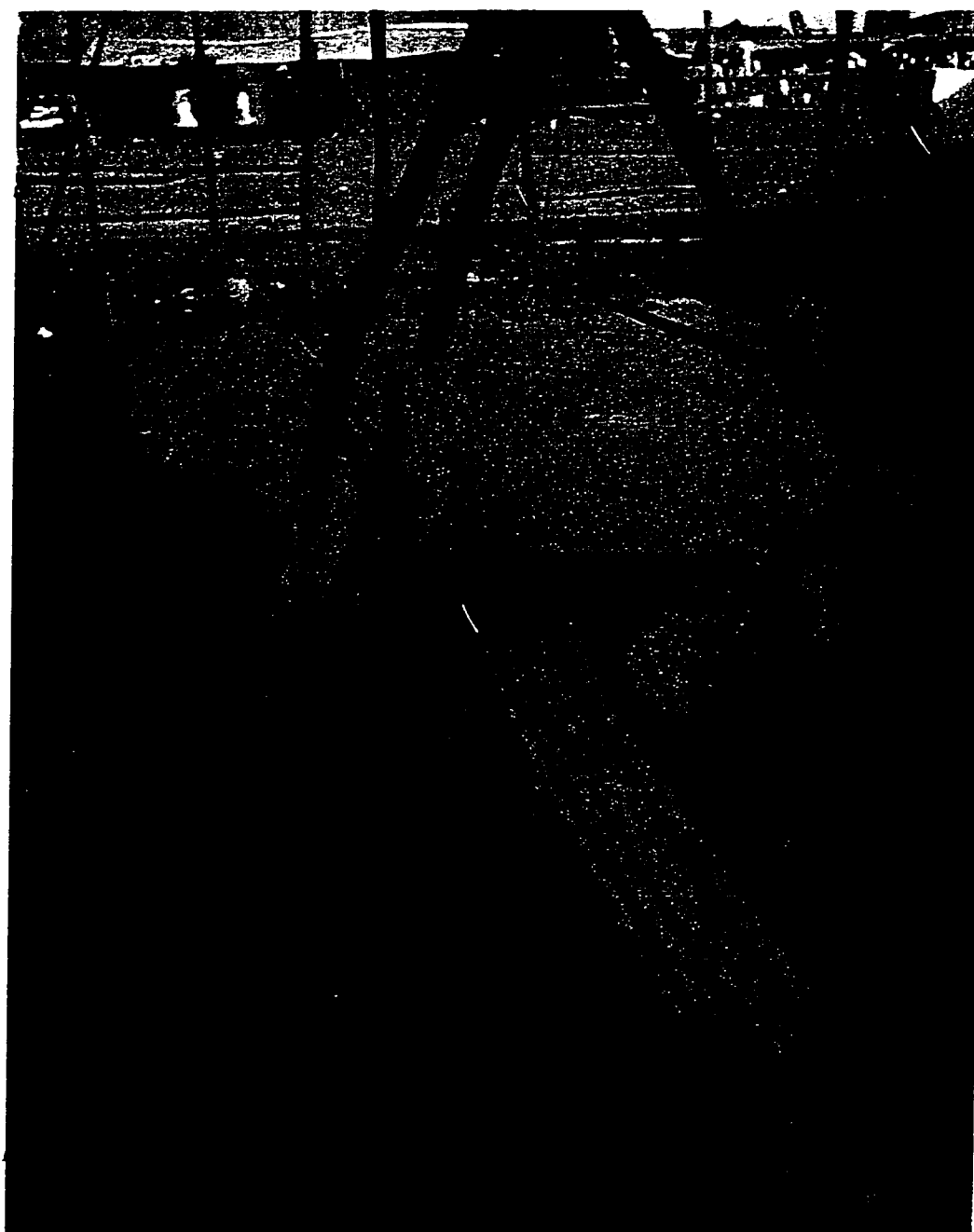


Fig 2: Mariama Tuwa Fahmbulleh weaving on a loom.

3. Gbessay Goba - Textile Artist

Gbessay Goba was born in Boajibu, Kenema District, in 1971. Her parents are from the Mende ethnic group. She grew up in the household of an uncle who is an artist. Like other girls in the community, she went through traditional education at a Sande institution which is exclusively for girls. Her main interest was to train as a sculptor but this did not prove to be possible due to her gender. Her next interest was weaving, which in her community was also not open to women. Through the suggestion of a relative and possibly out of desperation she moved to the city of Freetown.

After a year in the city, she was invited by a well-known weaver to train in his studio. Gbessay readily accepted the offer and started the training. She did not complete the training without problems. The instructor's strictness compelled her to give up half way through but after careful consideration she decided to return and complete the program. To her surprise the instructor accepted her back without any animosity. She was so touched by his attitude that she decided to work very hard and complete the program.

After completing her training in two years, she found it was difficult to set up a studio without the backing of a financier. This setback forced her to stay on at the studio of her instructor who again, willingly accepted her. This

relationship was advantageous to both parties because she received from the instructor the logistical support which she needed as a new graduate and in return she assisted the instructor to execute his commissions and supervise the other apprentices. Through contacts made by the instructor, she and the others attached to the studio were kept busy. After a while she starting accepting her own commissions. Because of her love for the profession, she has continued to work very hard to improve her skills.

From our conversation, I got the impression that weaving meant a lot to her. Based on the strides she has made, she sees herself as one who is destined to take weaving to a higher level in Sierra Leone. She claims that, weaving is more important to women in Sierra Leone because they commission weavers more than men. She believes that a woman weaver would be more interested in producing attractive designs of textiles to be used by other women.

Although she is now well-established as a weaver, her main concern is to return home to serve a community that meant much to her development as a Sierra Leonean woman.



Fig 3: Gbessay Goba weaving on a loom.

4. **Philip Kainyande - Sculptor**

Philip Kainyande was born in 1941 in Bonthe, Bonthe District. He is from the Mende ethnic group. After completing traditional education in Bonthe at the age of ten years he went to live with an uncle in Magburaka. While there, Philip served a two year apprenticeship with an artist who specialized in cane weaving (baskets and furniture). After completing his training he worked for his instructor for a year, then he returned to Bonthe to seek employment in his specialization. Philip could not find gainful employment in Bonthe so, he eventually moved to Freetown and stayed with another uncle. At this time Philip was positive that canework was not really of interest to him, so he served another apprenticeship under a sculptor who worked with clay and wood.

Due to his quest to earn a living after his apprenticeship, Philip worked for a number of employers doing unskilled jobs until he was employed by the United States Embassy in Freetown as a security guard. It was during this period that he started using his acquired skill as a sculptor to augment his income. A diplomat at the mission was so impressed with his work that he bought some of it and commissioned him to produce more work which he willingly did. When his position at the embassy was terminated he turned to sculpting full time because he could not immediately find another job. As it turned out he was able to earn enough to

support his family and therefore decided to continue sculpting in a full time capacity - a decision which he has not regretted.

Philip's working conditions were far from ideal. He worked from an open yard in a crowded compound which he shared with the other tenants. Activities that went on within the vicinity of his work space varied from women cooking to children playing. As a goodwill gesture, he was also hosting Vandi Koroma, an experienced sculptor originally from Potoru in the Pujehun District of Sierra Leone who had lived and worked in Liberia. Vandi had been displaced due to the Liberian civil war and could not go to his former home Potoru because of a similar political situation in Sierra Leone.

It was amazing that, despite his deplorable working conditions, Philip was able to turn out good quality work. In fact, during our first meeting, some of the female occupants of the compound often interrupted our conversation to commend his competency as a sculptor. (Although this form of behavior is frowned upon and unacceptable in the African context, I put up with it, until they willingly ended their intrusion. As a rule, a visitor is not expected to be interrupted by a third party when he or she is engaged in conversation with his or her host, more so by someone who is not connected with the deliberations. However, the expression on Philip's face

indicated that he was indignant at their intrusion. He later agreed with me that under better working conditions he would be more relaxed and better focused.)

At the time of my visit, Philip was working on a mask commissioned for a ritual. Since he had to fulfil certain requirements pertaining to secrecy during the production, he worked in the courtyard late into the night when everyone else was sleeping. He allowed me to view the finished work after he had performed the ritual of appeasement. For me, this was a rare privilege which I may not be fortunate enough to witness in the future. Although he had allowed me to photograph his other works, permission was not extended to include this particular mask.

As a sculptor, Philip is artistically creative and technically competent. His work has been widely exhibited at local venues. And apart from local commissions, he has enjoyed the patronage of foreigners and diplomats serving in the country. The commissions from such patronage are financially rewarding.



Fig 4a: Philip Kainyande sculpting a mask.



Fig 4b: A collection of sculptures done by Philip Kainyande

5: Ibrahim Kamara - Potter and Sculptor

Ibrahim was born in Mambolo, in the Sanda Tindarin Chiefdom of the northern region of Sierra Leone. He is from the Soso ethnic group. After completing his education in a traditional institution in Mambolo at the age of ten, he went to live with an uncle who was a diamond miner in Sefadu, Kono District. He stayed in Sefadu for five years then returned to Mambolo, with the aspiration to be trained as a potter. Ibrahim said he decided to become a potter during his stay in Sefadu after watching an actor in a film transform a chunk of clay into a useful object. It was a magical moment for him. On the invitation of his neighbor Ortame who had set up a pottery studio, Ibrahim was offered an apprenticeship in pottery which he willingly accepted. He graduated after three years of training and then set up a studio in his parents' back yard. He only managed the studio for a year before accepting an appointment as a pottery studio assistant in the Art Department of the Scarcies High School located in his home town of Mambolo. The aim of this school was to provide vocational education for children of peasant families. For Ibrahim, this appointment was very challenging, due to the fact that he was not Western-educated, and was being appointed to work at a school which offered Western type education and which was being managed by Europe educators.

Ibrahim's appointment offered him the opportunity to

experiment with new materials and consolidate ideas he had developed during his apprenticeship. He enjoyed working with the staff (some of whom were expatriates from Europe) and the students whom he assisted in solving their technical problems in pottery. In his spare time he produced work which he sold to members of the community.

In comparing the training he received during his apprenticeship to that offered to students in this Western-type institution, Ibrahim does not see much difference between the two. However, he accepts that the students have the opportunity to improve their skills through reading books, which he cannot do. Despite this drawback, he is still happy with his achievement as a potter.

After serving at the institution for three years, Ibrahim moved to Freetown in 1988 in search of better employment. Apart from a source of economic benefits, he saw Freetown as an environment that provided better facilities for artists who wanted a bigger audience and patronage. Based on samples of his work which he had brought with him from Mambolo, in a few months Ibrahim landed a job as a studio assistant in the ceramics studio of the Art Department of the Milton Margai Teachers' College, Goderich, Freetown. (I myself had managed this Department from September, 1970 until September, 1985 when I joined the Institute of African Studies at Fourah Bay

College, University of Sierra Leone as a Research\Teaching Fellow in Fine Art.)

The demand for Ibrahim's work which ranged from mugs, bowls, plates, grain containers, cooking and waterpots and masks increased. He also had the opportunity to exhibit with well-established artists, including both the traditionally educated and the Western-trained. His contact with more experienced potters and staff at the Teacher's College helped him to design and produce better equipment for use in his studio.

Ibrahim stopped working at the college in 1992. However, he has continued to produce work at his studio and sell it from a studio outlet, as well as through art galleries around Freetown.

Ibrahim's pottery is produced on a potter's wheel which he designed and built from recycled materials. He uses clay processed from local sources. He also blends clay from local sources for his sculpture. He fires in a kiln that he built from local materials. As an artist, Ibrahim is hard working and very resourceful. Although I was not able to estimate how much he earned as a potter it was evident from our discussion that he earned enough from his production to enjoy a moderate life style.



Fig 5: Ibrahim Kamara working on a potter's wheel which he built.

6: Alpha Kargbo - Sculptor

Alpha Kargbo of the Limba ethnic group was born in Freetown in 1967. His father and mother were both artists. Although his mother was active as a trader, she had trained as a textile artist but it was a profession she practiced only in her spare time. After receiving a traditional education, Alpha's spare time was spent in his father's sculpture studio where he acquainted himself with the techniques of sculptural production, despite the fact that he was yet uncertain he wanted to train as a sculptor.

After two years of uncertainty he started at the age of twelve to train under his father, Pa Mustapha Kargbo, in the studio which he presently occupies at Lumley on the outskirts of Freetown. Alpha trained with three other apprentices who were more focused on training to become artists. With some extra effort put into the training program, he completed the apprenticeship with the others within three years. At the request of his father Alpha continued working at the studio. According to him, such an arrangement worked in his favor because, apart from gaining the experience of running a sculpture studio, his father passed on some of his commissions to him so that he was able to earn money in addition to the valuable experience he had gained. In gratitude for his father's support, Alpha assisted him on his commissions. Due to an increase in his commissions and considering that he

divided his time between his own and his father's work, Alpha recruited apprentices who, during their training, helped with some aspects of the production.

Through his father's connections, Alpha was commissioned by an ethnic association to produce sculptural pieces which were to be used for ritualistic purposes. Alpha's proudest moment as a sculptor was when he saw those pieces being used for the purpose. Since that initial commission he has done a few more. For him, working under the guidance of his father, an experienced sculptor, was an added advantage. Such support, he asserted, has helped him to become an outstanding sculptor within the community.

Because their studio is close to the tourist resort of Lumley Beach, the sale of their production continued to increase. As the demand for his work increased, he recruited more apprentices and retained the services of some of those he had trained.

When Pa Mustapha Kargbo was confident that his son was now an established sculptor, he retired and handed over the workshop to Alpha. Since taking over the running of the workshop in 1989, he has invited artists in other fields to share the studio space with him. Apart from work produced in his studio, he sells the work of other artists on a commission

basis. Some of his own works are on display at the Gaga Studio, a gallery in Freetown owned by Louise Metzger, a leading Western-trained Sierra Leonean artist.

Based on his commitment to the community and to the training of artists, Alpha accepted a part-time college appointment in 1996 to teach sculpture in the Art Department of the Milton Margai Teachers' College, Goderich, Freetown. (On completion of their training, the students from this institution will be employed nationwide as art teachers in high schools.)

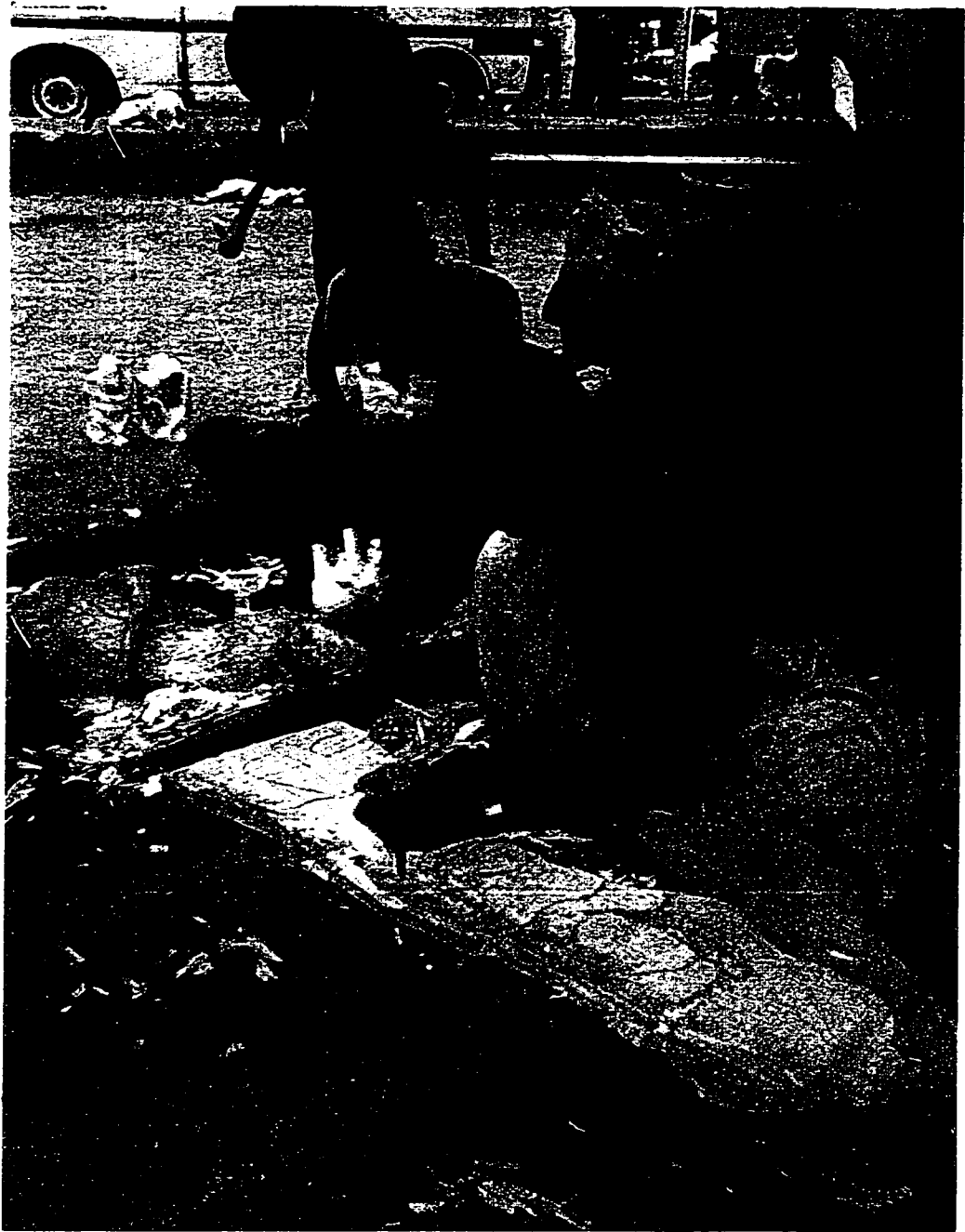


Fig 6a: Alpha Kargbo working on a sculpture with two of his apprentices in the background.



Fig 6b: A collection of sculptures done by Alpha Kargbo

7. Mohammed Jerome Konneh - Textile Artist

Mohammed Jerome Konneh was born in 1961 in Folu Jawei, Kailahum District, of parents from the Mende and Mandingo ethnic groups. After receiving a Koranic education until the age of ten, Mohammed served an apprenticeship in weaving for three years. His instructor was a relative from their household. After working in the family studio for about two years, he moved to Kenema to stay with an uncle. During his stay in Kenema, he had the opportunity to receive Western education, which was sponsored by his uncle. Since he was above the normal school entry age he was allowed to enter the program at the middle level. Through hard work and determination, he completed within six years the elementary and high school programs which should have lasted twelve years. He partly funded the school program by selling his production. In fact, his clientele grew so fast during this period, that he had to put in extra hours to meet the demand as well as cope with his school program.

Despite the growing demand for his work in Kenema, Mohammed had to bow to family pressure and return to Folu Jawei shortly after graduating from high school. He took over the running of the family studio and supervised the training of relatives and others as weavers. Since Kailahum District is famous for the production of woven textiles and due to his growing reputation as a weaver, Mohammed did not have any

problem earning decent a living. He had to work extremely hard to fulfill the demand of his clientele which continued to grow. To boost his production he recruited more apprentices who helped with the basic aspects of production. His production was not only bought for local use, but some of it was exported to Europe and North America by cooperative societies.

In 1994 Mohammed moved with his family to Freetown to escape the civil war that had disrupted life in the rural regions of Sierra Leone. After struggling for a few months to find accommodation for his family in an overcrowded city, they were housed at the Kissy Refugee Camp on the outskirts of Freetown. In addition to housing for him and his family, space was also provided for a studio so he could carry on with his work.

In his new work situation, it took him no time to become very busy. Apart from the two other textile artists with whom he was sharing studio space, he was training three apprentices who were actively involved in his production. Unlike some of the artists in this study who now produce work mostly for the tourist market, Mohammed's production is used extensively for ritual purposes and other ceremonies such as birth, marriage, and death. This I would attribute to the high quality of work that he is producing. I also found him to be well-focused. Of

all the weavers in the study he was the only one who had invested in growing cotton which would provide him with a ready supply for the advancement of his work. Although Mohammed is presently enjoying popularity as an outstanding textile artist in his new environment, taking part in exhibitions and receiving commissions from a cross-section of the community, including diplomats, he would prefer to return to his place of birth at Folu Jawei where he had built a comfortable home with a studio and invested in the growing and processing of cotton.

When asked about the advantages of Western type education, Mohammed was positive in pointing out that he was better off with a Western education as a weaver, considering that he was capable of introducing innovative practises into the art of weaving through reading books on weaving written by experienced Western-educated weavers. He also believed that his students who were not Western educated were benefitting from this element in his tutelage.

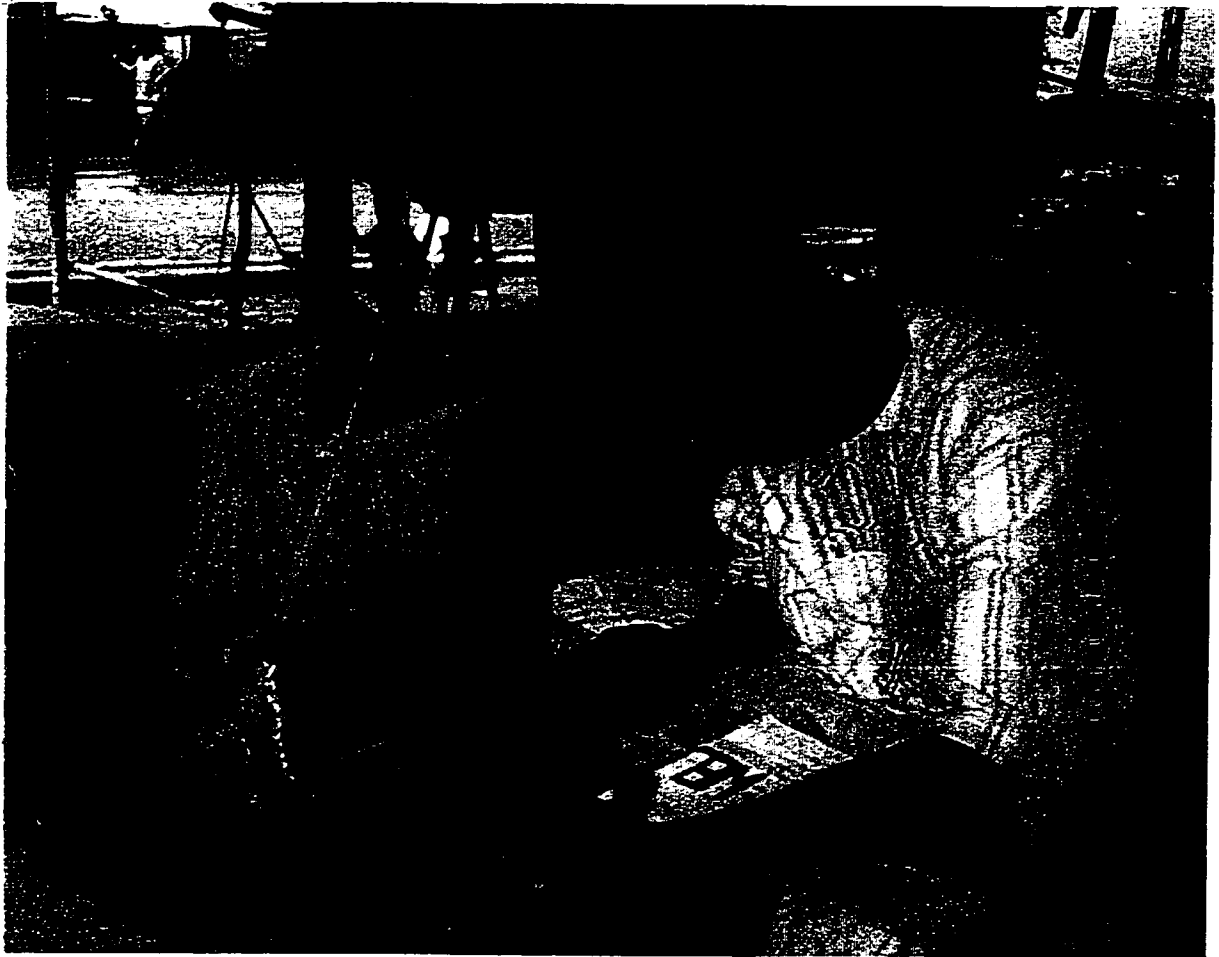


Fig 7: Mohammed Jerome Konneh weaving on a loom.

8. Sorie Koroma - Sculptor

Sorie Koroma was born in Bunumbu, Kailahun District, in 1956. His parents are from the Mandingo ethnic group. Sorie received a Koranic education in Bunumbu until the age of ten, then moved to live with an elder brother who is a sculptor in Kenema. Apart from helping with the daily chores at home he spent much of his time at his brother's studio. At the age of twelve years his brother apprenticed him.

In addition to the elder brother in charge, there were other brothers and relatives all working together at the studio. After three years of intensive training, Sorie was certified as able to work on his own. However, due to family tradition, he continued working from his brother's studio on commissions passed on to him. He also got commissions directly from his own clients. After a couple of years, he moved away from his brother's to set up his own studio in another part of town. He recruited apprentices from relatives and non-relatives.

Because of the scope that the art market in Freetown provided, Sorie eventually moved to Freetown and set up a studio in the east end of the city. This move, according to him, was advantageous because the demand for his production increased and his clientele enlarged to include Nigerian art dealers who bought the work of Sierra Leonean artists for

export to Nigeria and other parts of the world.

Due to the high quality of his work and the demand for it in the Nigerian art market, Sorie was enticed to move to Nigeria to work for a Nigerian art dealer (who he was sure profited handsomely from his production.) He was based in Tunubu, Lagos. Apart from increasing his production to meet the demand of the new art market, he also trained Nigerian apprentices who, according to their system, paid the instructor a predetermined fee for the training. After serving for five years, during which time he proved his capability as a competent sculptor, Sorie returned to Freetown to continue working and training relatives and other Sierra Leoneans.

Sorie set up a studio at Victory Park in the centre of Freetown. The studio is moderate in size and can accommodate two people. At the time of my visit, he had one apprentice who was midway through his training, and believed he could have had more apprentices if he had a larger studio.

In addition to sculpting in wood, elephant ivory, bone and stone, Sorie designs and produces jewelry using animal bones and other materials such as soft wood and shells. He was proud to point out that six of his brothers are artists, a definite indication that the tradition of having artists

within their family will continue.

Sorie's work is sold through a network of art dealers and the demand for it continues to increase. His work is regularly included in exhibited at exhibitions organized by Gaga Art Studio in Freetown. Also, Sorie is still in contact with Nigerian art dealers who buy his work to resell overseas. "They will always buy my work because they know how much profit they will make," he commented. Based on his experience in Nigeria, he is hopeful that more Sierra Leoneans will start collecting art works. Through such an endeavor "more young Sierra Leoneans will be inspired to train as artists and art dealers," he asserted. For him, working in Nigeria was an experience that he will continue to cherish as an artist. Among other things he "developed techniques to work with new materials such as plastics".



Fig 8: Sorie Koroma working on a sculpture.

9. **Gladys Mangbay - Textile Artist**

Gladys Mangbay was born in 1959 in Moiowa Village, Jong Chiefdom, Bonthe District of Sierra Leone. She is from the Shebro ethnic group. Like other girls in her community, she went through a traditional education. Gladys grew up in a household where some relatives were the leading artists in the community. She often had the opportunity to observe relatives practicing their art and came to appreciate art at an early age. She was so impressed during one encounter with a weaver that she was inspired, and longed for an opportunity to train in that field. In partial fulfillment of that wish, her aunt taught her to spin cotton. She had the opportunity of being trained as a potter by her aunt but did not avail herself of that opportunity because pottery was not in her line of artistic interest. Since she did not have the opportunity of training as a weaver, Gladys opted to team up with a shopkeeper relative and manage the latter's store. After getting married a few years later, she and her husband set up and ran their own store where she sold some products by local weavers. The demand for the products was so great that she had to commission weavers from other towns. This experience reawakened her desire to learn weaving. However, her effort to find a weaver willing to train her never materialized until years later when the couple eventually migrated to Freetown with their two children.

In Freetown, the opportunity to train as a weaver finally arose. After two years of training, Gladys successfully completed the program, thereby accomplishing the long term wish of becoming a weaver. During the initial period after her training, she worked from the instructor's studio, helping with his commissions and working on hers. This arrangement continued for a few years until Gladys and her husband returned to Moiowa where she set up her own studio. However, while in the process of establishing herself, the family had to return to Freetown due to the civil war that had ravaged most of the country. She is confident that, with her previous contacts, she will be able to get her weaving back on track.

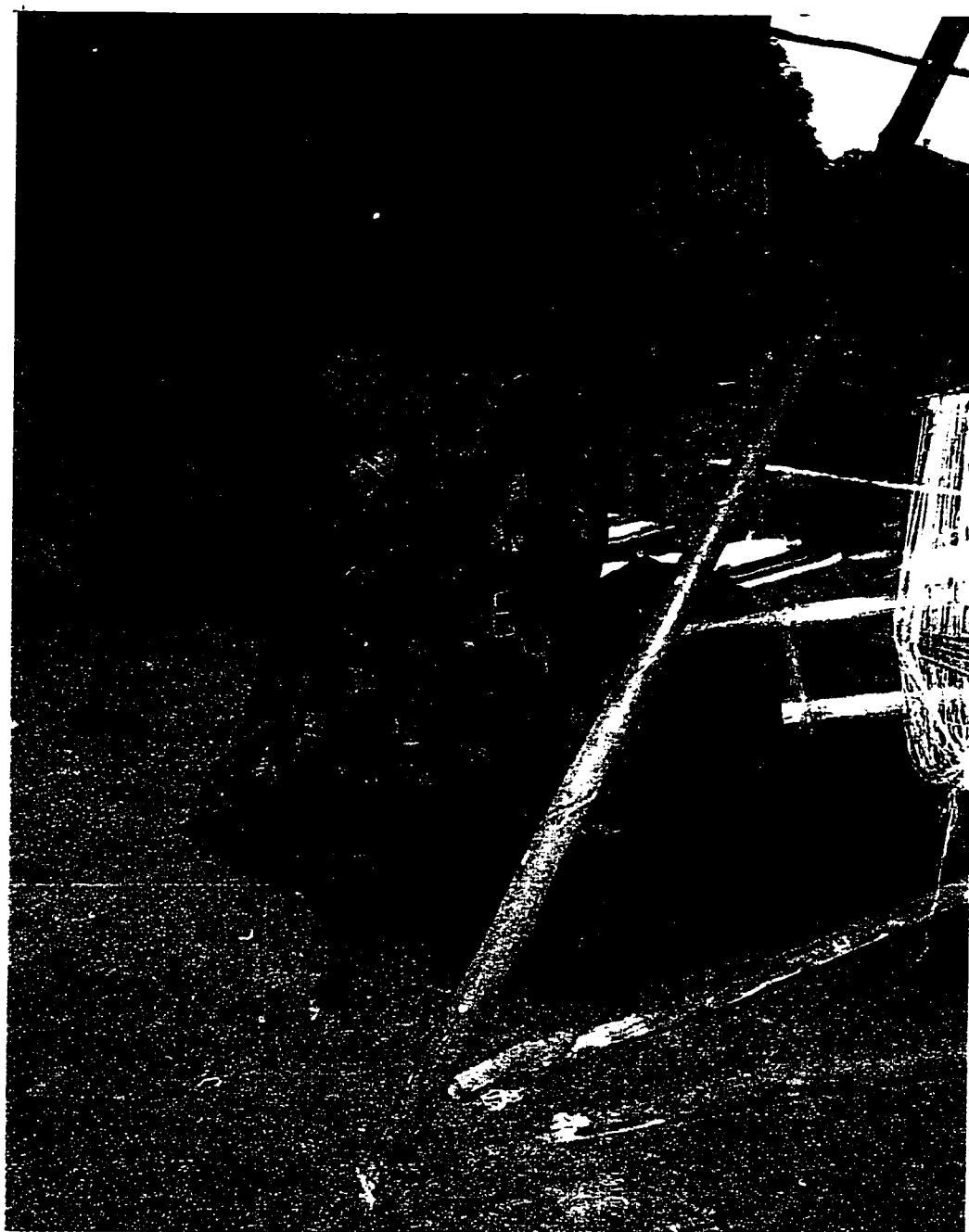


Fig 9: Gladys Mangbay weaving a strip of cloth.

10. Eric Samai - Textile Artist

Eric Samai was born in 1970 in Grima village, Tikonko Chiefdom, Bo District of Sierra Leone. He is from the Mende ethnic group. Eric grew up in a community of artists. Both his parents and an uncle were artists: his father and uncle were both sculptors and his mother a potter and cotton spinner. Their work fascinated Eric during his childhood.

At an early age Eric had shown signs of possessing some artistic talent. Apart from carving simple objects from wood, he also worked with clay, producing household objects like bowls and pots. After completing his traditional education within the community, he considered starting an apprenticeship in sculpture but dropped the idea. Instead, he moved to Freetown where a Western-type education was provided for him by his uncle. According to him, he felt at that time that a Western-type education would be more beneficial to his future, considering that some of his relatives were already gainfully employed after receiving that form of schooling.

Just before finishing a high school education, Eric opted to serve an apprenticeship at a motor maintenance workshop. Towards the end of his training, the workshop was sold to another company that preferred to recruit their own trainees. Therefore, Eric had to leave and returned to a technical institution in Freetown to train as a motor technician. After

completing the program, he worked for a while in a technical establishment in the city before deciding that it would be important for him to utilize his artistic talent.

To achieve this goal, Eric moved to Bo to start a training program with a renowned textile artist. His instructor showed a certain skepticism in wanting to train him due to the fact that he had acquired a Western education, a fact that seemed to create the impression that he was educationally superior to the instructor. Since he had realized the importance of a traditional artistic education as a means of earning a living, he worked very hard during the training to reach his goal.

After eighteen months of instruction, Eric completed the training and set up his own studio. With his technical background, he was able to build his own loom and other equipment. The quality of his work was so good that it attracted a sophisticated clientele who wanted textiles produced to certain specifications. Apart from items which he was taught to produce as part of his training, Eric created new items such as sports team scarves with motifs, and vestments for priests--which were in demand. Due to his desire to create an opportunity for young people to be trained as artists, he opened his studio to students who had acquired a Western education but who also wished to receive traditional

artistic training, as well as those who did not have the Western educational background. According to Eric, training the two types of students was not a problem. He was already working on a scheme to teach weaving at the local Western-type educational institutions when he was forced to move to Freetown to escape the civil war which was ravaging the Bo District.

Settling down in Freetown was not easy for Eric and his family. After a while, they were accommodated at the Kissy Refugee Camp where he was provided with a work space. Apart from setting up a studio at the camp and meeting the demand of clients, he was appointed to head a training program sponsored by UNICEF and CAUSE Canada to teach weaving to refugees at the camp. Although the program was similar to what he offered students at Bo, the sponsors had requested that a structured curriculum be planned. With the help of a curriculum specialist provided by the sponsors, a structured curriculum was worked out. Students of both sexes who graduated from the program are now working on their own or in partnership with their colleagues. To date, Eric has trained over twenty apprentices.



Fig 10: Eric Samai weaving on a loom which he built.

11. Alfred Sesay - Goldsmith

Alfred Sesay of the Limba ethnic group was born in Kamabai, in the northern region of Sierra Leone, in 1971. His father was a farmer who carved simple household objects in his spare time. After completing a traditional education in Kamabai, he moved to Freetown at the age of eight to live with his aunt who operated a gold buying and jewelry production company. He was enthralled by the work of goldsmiths who produced work for his aunt. When Alfred turned ten, his aunt invited him to serve an apprenticeship under the goldsmith who designed and produced work for her company in Freetown.

After two years of his apprenticeship in Freetown, Alfred was nearly completing his training when his aunt decided to move the production aspect of her jewelry business to Dakar, Senegal. With a European partner of his aunt's, Alfred moved to Dakar, where he had the opportunity to continue his apprenticeship under Alhaji Alpha Faal, a renowned Senegalese goldsmith. Such a move created new problems for Alfred which he had to surmount. Through hard work and determination he grasped a working knowledge of the Wollof language within six months. This helped him to interact more easily with his instructor and their clients. On the completion of eighteen months of training which ended his apprenticeship, Alfred returned home to Freetown to work with his aunt.

After several fruitful years of partnership with his aunt as head of her production team, Alfred resigned his position in the company to set up his own studio in the east end of Freetown. Due to the high quality of his production, his clientele increased to include some of those who had patronized his aunt. During this period, he trained a number of apprentices who are now working on their own. In a bid to serve a bigger clientele and market he moved to a new location at Victory Park in the centre of Freetown. This location houses the studios of artists in various fields. The area is also very popular with tourists shopping for all types of souvenirs, including art objects.

The quality of Alfred's work speaks for his popularity with his clients, both African and European. Although he has trained apprentices in the past, he did not have any candidates at the time of my interview because he was finding it difficult to recruit those who were honest. His concern at the time was the dishonesty of youth. "If Sierra Leonean youths are not honest and willing to learn the art of goldsmithing, dishonest foreigners will eventually take over the profession and not produce the high quality of jewelry that is usually admired and cherished by clients," he lamented.

As a goldsmith, Alfred is technically competent and

artistically creative. One can tell from his comments and interaction with his clients that he is committed to satisfying them. Reciprocally, his clients are committed to his artistry. It is not unusual for them to spend hours in his studio discussing new commissions or the repeat of an old one. As a mark of appreciation of his clients, he commented, "As long as my clients appreciate what I am doing for them, I will continue to be inspired to improve the quality of my work."



Fig 11: Alfred Sesay working on a piece of jewelry.

12. Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara - Textile Artist

Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara of the Temne ethnic group was born in Port Loko in 1932. She is the only child of her mother. After completing traditional schooling at the age of twelve in Port Loko, she started training to become a textile artist, (under the supervision of her mother) an experienced textile artist who was credited with having trained a large number of students in the Port Loko District. Haja Khadiatu's training lasted more than five years. Although she was capable of running her own studio after three years of training, her mother was not prepared to allow her to go it alone, considering she was the only child. Bowing to parental pressure, she stayed on until she got married during the fifth year. She lived close to her mother after getting married and continued working with her until she and her husband moved to Freetown five years later.

Haja Khadiatu met some of her former clients from Port Loko in Freetown and with their support was able to establish a studio. Due to the outstanding quality of her work, her clientele increased quickly and soon included expatriates and diplomats. Once she became established as one of the leading textile artists in the city, requests to train young people began coming in and quickly grew to include visiting artists from the industrialized countries. Through the initiative of Professor Loretta Reinhardt a visiting researcher from the

Department of Anthropology, University of Toronto, in Toronto, Canada a large scale exhibition of her work was organized locally. The success of this exhibition earned her an invitation to organize training sessions on a regular bases for visiting art students from overseas institutions. She conducted the program for a number of years, then she was invited to teach classes in the mentor program at universities in North America and Europe.

Haja Khadiatu's work was exhibited at the Field Museum of Natural History in Chicago, Illinois from April 20 to November 3, 1974. The book, *Contemporary African Arts*, edited by Maude Wahlman also featured an article about her work, contributed by Professor Loretta Reinhardt of the Department of Anthropology at the University of Toronto, Canada.

Although she was pleased with her exposure and performance, Haja Khadiatu felt that she would have accomplished more and that her performance would have been better appreciated if she had a Western education. It is coincidental that she brought this matter to my attention, considering that this research is partly about whether the perception Western educators have of traditionally trained African artists is genuine.

Although Haja Tejan-Kamara has not kept a register of the

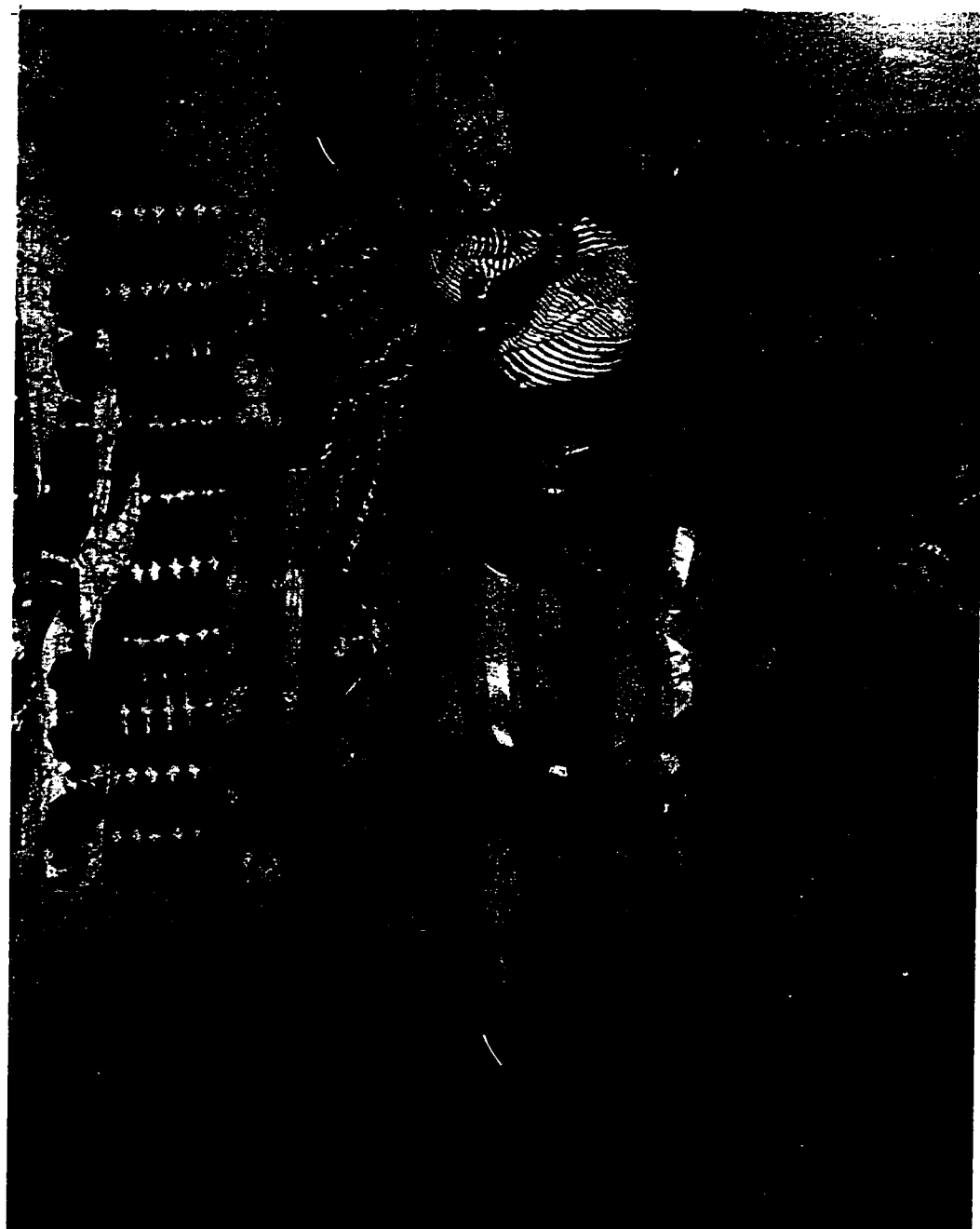
number of apprentices she has trained, she reckons the figure is over three hundred, both male and female. These artists are now practicing throughout Sierra Leone and in other parts of the world. She was happy to point out that she has been able to maintain a high standard of living as a means of her work. Apart from contributing to buying a house with her husband (who died some years ago), she has also helped to put their seven children through university in Sierra Leone and overseas. One of her sons, who went through her well-structured training program, is now studying sociology at the University of Sierra Leone. He is funding his university education with proceeds from his textile production, At the time of my visits she was not involved in textile production, because she had taken a period of time off to fulfill her obligation as a Moslem to fast during the month of Ramadan. As a committed Moslem who had gone on a pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca, she felt that her observance of that rite was very important. However, during this period she helped to run her sale shop located in the compound which contained a unique display of her production. The display and quality of her work was so impressive that I myself purchased some pieces.

At my request, Haja Khadiatu organized a tour of her studio and workshop. The dyeing workshop contained large and small dyeing vats and a number of plastic bowls. The studio

is modestly fitted with long tables and smaller ones that are used for the waxing and tying of fabric before dyeing. Her explanation of the preparation of local dyes was so detailed that I could have worked without supervision. Her repertoire of designs is so varied, indicating that she is capable of producing a variety of designs for all rituals or ceremonies such as birth, marriage, the crowning of a chief, as well as death. Notwithstanding her massive collection of designs, she is always willing to create new designs at the request of clients.

Despite the fact that her contribution as a textile artist in Sierra Leone is outstanding, Haja Khadiatu nevertheless is as committed as ever to the training of young people as artists. At the time of my visit she had six apprentices in addition to the group of relatives who are part of her household and who play an active role in running the workshop. She said that before the civil war in Sierra Leone she had a staff of twelve people consisting of four trained textile artists and eight apprentices. The bulk of her production during that period was aimed at overseas clients who have since canceled their business connections with her because of the political upheaval. Further concerning her commitment to training, she was very happy to inform me that over the years she had diligently trained her seven children as textile artists, although they are now working in other

professions. Summarizing Haja Khadiatu's achievements, Reinhardt said that she was a "well-known and respected [textile artist] dyer in Sierra Leone." The outstanding quality of her work has also won her prizes in the "British Commonwealth [art] exhibitions" (Reinhardt, 1974:14). In conclusion, Haja Tejan-Kamara has asserted that if the textile industry gets the support of the government in Sierra Leone, it can become a viable commercial enterprise and contribute handsomely to the state economy.



*Fig 12: Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara with a display of
textiles that she designed and produced.*

A Synopsis of the Researcher's Life History

In order to render this research more comprehensible, I have included a synopsis of my life history.

I was born in Magbeni, Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District, a region occupied by the Temne ethnic group. My parents are of the the Krio ethnic group which originated from liberated slaves and which occupies Freetown and its environs. My birth in Magbeni was coincidental, considering I was born during the visit of my parents to my maternal grandmother whose husband was a civil servant attached to the Colonial Native Administration. My parents stayed for three months after my birth before returning to Freetown with me. On my second birthday I went to live with my paternal grandmother at Wilberforce in the outskirts of Freetown. At age five I was registered at the local elementary school (a Western-type educational institution). The curriculum at this school included art which was taught by a non-specialist teacher who taught all the subjects on the curriculum. Despite her limitations, her approach to teaching the subject kindled my interest in visual art. Unlike children whose parents are from the ethnic groups in the Eastern, Northern and Southern regions, it was not mandatory that I receive a traditional education. If my parents had stayed in Magbeni I would have had to receive a traditional education so as to be accepted

within the community. Even though I did not stay in the region, I have remained close to it through regular visits.

At the age of nine I moved back to my parents in Freetown. I was registered in a Western-style elementary school in the city. After a year I was transferred to another elementary school that prepared me for a high school education. This school offered courses in art, music and agriculture. My high school which was run by the Colonial Government (since we were a colony of Britain) offered a rich program in art, woodwork, music and science. Some of the teachers including my first art teacher at this school were recruited from Britain. With a profound interest in collecting African traditional art, he was able to offer us certain insights into African art, which I enjoyed learning about. During my second year at this school I won a silver medal at the 1954 Festival of the Arts--Junior Printmaking Competition.

At the completion of my high school education, I attended a Teachers' college in Freetown on a Government funded scholarship and then taught art for three years before receiving another Government funded scholarship to study visual arts in Britain. Comparing the training I received in Britain, there is hardly any difference from the program that the traditionally trained artists in Sierra Leone are

receiving. After completing the program in four years I returned to Sierra Leone to teach art education at a college of education. My appointment at this institution gave me the opportunity to interact with art teachers in elementary and high schools all over the country. In the process of exhibiting my art work locally I met with traditionally and western trained artists. My contact with the traditionally trained artists was increased further through visits to various workshops in the regions of the country.

Eventually, I completed a Master's degree in Art Education in Britain in 1985 and then returned home to teach at the Institute of African Studies, University of Sierra Leone. The program at the institute is a link between traditional and western-type education.

The Researcher's Personal Reflection on Western-type Education

Reflecting on my art training in Britain, the education depended very much on the expertise and support of dedicated instructors. In most cases the instructors were practicing artists who through their training, systematically guided me to develop my artistic skills. Just like the artists in this study my program was arranged into structured segments each of which I had to complete before advancing to the next level. Similarly, in some instances I was evaluated through the

instructor's observation of my work. Punctuality was an important factor just as it was in the program being offered to the trainees who were serving apprenticeships. At one point in my training I felt that my supervisor's style of painting was influencing my work. In fact, it took me a while to shed this influence. In the case of the traditional artist in Sierra Leone it was no different. Another important factor worth considering is that traditionally trained artists in Sierra Leone contribute positively to the cultural enhancement of their communities. However, this is a claim that I could not substantiate in my case. From these reflections it is clear that my training and that of the traditional artist are to a certain extent similar.

The Research's Comparison Between Western-type and Traditional Education

Although I am not a recipient of a traditional education because of my liberated African background, my interaction with those who were educated in the system and the years I spent as an educator in the Western-type educational system in Sierra Leone have equipped me with sufficient knowledge in order to make the comparison between the two systems.

Traditional education was developed in Sierra Leone to educate its youth for service within the community. The system was structured so that everyone in the community

benefitted. Although the cost was affordable by most families, the few who could not afford it were willingly supported by affluent relatives.

The curriculum was structured to suit the community's interest. Whatever was taught was applicable to the student's future existence within the community. Such education was not the entire responsibility of the instructors. In fact, the early stage was supervised by parents, relatives and elders. Considering the differences gender plays, the students were educated in segregated institutions, except for the Sherbro ethnic group who educated some of their youths in co-educational institutions.

The Western-type education which I received was structure oriented and very expensive for most average Sierra Leoneans. It was based on the use of expensive equipment. Even the environment for such education was costly. The staff that managed the system had to be highly trained and motivated. The failure rate compared with traditional education was very high.

Based on my experience, Western-type education as applied to the Sierra Leone situation was a factor of alienation for its students. Those who were fortunate to receive this type of education were made to believe that they were superior to

the others. They tended to see themselves as specifically trained to serve in positions of authority such as administrators and technical experts.

Considering that traditional education has not kept up with the demands of contemporary society in Sierra Leone, the future of such education will continue to be bleak until proper steps are taken to skillfully blend the two systems to reflect the cultural trends of contemporary society.

CHAPTER VI

ANALYSIS OF THE COLLECTED DATA

This chapter pulls together the qualitative data collected from the twelve different respondents. It analyzes their decisions to become artists, the nature and organization of their training, their responses to the training and their place and role in the community. Overall, the chapter examines the efficacy of the different indigenous training processes and the extent to which they were of value to the artist (respondent). The data from the interviews reveal that family tradition, employment opportunities and unexpected factors led respondents to become artists. The findings also show that the artist's training programs were organized and intensive, and that the respondents regarded their training as valuable, rewarding and generally positive. Training facilities and work environments are discussed. The data also shows that artists regard their contributions to their communities as important and that they believe that their communities hold them in high regard.

Origins of the Decision to Become an Artist

From the different responses to the question, "Why did you become an artist", it was evident that (1) family traditions and imitation, (2) decent employment and (3)

fascination were the dominant factors that influenced the different respondents' decisions to become artists.

Family Tradition

Five of the respondents:- Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara, Sorie Koroma, Mohammed Jerome Konneh, Alpha Kargbo, and Mabinty Bangura--had parents who were already successful artists. These respondents had grown up and been socialized within an artistic home environment and sometimes learned to appreciate both the aesthetic and economic value of the profession. They therefore utilized the artistic route to further a valued family tradition with established artistic credentials and connections rather than strike a new occupational path. In most cases, the decision to maintain the family tradition was made early and quickly. In some instances, the decision was delayed. Although two of the respondents, Eric Samai and Philip Kainyande, originally came from artistic families, they only decided to take the artistic route only after they had left their places of birth.

A relative's wishes, were one of the key influences on the decision of Alfred Sesay to become a goldsmith. He was trained as an artist because his aunt who took care of him after he had completed a traditional education, supported him in his involvement in her jewelry production business. He gladly accepted the offer because of the conviction that as an

artist he would become important in the community and thereby earn a decent living. In the process of getting her nephew trained, the aunt had to send him to another West African State, Senegal, in order to complete the necessary apprenticeship which he had originally started in Freetown. This move, according to him, widened his scope and horizon as an artist.

General Summary

According to my data, family tradition highlighted an important factor in influencing eight of the respondents to train as artists. As stated by Mabinty Bangura, "it was inevitable that I had to train because my mother was already in the profession. Because of this family connection I started early but my apprenticeship only commenced when I was old enough to work on my own." For Alpha Kargbo, "my father was already a renowned sculptor within his community when I was born. He never forced me to become a sculptor. I decided to train under him because I liked what he was doing and felt I should do it too." Similarly, Sorie Koroma states that, "I was always in love with art, so I took advantage of the opportunity of the profession within the family. I was also very impressed with the production of my brothers and I thought it advantageous to serve my apprenticeship with them." In explaining how family connection influenced her to train, Haja Tejan-Kamara states, "I was trained by my mother to

become a textile artist some fifty years ago in Port Loko. She was an established textile artist in Port Loko even before I was born." In all of these cases the upholding of family tradition by these artists paid off.

The Quest For Decent Employment

In the case of Alpha Kargbo his training as a sculptor afforded him the opportunity to earn a decent living. This was due to his father's willingness to provide him with quality training. Apart from the training for which he is very grateful, he also took over the operation of his father's studio which was already established and producing good quality work for his father's numerous patrons. The data further indicates, that Alpha's decision to become an artist was also based on his fascination of his father who never forced him to become an artist but, "liked what he was doing and felt obligated to follow in his footsteps."

Although decent employment was not the main factor that motivated Mohammed Konneh to become an artist it somehow helped to inspire him to complete the training. Even as an apprentice, Mohamed was able to produce work which he sold to his friends. After completing the training his clientele grew so fast that he was not able to keep up with their demands for his work.

Sorie Koroma who during his training was at times treated high-handedly by his instructor, endured it all because he was sure that upon completion of his training he would be capable of earning a decent living. Apart from earning a decent living, he was invited to work as a visiting sculptor for an art dealer in Nigeria. According to him the invitation was an honor which spotlighted his artistic capabilities.

In the case of Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara, the possibility of decent employment as an artist was a major factor which she regularly discussed with her mother who in turn provided her with a high standard of training which Haja is now offering to her students--both local and international. My mother once said, "if you master this profession, you will earn the respect of your clients and a decent living."

Eric Samai had initially opted to receive a Western-type education but later realized that his chances of securing employment and a means of livelihood would be far better if he were a traditionally trained artist. Since he completed his training, Eric has helped those who, like himself, originally felt that there would be a lot more job opportunities for people who had received a Western-type education. Philip Kainyande, on the other hand, switched from one artistic speciality to another. He was originally trained as a basket-weaver during his first sojourn away from home. After moving

to Freetown sometime later, he opted to be trained as a sculptor, a move which he has never regretted because of the economic and other benefits that he is enjoying. He is now regarded as one of the leading sculptors in Freetown. His success as an artist may be linked to his devotion to producing high quality work. He is also producing work which the community finds easily identifiable. The fact that his work is included in major collections is firm evidence of his popularity. He can sell his work for a high price. To give an example, I willingly paid the equivalent of 100 (One hundred) Dollars (U.S.) for a Sande mask and 50 (Fifty) Dollars (U.S.) each for two miniature masks which I commissioned him to produce. These amounts quoted may seem small to outsiders but to Sierra Leoneans 50 (Fifty) Dollars (U.S.) is above the average monthly wage for blue collar workers in the country. Philip may have reduced his price as a goodwill gesture to me in the hope that I would introduce his work to Canadian art dealers and collectors. Considering that he regularly receives commissions from clients in Europe and North America, his work is in art collections in those regions. His work is already in a number of local collections including the Sierra Leone National Museum where a collection of Sande masks are on permanent display.

General Summary

Based on the data, the quest for decent employment

influenced six of the respondents to train as artists. In the words of Mohamed Konneh, "We were also told that training as an artist was a sure way of earning a living." In his explanation Eric Samai states that, "my decision to train stemmed from my realization that I was artistically talented and that I would benefit [financially] from training. Confirming that her mother alerted her to the possibility of decent employment by training as an artist Haja Tejan-Kamara states that, "As a good teacher she was always encouraging me to work hard so as to enjoy a brighter future as a textile artist. She always stressed that if I became a competent artist, I would not have to roam the streets begging or stealing... I also became aware that getting close to fulfilling my mothers wish that I should be able to earn a [decent] living as an artist." Although the desire for decent employment did not feature prominently in the result of the structured interviews with some of the respondents my personal interviews which was spontaneous indicated a more positive response, an indication that the future is promising for these artists.

Fascination With Artistic Process and Materials

For Mariama Fahmbulleh, Gbessay Goba and Gladys Mangbay earning a decent living as an artist was never a motivating factor for wanting to be artists. Instead they were moved by the fascination of producing artifacts that would be useful to

the community. It was not an easy task for them to break into a field that was dominated by men who were not prepared to uphold a tradition that forbade them to train women. To achieve their goal these women moved from their traditional communities to the capital Freetown which is cosmopolitan and where traditions are not always upheld. Once they were able to find instructors willing to train them they adhered to the strict discipline which was an integral part of the training. Even though the monetary factor was not a part of their original motivation, they are now earning a decent living due to the high quality of work they are producing as weavers.

For Ibrahim Kamara, the fascination to be an artist came from an unexpected source. He decided to train as a potter after watching an actor in a movie transform a chunk of clay into a vessel. This experience was a magical and inspirational moment for him. Even though he had seen the movie far away from home while staying with a relative in Kono, he vowed at the time to become a potter. When he returned home to Mambolo in the northern part of the country, he took up apprenticeship training at a neighbors's pottery. It is clear that Ibrahim's fascination to become an artist materialized in an unusual way. Once he completed his training he explored other avenues, such as working as a studio assistant in a educational institution that offered Western type high school education to the children of parents

who in most cases had only received traditional education. He later moved to the capital Freetown and served in a similar capacity in the Ceramics Department of a Teachers' College. Unlike the group of women who wanted to train as weavers he did not have any trouble locating an instructor who was willing to train him. Ortham, a neighbor willingly served as his instructor.

General Summary

Fascination with artistic process and materials from my data was an important factor that influenced five of the respondents to train as artists. In the case of Alpha Kargbo, his decision to train as an artist was based on his father's expertise. "I decided to train under him because I liked what he was doing and I felt I should do it too," he commented. For Ibrahim Kamara the call surfaced during his visit to an uncle in Sefadu. "On a visit to a movie house I watched a film which featured an old white man who worked on a potter's wheel producing cups and pots. I was so impressed that I decided I would like to train for that profession," Ibrahim explained. Based on her fascination Mariama Fahmbulleh has commented that, "weaving is an art which I had always loved. At my place of birth I was deprived of the opportunity to train because I happen to be a woman. When eventually I migrated to the city I got the opportunity and I took advantage of it to get proper training," Mariama

recalled. Looking back to the factors that prevented her from training as a weaver in her home town of Boijibu, Gbessay Goba lamented, "I became interested in training as a weaver when I was very young. Unfortunately, it was not easy to find someone to train me because I am a woman...When I eventually found a man who was prepared to train me, I happily accepted the offer."

Apprenticeship--A Form of Art Education

The artists I interviewed, made it clear that becoming an artist in the Sierra Leonean context involves a systematic and rigorous instructional process and it requires a dedicated tutor, great discipline and focus and a very positive attitude. The instructional process based on my observation at the sites visited included mental and practical exercises. The mental exercises entailed the knowledge of different techniques and processes relevant to the effective performance of the chosen craft. It also required the trainees to observe and learn the various elements of their profession. Through their training, they were required to perform and repeat different exercises under the instructor's supervision. The complexity of these assignments increased over time according to the rate of comprehension and experience of the trainee. The trainees learned and acquired new knowledge and skills by trial and error, and the imitation and repetition of different tasks. The instructors constantly reinforced the learning

process by meting out praise or censure.

The preferred and most easily accessible method of study for many artists in contemporary Sierra Leone is the apprenticeship process. All respondents in this study were trained via the apprenticeship framework. For some of the respondents, apprenticeship was a continuation of a family profession; for others it involved learning from an artist who was not necessarily their kin.

In the apprenticeship training system, (based on my observation during fieldwork) the artist's education is inextricably linked to the workday at the master/instructor's atelier. In this system, the trainees are both students and workers. They work and train with the other apprentices who are involved at various stages of their training. Although the senior apprentices contribute to the training of the junior apprentices in the workshop, the master/instructor has overall control of the training and work processes. The apprentice's work schedule is long and demanding. Trainees are expected to keep the same schedule as the instructor as long as they themselves are in good health. They work throughout the week and only stop for a few hours on Fridays for Muslim prayers, that is if they are practicing Muslims. The workday starts around seven o'clock in the morning and ends around seven in the evening. If the demand for the

workshop's products are high, the work day could even last longer. There is no formal lunch break. Masters and apprentices punctuate their work with a collective meal which includes all the people present in the workshop at the time. (It was on such occasions that I had the good fortune of being invited to some of the most sumptuous meals of my field trip).

Although none of the instructors or workshop leaders had written pedagogical outlines, it was evident that they had clearly worked out strategies of imparting knowledge and skills to their trainees. Such methods as observation, demonstration, participation, inquiry, and testing based on aspects of the training were regularly used. The instructor points out mistakes and the trainee then corrected and improved his or her basic skills of the craft.

From my observation the tests instituted by the instructors were meant to find out whether the trainees were on track to achieve competence. In some cases the tests were simple. As an example Alpha Kargbo's instructor in sculpture would request him to select from different types of wood suitable for sculpting a Sande mask. Since all types of wood are not suitable for mask-making, he would be expected to select the right type of wood in order to pass the test. My data indicated such tests were an integral part of the training for those who trained as sculptors.

Laude in confirming the importance of such a test has stated that:

In Africa, sculpture in wood predominates, but the wood used is never chosen haphazardly. Rather, a series of regulations determines the substance to be carved. For example, certain models of masks and statuettes must be sculpted from specific tree trunks (1971:76).

As another example, an instructor in pottery would request the trainee to prepare clay for a specific piece such as a water jug and in which case the instructor would be looking for the right composition of clay and other materials. My interview with Ibrahim Kamara indicated that similar tests formed part of his training. In comparison to my training as an artist in Britain I found these tests which I observed during my fieldwork are no different. But, instead of being asked to show my knowledge and skill by handling materials, I had no alternative but to demonstrate my knowledge in writing.

Mohammed Konneh, a weaver, began his education by observing his master and other workers. Sorie Koroma, Gbessay Goba and Haja Tejan-Kamara started off with simple tasks. Sorie Koroma, a sculptor, began with small tasks. According to Alfred, the only goldsmith in the study, his own training started when, "my instructors involved me in any commissions which they were working on. And in the process I was taught how to test...gold and silver...and to design and produce all types of jewelry..."

In some instances instructors charted out a systematic process of education divided into a series of segments and assignments. Alpha Kargbo, who was instructed by his father, completed different sets of "assignments" at regular intervals. These assignments ranged from selecting the right type of material to sculpting a mask to specification or preparing the stain for a mask from different materials. Any improperly completed assignments had to be repeated. Advancement to the next stage depended on the successful completion of a given stage. Eric Samai stated that his training was divided into three segments. The first two were similar to what the others trained by another weaver not far from his atelier were taught, but in the final segment he was grounded in the techniques of materials estimation which is a very important component for weavers. Philip Kainyande contended that his training was, "organized into segments and after completing each segment I was tested. If the instructor was not satisfied with my performance for each segment, I was not allowed to move to the next". Nearly all the respondents pointed out the importance of a successful completion of each stage, repetition of exercises and the testing of the knowledge acquired. To ensure that the trainees had mastered different techniques and could work independently, instructors routinely administered tests. However, in certain cases, testing was restricted. Alfred Sesay pointed out that he had a long training with limited testing due to the fact that it

was very costly to make mistakes when using precious metals like gold and silver. Testing was very restrictive in the case of Alfred because, as he explained, the high cost of gold or silver made trial-and-error learning too expensive. Instead, he was dependent on careful observation or sequential explanation from the instructor. When the instructor was certain that he could handle the materials precisely, the instructor would allow him to work on major tasks. One by-product of this situation was that the training period was often longer than other kinds of apprenticeships.

Discipline and focus marked the apprenticeship experiences of all the interviewed artists. Instructors insisted on regular improvement in performance and better output. Philip Kainyande, Gladys Mangbay, and Mabinty Koroma all described their instructors as being very strict. All echoed Philip's statement that if the instructor "detected the smallest mistake," he would immediately demand rectification. The exercises were repeated until a satisfactory output was obtained. In some cases, the instructors showed strong displeasure when trainees performed badly. Gladys declared, "I was blamed a lot by the instructor and to the point that I nearly abandoned the training." Alpha Kargbo also found himself in the position of being chastised for bad workmanship. According to Mohamed Konneh, his instructor would critically examine the work pointing to sections which

he would condemn as not properly done. "I would then be asked to undo and re-do those sections," Mohamed recalled.

Chastisement created temporary discouragement but it also disciplined and sometimes motivated the trainees. Alpha Kargbo, who was "blamed or chastised" a lot for his mistakes did not object to this treatment, but rather accepted it as a corrective measure that would steer him towards his goal of becoming an artist. Sorie Koroma, a sculptor, was not deterred by the constant insults or threats of punishment by his instructor. He maintained that, despite his humiliation, he was determined to continue the training and become competent. Haja Tejan-Kamara avoided blame by being "conscious of not making mistakes" that could in any way trigger her instructor's indignation.

Praise and appreciation balanced chastisement, reinforcing the self-confidence and development of the trainees. Alfred Sesay and Haja Tejan-Kamara received praise regularly from their instructors because of the high quality of their work. Philip Kainyande liked the praise and expressions of support, and subsequently uses the same technique to train others. Mabinty Bangura, who attempted on several occasions to abandon her training because of overwork, was constantly encouraged by her instructor to continue: the instructor was her mother.

Except for two respondents who liked all aspects of their training, the others viewed certain aspects unfavorably. Many respondents, even when they liked their training, saw many ancillary tasks as repetitive, boring and sometimes unappealing. This was well summarized by Alpha Kargbo who stated that he disliked sanding sculpture pieces although he did not mind undertaking that task earlier on when he was not competent at the other tasks such as creating his own pieces. Alfred Sesay, a Goldsmith, did not "enjoy working the bellows or the anvil or stretching gold or silver into wire." In the case of Sorie Koroma, his dislike for learning how to sculpt animal forms was based on his belief that these forms did not bear any cultural importance to the art in Sierra Leone. Some of the respondents contemplated dropping out of the training programs because of the unfavorable aspects of their training, yet held on and persevered through difficult conditions to attain their goals.

For their part, the instructors set high standards and motivated the trainees and inspired them. Alpha Kargbo, Ibrahim Kamara and Mariama Fahmbulleh praised the well structured and balanced programs their instructors had provided. Sorie Koroma, Haja Tejan-Kamara and Mabinty Bangura indicated that their instructors deliberately kept the quality of their programs very high, in the hope that the trainees would attain to their supervisor's level. Eric Samai's

training prepared him to perform the functions of an artist confidently and independently.

On the completion of their training the apprentices were usually not eager to part company with their instructors, even those who were not family relatives. They stayed on as a sign of gratitude and to consolidate their own professional standing. In some cases these former-apprentices single-handedly undertook the instructor's commission without pay. For example, some instructors demanded a part of the newly trained artist's earnings. In such cases, the graduate trainees were happy to comply with the instructor's wishes, considering that they did not pay for their training, unlike their counterparts in other areas of West Africa (d'Azevedo, 1973:322-323). [Laude (1966) and d'Azevedo (1973) have commented on the training of artists in some areas of West Africa where the apprentices are charged a fee by the instructor for their training. According to them, payment for such services could either be in cash or kind depending on what the parents of the prospective candidate can afford. (1966:21)]

Studio Facilities, Physical Work Environment

My visits to studios revealed a variety of set-ups. Some of the facilities were well planned and could be rated as excellent, while others were far from ideal and therefore

would rank as below average. My interviews also revealed that some of the artists owned their own studios while the others worked from rented facilities. The group of artists who were temporarily housed at the Kissy Refugee Camp in Freetown worked from makeshift studios but of a reasonable quality. For some of them, the main concern was that they were compelled to share studio facilities with other artists usually from the same district. Although some complained that the facilities were not comparable to what they were used to, I found that their makeshift facilities were better than the facilities used by some of the artists who were permanently based in the city. Despite their discontent, these displaced artists were producing good quality work. However, for some of them, the hope of returning someday to their usual working conditions was paramount.

One of the workshops I visited at the Refugee Camp was also an artist training center which housed artists, instructors and apprentices from most of the regions of Sierra Leone, all working and training together. This was an experiment funded by UNICEF and CAUSE Canada to train refugee students in the arts. The instructors--all traditionally trained artists--were mostly refugees. The program was funded on the understanding that instruction would be based on a planned curriculum. The information received from Eric Samai, one of my respondents, who is an instructor in the program,

revealed that with the assistance of Sierra Leonean educational planners they were able to prepare a curriculum acceptable to the sponsors. Since its inception in 1994, the program has trained about one hundred artists in weaving, textile dyeing/batik, sculpture, and black smithing.

Philip Kainyande a respondent, located in the west of Freetown and specializing in sculpture, worked from an open yard which he shared with the other tenants who lived in the compound. Activities that went on within the vicinity of his work space varied from women cooking to children playing. Normally one might expect an artist working under such abysmal conditions to perform poorly: however, this was not the case. This artist's work was of an outstanding quality with patronage from all the groups in the community-including foreigners. His poor working conditions did not stop him from accommodating another sculptor equally displaced by the civil war. In my opinion, this artist could easily produce work of an even higher quality in a better working environment. I could tell from my interview that although he sounded modest, he is proud of his present achievement and has gained an opportunity to even do better to promote his profession.

Although the studio of Sorie Koroma was only large enough to accommodate one person, the artist shared it with two apprentices. All three managed to work together without

getting in each other's way.

The work facility owned by Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara a female textile artist, one of the better known in the city, was quite well organized. She lived in a modern house in a large compound. Her studio and display room housed a collection of her finished work, occupying a sizable section of the compound.

[Throughout my visits to work facilities, it was evident that many visitors frequented the studios of artists to observe them at work and admire their production. Such visits did not distract the artists. In rare cases they stopped working to chat with the visitors. Food vendors also stopped by to sell food. In many instances, the artist bought food for him or herself and the apprentice(s) and myself.]

Social and Economic Dimensions of Arts Training

Restriction on Women in the Arts

The artists that participated in this study worked in the following fields:- sculpture, pottery, weaving, textile dyeing/batik and goldsmithery. The women artists were in the fields of textile dyeing/batik and weaving. The men worked in all the fields listed. For traditional reasons, women in Sierra Leone are not encouraged to train in such fields as sculpture, goldsmithery, blacksmithery and even weaving. A

man on the contrary, can train in all fields of art including pottery which is regarded as a speciality for women. The reasons given by the male artists was that the work involved was too strenuous for women.

Family tradition, however, guaranteed neither family consent nor sponsorship. Gender and the nature of the artistic field sometimes presented obstacles to being able to fulfill one's decision to become an artist. For example, three of the female respondents--Mariama Tuwa Fahmbulleh, Gbessay Goba and Gladys Mangbay--chose to further their family weaving tradition. However, they could not receive the necessary training because of their female status. [In research conducted in Kono, Sierra Leone between 1982 and 1984, Kris Harding confirms that there are by-laws which forbid women in Kono, Sierra Leone to weave and forbid men to spin thread (1996:36). According to Peter B. Hammond, this practice is not restricted to Sierra Leone. He states that "in West Africa, only men weave cloth [on a horizontal loom], and only they are allowed to sew it into garments." (1971:113-114) In desperation, each of the women eventually moved to Freetown, it being more cosmopolitan, where the restrictive practices connected with the training of female artists in certain fields are not observed. Since completing their training as weavers, these women have since made great efforts to train other women and men in the field.] Although it is their wish

to return home and help train their compatriots, these women are still working in Freetown due to the volatile political situation.

The female respondents clearly saw the completion of their training and their subsequent recognition as artists as an important achievement in the struggle for social equality and economic security for women. For Mariama Fahmbulleh and Gbessay Goba, their training provided them with an opportunity to break into a profession that had been dominated by men. Both women had been denied the opportunity to learn weaving in their places of birth and had seized the opportunity to do so after they relocated to Freetown. Mariama, one of the few successful women weavers in Sierra Leone, was determined to prove she could be as capable as a man. She produced a loincloth (lappa) which became quite popular among women. For Gbessay, performing as to a high standard was important because she had to, "prove that women are capable of performing as equally well as...men," in the art of weaving. Whether they received praises or chastisement, the trainees viewed their training process as valuable and their instructors as indispensable. They were grateful and gave credit to their instructors and programs for developing their skills.

Although this explanation may sound incredible to the

western observer or to the Sierra Leonean who trained as an artist in a western country, this is how these traditionally trained artists are indoctrinated by their instructors to view the matter in a country where women are still not totally emancipated. Kris Hardin, an American anthropologist who studied the Kono ethnic group between March 1982 and April 1984, encountered a similar situation when she tried to find out why women do not weave. The explanation she received from an old man in the community was that, "if a woman wove cloth or mat she would have to sit with her legs apart and a young man would be able to look up her skirt" (1987:129). It is not customary for women in these communities to wear pants just like their counterparts in the developed countries or Asia do. Hardin received an explanation as to why women do not weave from a woman in the community. The woman explained that the weaving profession was originally allocated by the Supreme Being to a woman at the time when allocation for professions were done according to gender. Unfortunately this woman taught her son instead of a daughter to succeed her. Since that fatal error, women have been banned from weaving--although they are still depended upon to spin the thread that is utilized by the men weavers (1987:129). According to Kris Hardin, the law against women weaving in the Kono community is strictly enforced. If a woman is caught weaving she is imposed a fine by the tribal head of the community--who is usually a male. A man caught spinning thread (which is a

woman's domain) is not legally punished by a fine; however, it is believed he will become impotent (1987:128). Jules-Rosette claims that in the regions of West and Central Africa, "these distinctions have their roots in ritual requirements and prohibitions traditionally placed on women" (1984:81-82). Based on the progress made by women who have moved to the capital city of Freetown to defy the ban on weaving imposed on them in their communities, there is hope that the ban will soon be totally lifted. What is interesting about the issue is that some of the weavers who were not willing to instruct women in their provincial communities have willingly instructed them in Freetown. Much to their personal pride, these women are performing extremely well as weavers.

Art Production: Economics and Professional Arrangements

Production for some of the specializations, such as goldsmithery, is strictly through commissions from patrons. Artists in the other fields produce work which they sell through art galleries and other outlets. Some artists with display facilities at their studios can exhibit and sell their production directly to the public. Some are involved in networks through which they sell the work of their colleagues.

Although some of the areas of art production like sculpture and pottery are no longer culturally viable, the works produced in the other areas are still in demand for cultural purposes. Artists in weaving, cloth dyeing/batik,

and goldsmithery still keep very busy with the production of artifacts that are needed for cultural events. These artifacts range from textiles for the wrappings of newborn babies, outfits for weddings or burial shrouds, Poro or Sande graduation outfits, hunters protection garments, pottery for storing grains, pots for storing medicinal herbs and trinkets for weddings or other ceremonies. One of the sculptors Philip Kainyande whom I interviewed was working on a commission from a women's ethnic association. He was to produce a Sande mask for ritualistic use. Alpha Kargbo had earlier finished a similar commission. For such commissions they had to observe strict rules like not allowing others to observe them working on the masks. They also had to perform an appeasement ceremony in honor of the deities involved. These artists were thrilled to be honored with such commissions because it raised them to a level of prominence as professional artists.

Because of the growing popularity of African art in the developed world, such as Europe and North America, about eight of the artists in the study--particularly the sculptors, some of the weavers, the tie-dyers and the goldsmith--are now selling their work abroad either through Sierra Leoneans living abroad or to visiting international art dealers who purchase the work for their own dealerships. Such transactions are lucrative for the artists in that they demand a higher price for their production.

Artist in the Community

Place of the Artist in the Community

Artists in Sub-Saharan Africa occupy a significant position in many of their societies. Because of their creative abilities, it is usually believed in Africa that they are endowed with supernatural powers. Consequently, these artists tend to be placed in a niche somewhere between fear and admiration. Their works have both ritualistic and utilitarian purposes. Products of artists can be found everywhere in the community. Wooden spoons, pottery and kettles are used on a daily basis for household functions. Cloth and jewelry are worn regularly by community members. Most houses are adorned with sculptures or paintings. Many popular masquerade groups, like Odelay, and ethnic associations such as Bundo, Sande and Oje, depend on the creative knowledge of artists for their masks and costumes. Artists who make such creations imbue them with high aesthetics, deep mysticism and symbolic presentation that increase public fear or admiration of these societies. Thus, everywhere in the community there are signs of artists' efforts and contributions.

Whether their products were for ritualistic or for utilitarian purposes, the respondents were well aware of the fact that the society values and appreciates their work. This accords with Ronald Neperud's assertion that many artists "generally enjoyed a high reputation" within the community

because of their artistic contribution to the functioning of the society. This status sometimes translates into financial and other material compensation (Nepurud:1969:17-21, Laude 1966:21). All of the artists I interviewed felt that people demonstrated this value and appreciation through purchase, commission or scholarly interests. Philip Kainyande has annual, well-attended public exhibitions and his work is used by the Sande ethnic association. Gladys Mangbay and Mohamed Konneh noted that they had a high number of commissions, some of which came from "foreigners and diplomats." Mabinty Bangura and Mariama Fahmbulleh are pleasantly surprised by the popularity of their work and are proud that the scholarly community takes a keen interest in them. Haja Tejan-Kamara has received invitations to serve as a visiting artist at the University of Toronto and other overseas universities. She is also the winner of the British Commonwealth International Art Award. It is the strong social recognition such as this that gives artists access to regular financial compensation (John Nunley, 1987:140).

The relationship between artists and their communities is reciprocal. Artists recognize that they have a responsibility to help and positively contribute to their communities. According to Gbessay Goba, the artist's work should be community oriented. In the opinions of Ibrahim Kamara, Sorie Koroma and Mohamed Konneh, helping the community includes the

production of artifacts for ritualistic and utilitarian purposes. These artifacts must be of sufficiently high standard and quality that they are acceptable to the community. Such artifacts include decorative masks that could be worn by masquerades or used for rituals, well-woven and designed textiles that could be proudly worn by members of the community-oriented functions, elegant sculptural pieces that could decorate houses, fashionable jewelry that could enhance the appearance of the wearers, and beautiful paintings that could hang on the walls of private homes and public buildings. To Gladys Mangbay and Philip Kainyande producing artifacts at a reasonable cost and to the specifications and satisfaction of the clients constitutes a major contribution to community development. Caring for the community and responding to its needs is noted as a major factor which for some of the respondents distinguishes them from parts in the developed world. As Nunley (1984) comments, the artist in the developed world, "is often seen as a misfit, a neurotic person who is at odds with his [her] society" (139). The respondents in this study all recognize the importance of community support during their training process. Thus, the lives and work of local artists are grounded within the community. They also realize that the community depends on them as artists for certain utilitarian, ritualistic and aesthetic items. By producing these items, the respondents know that they play a vital role in the maintenance and promotion of indigenous culture.

According to Alfred Sesay and Ibrahim Kamara, it is this realization of their place and importance in the community that spurs them to produce good quality work. For Eric Samai and Gladys Mangbay, caring for the community is also evident in their commitment to educate the next generation of artists.

Sierra Leonean Artists in Relation to Other Artists

Six of the artists in this study are not really concerned about what Western-trained artists are doing. This opinion was expressed during our conversations before the interviews. These artists are more focused on their own production. For the majority of them work is about survival. The harder they work and the more they produce, the better it is for them. They spend their entire work day trying to finish their commissions or looking for more work. I also discovered that the majority of the artists do not attend exhibitions-possibly because they are not invited. Even some of those who I invited to an exhibition that I was participating in did not turn up. Those who were participating at this exhibition, attended the opening ceremony and showed interest in my work by asking questions about my technique. The interview also revealed that the artists that they relate to are those to whom they are closely related through their training. Some of the artists were also interested in the work of artists who worked in the same discipline as they. Philip Kainyande (a sculptor) in particular named only sculptors, and Ibrahim

Kamara (a potter) named only potters.

If the artists interviewed did not relate to the work produced by the local artists in their environment, it would not be easy for them to relate to the work done by international artists because of their geographical isolation. Although a few of the artists had some international exposure, the exhibitions they had attended did not seem to have left much of an impression. Although they agreed that they had not had much exposure to the work of artists overseas it did not mean they were not capable of appreciating the work of foreign artists of a high quality.

Sierra Leonean Artists in Relation to the World Community of Artists

An opportunity to visit another country was welcomed by all respondents. Their reason for wanting to travel is not based on a desire to improve their artistic capability but of having the opportunity to demonstrate their artistic skills, especially to those who do not accept them as competent artists. The choice of country varied from the developed to the developing. The United States and Europe were popular choices. For some, the choice was based on the fact that a relative was already living in the country they selected. For Haja Tejan-Kamara, who had served as a visiting artist in North America and Europe, the choice of India was based on the

rationale that textile artists in India produced good quality textiles that are comparable to Haja Tejan-Kamara's.

Contribution to National Development

This study demonstrated that artists are important pillars of their communities. It has indirectly raised the issues of their importance and contribution to national development. The contribution of the artist materially to national development, especially in developing countries that are economically strangled, is much debated by international organizations such as UNESCO. Developed countries heavily subsidize the arts with the expectation that they will generate social and economic returns. In such countries artists are seen as contributors to a vibrant social life as well as to the national economy. Their products usually help in the shaping of popular cultures and national identities. Laws, policies and institutions are specifically created to protect and support their training and work.

Artists in Sierra Leone and, indeed, in Africa at large perform no less than their Western counterparts and in several cases make comparable contributions to the national culture and gross national product. Sierra Leonean artists according to this data contribute to the social, cultural and economic development of their societies. Through tourism and international trade they attract foreign attention and

interest to African art. Already in the developed countries there is a growing market for art products from the developing countries. The main criteria is that they must be well produced and reasonably priced. In some cases, artists whose work is found acceptable to international art dealers or art educators are invited to serve as visiting artists for a reasonable fee. Some are now invited to exhibit their work at internationally juried exhibitions. Their services as teachers/lecturers are readily sought at schools and institutions of higher education within the country and overseas. My claim that the art products from the developing world are in demand in the developed world could be substantiated by my visit to some of the shopping malls in Montreal. Shops retailing woven and dyed textiles, sculpture in wood, pottery and jewelry from developing countries are opening at these malls. On my return from my fieldwork in Sierra Leone in 1997, I took samples of woven and dyed textiles from two of the respondents in my study to a shop in Montreal that retailed such items from developing countries. It was not surprising that the proprietor of the dealership was prepared to put in an order through me for some of the items he had seen. The sudden eruption of the political situation in Sierra Leone prevented me from undertaking the venture.

Although trade statistics in Sierra Leone do not normally

cover the sale of artist's works locally or overseas, the sale of such work to art dealers from overseas is booming. The artists in the study verified this observation. Philip Kainyande alone is generating sales through his overseas contacts worth over 5,000 Dollars (U.S.) annually. His local commissions and other sales through local galleries may be nearly as much. Mohamed Konneh, as a successful weaver with a team of weavers working with him, is selling woven textiles worth over 6,000 Dollars (U.S.) annually through his overseas contacts. Locally his production is worth far more than his overseas transactions. Haja Tejan-Kamara is believed to be generating far more funds overseas and locally due to her international reputation. I reckon that her overseas and local sales is above 20,000 US dollars annually. These figures may look modest to the reader from the developed countries but considering that the average wages for a local worker in Sierra Leone is between 500 and 1,000 Dollars (U.S.) annually, these artists are doing comparatively well.

Summary

This chapter analyzed the data from the twelve respondents. It examined their decisions to become artists which are: (1) family tradition (2) the quest for decent employment, and (3) fascination with artistic process and materials. The data also highlighted an intensity in the apprenticeship training programs. An examination of the

physical work environment revealed a variety of set-ups. The place and function of the artist in the community was discussed and so was their contribution to national development.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of traditional forms of education including traditional schools and apprenticeships to the training of Sierra Leonean artists. The study focused on the following areas: (1) The contribution of traditional schools and apprenticeships to the training process; (2) the training methods that were used by the instructors; (3) the suitability of the training for the role played by the artists and (4) the contribution of artists and art training to the national economy and cultural identity. Apart from developing an ethnographical framework, relevant literature was reviewed in three areas: (1) traditional education; (2) the education of the artist; and (3) the concept of an educated person. The historical development of Sierra Leone was examined to set these forms of art education within their historical, social and cultural contexts.

Participant observation and interviewing were the research methods used in this study. Interviews were recorded on cassette tapes, and photographs of respondents and their apprentices were taken at work, the researcher's (my) field

observations were recorded in field notes. Based on the findings reported in Chapter Six, this concluding chapter presents implications for art education policies and practices in Sierra Leone as well as recommendations and suggestions for further research.

Conclusions

The results of the interviews show that artists who are educated through traditional methods feel that they are well prepared for the task of serving their communities. Their training shares similarities with what is provided for their counterparts in developed countries. As summarized by Oguntona (1981) African traditional artists because of their training contribute to the "religious, political, economic, educational, social and cultural activities of their environment" (172).

Laude has confirmed that:

Africa produces [traditionally trained] artists in the full sense of the word...The African artist is a man [woman] who first of all learned a craft according to specific rules of an aesthetic as well as a social order. (1971:91)

The result of my fieldwork support my second claim that the traditionally trained artists in Sierra Leone are contributing immensely to the economic and social enhancement of their communities. A number of researchers from the developed countries such as Laude (1971) d'Azevedo (1973) Nunley (1987), have commented on the contribution of

traditionally trained artists to the social and economic enhancement of their local and national communities. Each of the twelve artists in this study are producing some amount of work for ritualistic uses as well as for art collectors. Based on my conversation with the artists, all of them are able to earn a decent living from their work. A few of them as indicated in the previous chapter earn far above what those in the professional class in Sierra Leone earn. Because of their earning capacity, the government can benefit directly and indirectly through taxation.

The Advantages of Artistic Contribution

Another relevant point is that artistic contributions are a means of enshrining and preserving our culture. Like other African states, Sierra Leone can take steps through the arts to create artistic awareness by organizing arts festivals at a national level. The media, including radio and television programs could be utilized to publicize such events.

Based on the interest shown in African art in the developed countries such as in Europe and North America, there are indications that educational institutions in most parts of the world are planning courses in African art. This creates an urgent need for relevant teaching materials to facilitate both teaching and learning about this new area in their curricula. This assertion is substantiated by McFee and

Degge's suggestion that if educators help students to appreciate cultural diversity in art, "they may be better able to understand themselves in their own cultural background," (1980:297). Similar views are expressed by Boyer: "The ability to compare and contrast one's own culture with other cultural perspectives is essential to acquiring cultural literacy," (1987:100). To assist art educators who are focusing on the significance of cultural diversity in art education, F. Graeme Chalmers advises that:

To approach art education as global education it is necessary to eliminate many conventional notions of what school art is, and to look instead for art's functions and roles in cultural life. What does art mean across cultures? Why is art created? How is art used?...Global education is for everyone. Perhaps children from culturally homogeneous societies need global education even more than others. Their understanding, appreciation, and respect for cultural diversity and the artistic production of others, and their limited awareness of global issues, needs to be expanded, and their possible limited views of the world need to be challenged. (1995:23-24)

In advocating the inclusion of African content as part of a culturally diverse art curriculum in American schools, William Bradley has commented that:

One relatively unanalyzed influence on art education curriculum in America (and throughout Europe) is that of Africa and, in particular, Nigeria, where the ceremonial wood carvings and bronzes imported into and housed in Paris and London near the turn of the century helped to create a rethinking of the nature of both cultural and private functions of art. Because of these implantations, civilizations could no longer be measured according to a simple evolutionary development. The factors of custom, environment,

religion, function, and history could now be seen
as important considerations for teaching art.
(1984:228)

The model would incorporate aspects of mask production using local materials and weaving and using locally produced looms and cotton. Also, traditionally trained artists would be encouraged to teach, using teaching skills similar to those that they have used in the past to train their students in traditional schools and apprenticeships. Where possible, some of the classes could be held in the studios of the artists. Such an environment may be enlightening to those students who believe that Western education is superior to traditional education.

Relevance of the Findings for Art Education Program

Development

From the findings of the pilot study, it was clear that the functions of traditional art are changing in Sierra Leone and so are the artists. From producing artifacts for ritualistic and social use, the artists are now producing art objects which are bought by tourists and collectors-mostly foreigners. Because of this expanded clientele more artists are working full-time.

Although the situation is not yet clear in Sierra Leone, artists experience some distress at not being able to produce more work which is ritually useful to the community. African

artists are trained to believe that they have an obligation to their communities. It is normal for artists to measure their success in part by the number of artifacts that they produce for ritualistic purposes. The question is, will artists continue to play an important role in enhancement of culture in their communities? I think that they will continue to see themselves as contributors to ancient rituals and traditions.

Based on his study of Ode-lay artists and their local patrons in Sierra Leone, Nunley contends that, "Whereas art patrons of the West seldom meet art producers or meet them only in a gallery context, African buyers carry on a dialogue with the artist from the beginning of the work to its final installation or presentation," (1987:151).

Since the role of the traditional artist is changing, the alternative is for the local ethnic authorities, along with the support of Sierra Leonean art educators, to plan programs for the education of future artists. Such programs need not be carbon copies of Western models but rather a mixture of both.

Therefore for such plans to be meaningful and acceptable to the community, the traditionally trained artist who is acknowledged by the community as successful, should be involved in the planning and implementation of the program. Due to differences in their methods of training, the

traditionally trained artist may not readily agree to work with his/her Western-trained counterpart. However I believe that with proper handling, the matter could be amicably resolved.

As a means of helping to preserve aspects of Sierra Leonean culture, especially those that formed a part of traditional school education, steps should be taken to incorporate aspects of traditional schools into the Western-type schools. Instruction could be provided by traditionally trained instructors working with experienced Western trained educators. For example: as a way of expanding the concept of the importance of traditional art in contemporary Sierra Leone, a traditionally trained sculptor, Samuel Marco, was recruited as an artist-in-residence at the Institute of African Studies, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone from 1992 to 1994. During his tenure at the Institute he was delegated to teach courses in sculpting. The students were divided into small groups to work with him. The classes were offered for six hours a week. As a medium of instruction he conducted his classes in Krio which is the lingua franca of Sierra Leone. Apart from the mandatory classes the students were encouraged to visit his studio to observe him at work. During his tenure between 1992 and 1994 the Institute organized two exhibitions of his work. He was also invited in 1993 by the Commonwealth Institute in London to attend a month

seminar in Hull, England for artists from Commonwealth countries.

An Example of Successful Integration of Western and Traditional Approaches

This program was inaugurated in October, 1992. This system is already being used by the University of Sierra Leone in the 'Artist-in-Residence Program' in which the traditionally trained artist is appointed to instruct students. It incorporated three main components: (1) The artist aiding the students to develop their artistic skill. (2) The artist demonstrating his\her artistic skills and allowing students to observe and ask questions. (3) The artist exhibiting his\her work for the viewing of the college community and others. After careful consideration the Institute invited Samuel Marco, one of the leading Sierra Leonean traditionally trained sculptors, to serve as artist-in-residence for two years. Although the Institute did not want to create a rigid contract with the artist, it was made clear to him that he was expected to keep regular working hours and be willing to meet with official visitors to the Institute. He also agreed to produce a number of artifacts which were to be kept by the Institute in return for providing working space and materials. His salary for the period compared favorably with that of other members of the university staff. Since the Institute was aware that his earnings would drop, he was allowed to augment

his salary by producing work for his clients. Although he may have lost earnings during this period, the high-profile of the appointment boosted his position as a traditional artist within the community. Although I was not available to evaluate the program at the end of his tenure, the verbal reports I received from colleagues at the Institute during my fieldwork visit indicated that the program served its intended purpose of creating an awareness of the importance of traditional Sierra Leonean art to university students and the community at large. It also highlighted the fact that the traditional artist has a part to play in the education of the student at the university level.

Suggestions for Future Research

This study examined the traditional artistic training processes, the nature of the artists' work, the place of the artists in their communities and their contributions to Sierra Leone's national development. Considering that this area of research is relatively unexplored, additional research will be required in a number of areas. Two questions needing further study are: (1) Why are some fields of visual arts enjoying more popularity than others? and (2) Why are women excluded from training in some areas, such as sculpture and goldsmithery? Research is also needed to explore the reasons why an increasing number of students are requesting traditional artistic training, even after they have received

a Western-type education. Further research is also needed on the role and function of artists as makers of important items for rituals. The development of curriculum programs that will reflect the importance of traditional art education should also be evaluated. Further research into the integration of traditional artists as visual art teachers in the Sierra Leone educational system should be undertaken. The advantages of introducing art education to children at an early age as an enculturation process should be evaluated, considering that some of the respondents in this study indicated that their interest in traditional art was kindled through parental exposure at an early age. In the hope of improving the general quality of education in Sierra Leone research should be implemented to formulate ways of integrating art into the teaching of subjects such as social studies and mathematics.

Recommendations\Proposals for Change to Aid Sierra Leonean Artists

The major challenge for the Sierra Leone government is to harness this potential and use it effectively in the task of national development. Governments have to develop policies and institutions that will help the development of the arts. Support should be given to the Arts Education Unit at the National Ministry of Education. More facilities should be provided for artists to organize and improve their work and output. Governments should discourasge the importation of

items that reduce the demand for the work of local artists and endeavor to improve local artistic output. The results of this could increase the economic opportunities for local artists and also help reduce the balance-of-trade and need for foreign currency exchange. Governments can also use the arts and artists to elevate the national ethos of the nation.

Most importantly, governments should devote more attention to helping with the development of indigenous artistic training processes. Schemes should be set up at the national level to help artists, especially the young ones, to establish workshops. Such artists as goldsmiths should receive government commissions to produce jewelry that will be sold to jewelers in the developed countries where there is a demand for such production. The new junior secondary school system and vocational training colleges can benefit from the indigenously trained artists. Lastly, children and youth should be given the opportunity to participate in traditional art activities which will be meaningful to them, considering that art is interrelated to other subjects in the school curriculum. Alternatively, such activities could also form a part of their extra-curricular activities.

Although traditional education is being superseded by a Western model of education in Sierra Leone, the data emanating from this study will be useful to educational planners who are

formulating art training programs which integrate aspects of both the traditional and Western educational models.

And so we have seen how relevant the work of traditional artists is to the enhancement of culture in Sierra Leone. The stage is now set for further research that will help to highlight the link between art education and culture. Such a link is necessary if the educational system is expected to play an integral part in promoting economic and civic health and maintaining our cultural traditions.

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APPENDIX

PERSONAL DATA AND INTERVIEWS WITH RESPONDENTS

Personal Data and Interview with Mabinty Bangura

Name: Mabinty Bangura

Age: 50 yrs.

Gender: Female

Area of Specialization: Textile dyeing\Batik

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Temne\Port Loko

Length of Experience: 35 yrs.

Date of Interview: January 19, 1997

Relationship to Teacher: Family member

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. It was inevitable that I had to train, because my mother was already in the profession. Because of this family connection I started early but my apprenticeship only commenced when I was old enough to work on my own.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. My training started with the instructor teaching me to design the textile by tying, knotting, and stamping. This aspect took a while to complete because it is the backbone of the art. I was next taught how to prepare the dye. I was then taught how to dip the prepared material. Finally, I was instructed in the finishing process.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. As an instructor, my mother was very methodical. She made sure that I moved from one stage to the other when she was satisfied that I had mastered the previous stage. She also tested me by letting me work on stripes of materials which she would assess before getting on to the next stage.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. Although my mother was hard, she did not blame me a lot during my training. If she detected a mistake, she would insist that I re-do the work.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. Although tying and knotting were not easy to master, when I first started these were the aspects that I enjoyed. I also enjoyed dipping the material because at this stage you see the result of your effort.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I did not enjoy mixing the dye because the work was back breaking: you had to stoop for long hours. I also did not enjoy preparing the hot wax on the fire. The slightest mistake you make in the process gets your fingers burnt.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. During the early stage of my training, I did not take things too seriously. It was when my friends started praising my work and requesting me to produce work for them, this was when I realized that I was in the process of becoming an artist.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. Although I was not free to abandon my training, there were times when I ran away to the next town to avoid the hard work that I had to endure during the period. In each case, I was brought back and offered words of advice by my mother.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist in my field should be an expert in the various aspects of the work. They should also be capable of creating new designs at the request of the clients.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their community by producing beautifully designed and reasonably priced fabric for use at various functions. They can also help by undertaking commissions from members of the community.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As a textile artist, I help my community by training young people to become artists and by producing work for commissions. To help some of my clients, I encourage them to provide the materials for their commissions and I charge for my professional services only or I can work on their commissions by providing materials which will be included in the final cost. Whatever method I use my clients are always carefully considered.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. I am proud to state that I have not yet met those who make adverse comments about my work because I have always worked relentlessly to produce good quality work that reflects the cultural aspirations of the community.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. As an artist who has spent most of my working life training people to become artists, I still find it important to continue the process because those trained will be able to earn a living. To show how important it is to train others, I have extended my training to include medical doctors, nurses, teachers and office workers. My only criteria for selection is the will to learn.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your

instructor.

A14. The training that was given to me by my mother was so good that I would have liked to thank her if she were still alive. I have been able to hold my own as an artist and to influence the community through my work.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should be calm, calculated, knowledgeable in his/her field of art and be prepared to help students achieve their artistic goal.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. Some of the artists whose work I admire are Mariatu Sesay and Foday Bangura.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I like the work of some non-African artists but I do not know their names.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit Nigeria because of the high quality of textiles that they have been producing.

Personal Data and Interview with Mariama Fahmbulleh

Name: Mariama Fahmbulleh

Age: 28 yrs.

Gender: Female

Area of Specialization: Weaving

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Mende\Bonthe

Length of Experience: 10 yrs.

Date of Interview: January 2, 1997

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. Weaving is an art that I had always loved. At my place of birth I was deprived of the opportunity to train because I happen to be a woman. When eventually I migrated to the capital city I got the opportunity and I took advantage of it to get proper training. Now that I am a skilled weaver I would not consider giving it up for another profession. I believe that, as years go by, I will eventually make a name for myself and contribute even more positively to the profession. Through hard work I will also prove to the men folk that discriminating against women in a profession like weaver is unwarranted. They should not forget that women use the services of weavers more than men.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. My instructor started by teaching me how to run the warp thread. That task took me a while to master. I next received instructions on using my hands and feet to coordinate the operation of the loom. From that exercise, I progressed to weaving on a strip loom which produces a narrower strip of cloth. Once I had mastered that operation I went back to warping for the weaving of an hammock. Since this project was more demanding, other apprentices were allowed to work on it with me. At the completion of the project, the instructor taught me to work out patterns on loin cloth and chair covers. From my observation, the program was so well-structured that I was able to notice my progression.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. We were taught aspects of the program and the instructor tested us at each stage. There were times when we were given assignments to work on. On completion, he would examine the work carefully for mistakes. If any were found, he would request us to re-do the piece.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. At first the instructor blamed me for even the smallest mistake that he detected in my work. When I started improving he changed to praising and encouraging me to work harder.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. I really enjoyed incorporating patterns and designs into most pieces that I worked on. As a woman, I enjoyed weaving loincloth for use by us women.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. There was no aspect of my training that I did not enjoy. I even enjoyed doing the layout of the warp thread which my colleagues disliked doing. It was a time consuming exercise but I always managed to accomplish it in the shortest possible time and without mistakes.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. When I first started training I was worried that I would not accomplish my goal, especially as I had earlier been made to believe that weaving was not a profession for women. Because the instructor accelerated the pace of my training, I felt at a point that I would not be able to achieve my aim of becoming a weaver. As I continued working on projects, my skills developed at an unbelievable rate. In the end, I am thankful that I did not give up at the time when I felt I was not progressing.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. I was free to abandon my training but I did not have that

thought as part of my agenda, considering that I was given the opportunity to be trained in a profession that I had earlier been made to believe was exclusively for men. I was so focused when I started that my only concern was to qualify.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist in the profession of weaving is one who is competent in all aspects of weaving. He or she must be innovative and capable of creating new designs.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. An artist can help the community by training young people to become artists that are capable of earning a living. They can also help by producing artistic work for the cultural enhancement of the community.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist, I have been helping my community by producing good quality textiles such as loincloth for women and fabric for apparels worn at various functions, and furnishing materials for use in the home. I also produce work for exhibitions and community-organized cultural events. Some of these events are patronized by diplomats and foreign visitors.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is appreciated by my clients and others. This makes me happy because I did not know that after my training, I would enjoy such popularity through my work as an artist. Even some of my clients living overseas are very appreciative of the pieces that I produce for them.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. I have no objection to training others in such an important profession, considering that after their training they will be able to earn a decent living as artists. Moreover, they will aid the development of weaving in the community and the country.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. The training I received from my instructor was of a high standard. It incorporated all the qualities, capabilities and skills that make a competent artist.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should have the patience and skills to guide the students to learn. He or she should also be a competent artist, skilled in all aspects of the art. It is advantageous if he or she is aware of the students feelings.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion

may have influenced you.

A16. Unfortunately, I am not familiar with the work of other artists apart from those I work with.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I admire the work of Chinese artists but unfortunately I do not know their names.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit the United States of America.

Personal Data and Interview with Gbessay Goba

Name: Gbessay Goba

Age: 25 yrs.

Gender: Female

Area of Specialization: Weaving

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Mende\Boajibu

Length of Experience: 10 yrs.

Date of Interview: December 30, 1996

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. I became interested in training as a weaver when I was very young. Unfortunately it was not easy to find someone to

train me because I am a woman. The men who are well-established always told me openly that weaving was not a profession for women. When I eventually found a man who was prepared to train me, I happily accepted the offer.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. I started by doing very simple tasks after observing the instructor at work. My first assignment was to lay out the warp for weaving. Next I started weaving just to get the feel of operating a loom. Once my dexterity was established, I worked on weaving scarves and loincloth. At intervals, the instructor would check my mistakes and get me to correct them. When he was sure I could weave accurately, he taught me to create patterns and the letters of the alphabet.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. I was tested at each stage of the work. In some cases, I was asked to explain aspects of the work. When the instructor was satisfied that I could weave well, he explained to me how to estimate the amount of material that was needed for specific jobs.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. My instructor started by praising me because I was making

every effort to do well. I tried to prove that women are capable of performing as well as the men, despite the fact that some of us had not been given the opportunity to train earlier on because of our sex. The times when I was blamed for poor performance were not many.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. The most enjoyable aspect of my training was operating the loom. I was so thrilled with that aspect of the work that I wanted the instructor allow me to operate the loom on my first day of training. I also enjoyed creating patterns during weaving.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I did not enjoy preparing the warp for weaving even though it is quite important to weaving. Another aspect I just did not enjoy was winding the bobbin. Considering how important these functions are to weaving, I eventually compelled myself to enjoy them.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. The work the instructor gave me to do during the early part of my training was so repetitive that I felt I would never achieve my goal. In desperation I quit the program but later realized that I had to prove my womanhood and destroy

the myth that weaving is a man's profession. The progress I made on my return was so significant that I soon realized that I was close to achieving my goal of becoming a weaver.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. I was free to abandon my training and I did so under stress. However, when I returned, the instructor was not annoyed.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist is someone who has mastered all aspects of his or her field. In the case of weaving, he or she should be capable of preparing the loom for weaving and weaving to specification which includes the formation of patterns.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their communities by producing work that they appreciate and they can happily give to others as gift.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist, I help my community by producing good quality textile that is used by both men and women. Some of my work is sent to friends overseas.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is appreciated by the community, more so as there

are not many female weavers around. Admirers of my work have sometimes expressed their gratitude on meeting me.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is important that young people get trained to replace the older ones, so that the profession will continue to expand to the benefit of the community.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. The training that was provided by my instructor was realistic and of a high quality. The training prepared me to work independently.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should be a stable person who is knowledgeable in the art and capable of imparting knowledge to the students.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I admire the work of Kadi Mansaray, a textile artist working in tie dyeing. I admire her work to the point that I would like to train in that field. I admire the work of other artist but I do not know their names.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I do not know the names of any non-African artists although I have seen works by some of them.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit the United States of America because my brothers and sisters are living there. My visit could spur them to help me to expand my profession.

Personal Data and Interview with Philip Kainyande

Name: Philip Kainyande

Age: 50 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Sculpture

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Shebro\Bonthe

Length of Experience: 30 yrs.

Date of Interview: December 5, 1996

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. My great grandfather was an artist in my home town of Bonthe. He was also a masquerader who entertained the community at festivals. At an early age I became involved in

his work but I was too young to be apprenticed by him. Few years later, I went to live with an uncle in Magburaka. Since I was now old enough to start an apprenticeship, I was recruited by a local artist who worked with cane fiber producing baskets and cane furniture for the community. Although this form of art was not to my interest, I accepted the offer and went through the training. On completion I worked with the instructor for a while before returning to my place of birth. But I only stayed in Bonthe for a short while before going to live with another uncle in Freetown. While there, I was apprenticed by a sculptor who taught me to work in clay and wood.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. At the start of my training I was taught to collect and process clay and wood. I then observed the instructor at work. He started by producing simple items which I took my turn to make with him observing. If there was a mistake I was instructed to correct it. This was the system throughout the program.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. My training was organized into segments. In the first segment I worked on simple object such as walking sticks, bowls, toy dolls for young girls, head rests and statuettes. I also sanded work nearing completion. In the second segments

my instructor would plot out sections of a mask and instruct me to finish it. When this task is completed he could then supervise the sanding. In the third segment I was requested to undertake the layout of a mask and then work on the carving. As his confidence in me increased so did the assignment which he gave me. In the third segment I went on to applying color and other finishing touches like applying beads, leather and metal. In the advanced stage of the third segment I was permitted to accept commissions which the instructor did not have the time to undertake. After completing each segment I was tested. If the instructor was not satisfied with my performance in a segment, he did not allow me to move on until I mastered that segment.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. The instructor was very strict. He could detect the smallest mistake and get you to rectify it. In some cases he would resort to shouting and cursing if I did not perform well. When my technique improved, he praised and offered me monetary tips.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. I enjoyed producing masks in clay or wood.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I was fortunate to have enjoyed all aspects of the work.

Even when I trained as cane weaver, I enjoyed all aspects of that profession too.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. It dawned on me that I was at the stage of becoming an artist when I realized that my work was admired by friends and other patrons, who thought I am talented.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. Since I was enjoying my training and the instructor was so helpful, it would have been difficult for me to abandon the training.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist is one capable of producing work that his or her clients can relate to.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their community by producing work that are needed for ritual and decoration at affordable prices.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist, I help my community by producing work based on their request or, in some cases, through the sale of work which I produce for an exhibition. I also sell my work at reasonable prices.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is very popular with my clients, both locally and overseas. My popularity continues to increase through my taking part in exhibitions. Now that you have bought my work, I am sure your friends in Canada will want to know about me.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is important to train young people to become artists in the hope that they will produce art for their community and earn a living for their family. If they become popular, I will be happy and proud to be associated with them.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. My instructor provided me with quality training and also accepted me as a member of his family.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should be focused and have the capacity to guide students to reach their goals. He or she should be innovative and well trained.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I like the work of Samuel Marco, Momoh Sei, Vandi Koroma and Micheal During.

Samuel Marco born in 1959 is one of the leading sculptors in Sierra Leone. Both of his parents are artists. His father was a sculptor and mother a potter. Although he did not serve an apprenticeship after completing traditional education he developed his artistic skills at an early age by watching his father at work. Through the influence of a British engineer who worked on the Sierra Leone Railways with Samuel's father, he was enrolled at the local elementary school in Moyamba where his father was based. On completing elementary education he moved to Freetown for high school education. To supplement his education he carved small pieces in wood which he sold to friends. The demand for his work became so high that he turned professional immediately after he completed high school.

The quality of his work was so high that Art dealers from Europe and North America were prepared to pay whatever price he demanded. Between 1992 and 1994 he served as Artist-in-Residence at the Institute of African Studies, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone. In my capacity as Head of the Fine Art Department of the Institute I was instrumental in recruiting him and enjoyed working with him. During his tenure with the Institute he was invited in 1993 by the British Council in Sierra Leone to tour the United Kingdom as

an artist from the Commonwealth. As part of the visit which lasted three months he exhibited two life-size sculptures at the Hull Museum of Fine Arts which he had executed during the visit.

Through his affiliation with the institute he was invited by the United States Mission to Sierra Leone to attend the 1992 Haystack Arts Festival in the United States but turned down the invitation because he felt he would have been coerced into staying on in the United States.

Apart from many exhibitions of his work held in Sierra Leone Samuel was commissioned by the Catholic Arch-Diocese of Freetown to carve sculptural pieces representing the Twelve Stations of the Cross and a set of doors for a church that was under construction at Juba Hill in the outskirts of Freetown. During my field work visit to Sierra Leone in 1997-98 he was working on a commission to produce sculptural pieces for a tourist resort at Lakka Beach in Sierra Leone. It is interesting to note that apart from sponsoring his six brothers to receive a western education, they are also been trained as sculptors in his studio. Because of this he is able to undertake large scale commissions.

Despite the fact that he is such a well-known sculptor, he did not qualify for my study since he did not serve an

apprentice organized under the auspices of the traditional school system.

Vandi Koroma Vandi Koroma is a Sierra Leone sculptor who received traditional education in his place of birth Potoru, Pujehun District. Because of his interest in sculpture which he exhibited during the period of his traditional education, he was immediately apprenticed to the leading sculptor in the community Pa Kai. After three years of training he was competent to work on his own but chose to stay on with his instructor as was the norm. He stayed on with the instructor for two years before setting up his own workshop in the community.

Although Vandi continued to enjoy popularity within the community due to the high quality of his work he always felt that with his instructor around he would always be second to him. With that at the back of his mind he decided to move over to neighboring Liberia in 1970, where he already had a growing clientele.

According to him he had the opportunity in Liberia to produce masks and other artifacts that was needed in the use of ritualistic processes. He also earned a lot more than he would in Sierra Leone for his production.

At the peak of his artistic career Vandi had to flee from war torn Liberia to take refuge in Sierra Leone. Unfortunately, after a few months of his return, Sierra Leone also faced a similar situation. Since he was not lucky to be accommodated in a Refugee camp, Philip Kainyande, a friend he had known since his youth, willingly accommodated and provided him with work space though inadequate. From the work he had produced during my visit to Philip there are indications that Vandi is a sculptor of a high caliber. Although this arrangement was temporary, Philip was happy to have had the opportunity of sharing work facilities with an artist of Vandi's caliber. The other artists mentioned by Philip are not well-known to me.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I like the work of Italian artists especially sculptors who work in stone.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. Apart from Italy, my other choice of country to visit is China because of the type of art that they produce there.

Personal Data and Interview with Ibrahim Kamara

Name: Ibrahim Kamara

Age: 36 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Pottery

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Soso\Mambolo

Length of Experience: 16 yrs.

Date of Interview: December 9, 1996

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. When I was very young I went to live with an uncle who was a diamond miner in Sefadu, Kono District, Sierra Leone. On a visit to a movie house I watched a film which featured an old white man who worked on a potter's wheel producing cups and pots. I was so impressed that I decided I would like to train for that profession. The opportunity arose when I returned home to Mambolo. My pottery instructor Ortham was a neighbor. Seeing that I was keen he invited me to join his studio as an apprentice.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. My training started with the digging and processing of clay. I was next taught how to design simple objects such as mugs, plates and vases. The next stage was building and decorating these objects. In between these tasks, I was taught how to pack dried pieces in a kiln for firing. I

progressed to working on the potter's wheel. After mastering this stage, my instructor started offering me some of his commissions to work on.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. I started working on simple tasks and moved on to more difficult ones. Within two years I was competent enough to work on my own.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. When I first started, my efforts were condemned by the instructor. It was not until his clients started praising my efforts that he changed his tactics. His condemnation was intended to urge me to work harder. It paid off in the end because I had to make an extra effort to develop my skills.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. The most enjoyable aspect of the training was working on the potter's wheel to produce utilitarian objects such as bowls, plates, dishes and jugs. I also enjoyed glazing and firing. It always felt good to empty the kiln after the firing.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I never enjoyed digging clay even though I was aware that

clay digging was important to the profession. I never liked helping the instructor at his farm because I was aware that farming was not what I wanted to learn.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. It was not too long into my training before I realized that I was destined to become an artist. At this stage I doubled my efforts and worked very hard to attain my goal.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. Although I was free to abandon my training, I was not able to discuss that possibility with my instructor who was quite concerned with creating a better life for me as an artist. This would have been tantamount to ingratitude. Thus straining our neighborly relationship.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist must be capable of undertaking all aspects of the work. He or she must be able to produce both hand built and wheel pottery, prepare glaze, decorate and fire the work.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their community by producing work for community rituals or for utilitarian functions in the home.

The objects can be given as gifts to friends and relatives.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist, I help my community by producing work for clients who commission me or by selling my work. These artifacts are used for a variety of purposes such as the preparing and serving food, as well as rituals which enhance the solidarity of the community.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. Visitors to my studio usually offer me positive comments about my work. I also receive encouraging comments from my clients who continue to patronize my work.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is important for me as an artist to continue training others to become artists so that the profession will continue and those whom I train will be able to earn a living.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. The training my instructor offered me was well structured and of a very high quality. I was so inspired by the training that I worked very hard to become a more outstanding artist than he is.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor must be patient and honest. He or she must be a competent artist, able to guide the students to achieve their artistic goals.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. Some of the artists whose work I admire are Ibrahim Bah, a weaver, and Ortham and Alhaji Barateh, both potters.

Ibrahim Bah Although the work of Ibrahim is not well known to me, I was made to understand that as a weaver his work is liked by his peers, and those who appreciate work of a traditional nature. I was made to understand that he could reproduce work based on designs of a cultural bias. Since my fieldwork visit coincided with the month of Ramadan it was not easy to get to him as he was not working.

Ortham born in the 1930's is a well known potter in Mambolo. He trained as a potter after completing traditional education. His work is well-known in the Northern Districts and the Western area of Sierra Leone. He is a regular exhibitor at the Gaga Studio in Freetown. He was responsible for training Ibrahim and instrumental in his employment at the Scarcies High school in Mambolo where he was employed as a pottery instructor even though he was not western educated.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I admire the work of some non-African artists but unfortunately I do not know their names.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit France or America because I was told that people in those countries do not meddle in the affairs of others.

Personal Data and Interview with Alpha Kargbo

Name: Alpha Kargbo

Age: 30 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Sculpture

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Limba\Freetown

Length of Experience: 18 yrs.

Date of Interview: January 23, 1997

Relationship to Teacher: Family member

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. My father was already a renowned sculptor within his community when I was born. He never forced me to become a sculptor. I decided to train under him because I liked what he was doing and felt I should do it too.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. I started training in 1979 under my father in his studio at Lumley with two other apprentices. After he had taught us how to select the right type of wood for specific projects, we learned how to finish the pieces using files and sandpaper. After being taught how to use tools, including chisels and knives, we started working on miniature pieces called "black power". We later worked on shaping larger pieces plotted by my father. We learned a lot just by imitating the instructor.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. My training was based on assignments given by the instructor. In some cases, he explained what should be done and in other cases, he would demonstrate and then get me to do it. If it was not done properly, I was encouraged to re-do it. I had to complete each stage before I was allowed to move on to the next.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. I was praised when I did well but was blamed or chastised when I made a mistake. In such cases, the reason for the mistake was explained and the mistake was corrected.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. The aspects of the training which I most enjoyed were laying out and sculpting with chisels and knives.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. The Aspect of the training which I disliked was sanding the finished piece. It was an aspect which I enjoyed when I first started, but once I started sculpting with chisels and knives it became boring. There were times when my father, the instructor, would get annoyed because I delayed his production by not sanding work he had passed on to me.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. During the early part of my training I was not very committed. It was not until I noticed that the other two apprentices who started off with me were ahead that I made an extra effort to catch up with them. Since then my progress became so marked that I felt very proud of myself and realized that I was up for a brighter future as an artist. I have not regretted my effort because it has paid off.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. I did not have the freedom to quit because that would have upset my father as the instructor. Fortunately, I enjoyed the training and the need did not arise to quit.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist in my opinion is someone capable of producing good quality work. He or she should be technically competent.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. An artist could help the community by producing work that is appreciated and enjoyed by the community.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. I Help my community by training young people to become artists, and hope that they will generate income for themselves. My other support to the community is through producing art work which is used for ritualistic or decorative purposes.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. Most people who view my work are very impressed and appreciative. They always comment that I am very talented.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. The reason it is important for artists to continue training young people to become artist is so that those trained will be able to make a living.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. The training which was provided for me by my father as instructor was well structured and of a high quality. I still appreciate his efforts.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should be a competent artist with patience, goodwill and the ability to motivate students to achieve their goal of becoming competent artists.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I like the work done by some Sierra Leonean artists whose names I, unfortunately, do not know.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I also admire the work done by some foreign artists whose names I, unfortunately, do not know.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. My choice of country to visit is open: that is to any one which is known to produce good quality art work, especially

those from which I can collect ideas to enhance the quality of my own work.

Personal Data and Interview with Mohamed Jerome Konneh

Name: Mohamed Jerome Konneh

Age: 35 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Weaving

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Mandingo\Kailahun

Length of Experience: 18 yrs.

Date of Interview: December 27, 1996

Relationship to Teacher: Family member

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. I became an artist because, in the Kailahun district where I grew up, it was normal for young people to be trained as artists. Since my town was renowned for textile weaving, I had no choice but to train for that profession. We were also told that training as an artist was a sure way of earning a living.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. I commenced my training by observing the instructor at work. This went on for some time until the instructor was sure that I understood the different stages of weaving. I was

next taught to prepare the warp for weaving. In the process I learned how to combine local and imported threads. Once this task was completed, my instructor introduced me to "hands-on" experience on the loom. At the beginning I made many mistakes which meant I had to undo the work to correct the mistake. Once the straight weaving technique was mastered, I was introduced to creating patterns and letters of the alphabet in the weaving.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. My instructor was very strict. At times, he would, at times, give me an assignment to work on and after I had worked on it for a while, he would critically examine it and point to sections which he would criticize as not properly done. I would then be required to undo the sections and re-do them. In some cases I was made to work on the section a couple of times before I am allowed to proceed to the next stage.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. If my instructor was not happy with my performance, he would abuse me and request that I re-do the work. After I had gone through a period of abusive comments, my instructor started praising my effort. When he was satisfied with my progress, he passed on some of his commissions and I was paid.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. I enjoyed creating patterns and juxtaposing symbols and letters of the alphabet on the cloth that I wove. Today, those aspects of the work make me think a lot and when I present such work to my clients they understand that I am a skillful artist.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I did not enjoy the preparation of the weft for weaving, especially when I had got to the stage of learning how to weave. The process was long and back breaking. I also dreaded the times when the instructor would give me assignment and later condemn my effort, even when I was certain that the work was well done. I hated him shouting at me as a corrective measure.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. I felt really good realizing that I was about to become a certified artist. It is not easy to explain the feeling I had. I was then certain that my life would improve financially and that the community would benefit culturally from my output as an artist. (The respondents use of certified artists is an indication that he received western education and is aware of the meaning of the term. He meant that the instructor is mandated to recognize his or her students as qualified to work as artist).

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. I was free to abandon my training, but since I was enjoying it, I did not want my instructor to feel that his efforts were not appreciated and, as a result, regard me as ungrateful.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist is someone who is creative, is conversant with every aspect of the profession, and is prepared to learn new techniques.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. The textile artist helps the community by producing good quality woven textiles which are gratefully worn or used for other functions by members of the community.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As a textile artist I help my community by producing good quality work which they use for various purposes. I also accept commissions which I execute to the satisfaction of the clients. My other contribution to the community is through the training I offer to young people. Considering all that I do, I can proudly say that I promote the arts in my community.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. I have no doubt that my work is admired and appreciated by the community. I get a lot of praise from my clients who re-commission me. My present clientele now includes foreigners and diplomats serving in Sierra Leone.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is very important for us as artists to continue training young people to become artists in the hope that our culture will continue. It is assumed that young people you train will be able to earn a living by producing work for their clients. Those whose parents are financially comfortable could support them to expand studio facilities to produce work for a larger clientele.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. My instructor was instrumental in training me to a very high professional standard. It is possible that my respect for authority during my studentship contributed to the quality of the training that the instructor offered me.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should be skilled at instructing students. He should also be able to use methods that will aid his/her your students to learn faster. Another important

attribute is patience.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I particularly like the work of Mr. Davies, a sculptor in Lumley, on the outskirts of Freetown. I also like the work of some painters working in the city. I am so impressed by the work of some of these artists that I would have liked to be trained by them. Apart from the Sierra Leonean artists, I admire the work of some Nigerian artists.

Mr. Davies: He is a self taught artist who has exhibited locally. I was fortunate to find some of his work on display for sale at the studio of Alpha Kargbo at Lumley.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I admire the work of artists from Germany and the United States, unfortunately I do not know their names.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit India or Germany.

Personal Data and Interview with Sorie Koroma

Name: Sorie Koroma

Age: 40 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Sculpture

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Mandingo\Bunumbu

Length of Experience: 25 yrs.

Date of Interview: December 13, 1996

Relationship to Teacher: Family member

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. I was always in love with art so I took advantage of the opportunity of the profession within the family. I was also very impressed with the production of my brothers and I thought it advantageous to serve my apprenticeship with them. Even after I completed my training I continued working with them until I felt it was time to go it alone.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. My instructor started me off with simple tasks like sanding completed pieces of sculpture. I progressed to carving small pieces which were examined by the instructor. If the work was not well done, my mistakes were pointed out, but if it was properly done, I was praised. After two years of intensive training I was allowed the privilege of doing my own work under the guidance of the instructor in the third year. There were times when the instructor went out of town,

leaving me in charge of the studio. At the end of the third year I was certified as qualified to work on my own.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. As I earlier explained, my training started with basic tasks like sanding and plotting out the structure before the carving process. During this stage, the instructor was always observing me to ensure that I did not make mistakes. Any mistake was quickly corrected. When the instructor was satisfied that I had mastered the techniques of carving, he allocated small pieces to me and then larger pieces which I worked on from start to finish.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. I was blamed and abused a lot during the early stages of my training. There were times when the instructor threatened to flog me with a cane. Despite all that, I was determined to continue the training and become as competent as my instructor was. When he later realized that I was progressing, he began encouraging me to work harder, offering financial incentives and commissions.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. I enjoyed plotting and working on the structure of Gongoli and Sande masks because of their importance to our

culture. Such masks could be used for ritual purposes.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I did not enjoy carving animal forms because I did not find them interesting or culturally important art forms.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. When I started training the work seemed difficult. I wondered at times if I would achieve my goal. However, after carefully observing the instructor I became more confident.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. Yes, I was free to abandon my training. There was a time when I thought about it but considering that my work was already being admired while I was still serving my apprenticeship I felt that was good enough reason to continue.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist is someone who makes the effort to produce good quality work and is always endeavoring to improve the quality of his or her output.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their community by producing art works which please the community which uses them in culturally oriented

ceremonies or as forms of decoration.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist I help my community by producing work that is used to further our traditions. Through my work I also help people in the community to realize that our culture is important in Africa.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is admired and appreciated by the community. Because of my work I am also respected in the community.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. Yes, it is important to train young people as artists because those trained will be able to care for themselves and their families. Our culture will continue to progress.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. I now realize that I was well trained by my instructor. There were times when he was very hard on me because he wanted me to be as competent as he is.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. The most important thing is that the instructor should be

patient. He/she should also competent and devoted to the progress of the students.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I admire the work of Samuel Marco, sculptor, and Alusine and Abu, both painters.

Alusine Kamara: He was born in Freetown in 1952. After receiving a traditional and western education in Freetown, he was appointed a Prisons Officer in the Sierra Leone Civil Service. At high school he took some courses in art which included painting. In his spare time he continued to paint, some of which he sold to augment his income.

After a few years he gained popularity as a portraitist. Some of his clients included politicians and civil servants. Some of his works were exhibited locally. During the Coup d'etat of April, 1993 organized by the Sierra Leone Military Forces, a cultural renaissance was part of their plans to create awareness. The program that evolved incorporated art for community participation. Some artists within the community including Alusine were invited to decorate wall space with paintings and murals. They were provided with art materials and paid an honorarium. Alusine's work consisted mostly of portraits of heroes of Sierra Leone. His work was well accepted by the authorities and the community.

In recognition of his contribution he was promoted to a higher rank in the Prison Service and assigned the position of Art Instructor in the Prison Service. His new position mandated him to organize art classes for prisoners and some of the officers. His work and that of other artists who participated in the cultural revolution program was featured in a book *"ECSTATIC RENOVATION!" Street Art Celebrating Sierra Leone's 1992 Revolution* by Joseph A. Opala, an American anthropologist who taught at the Institute of African Studies, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, and published in 1994 by Sierra Leone Adult Education Association in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I admire the works of some foreign artists whose names I do not know.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. My choice of a country to visit is Italy.

Personal Data and Interview with Gladys Mangbay

Name: Gladys Mangbay

Age: 38 yrs.

Gender: Female

Area of Specialization: Weaving

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Shebro\Bonthe

Length of Experience: 10 yrs.

Date of Interview: January 13, 1997

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. I grew up with relatives (both male and female) who were artists. I was aware that women were not trained as weavers in my community, but I still learnt to spin cotton from my aunt. Whenever the opportunity arose, I went to the weaver's studio to observe him at work because I always wanted to be a weaver like some women from parts of Africa.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. I spent some time as an observer. I was then instructed on the preparation of warp for weaving and bobbin winding. The next stage was hands and feet co-ordination on the loom. After mastering that aspect I went on to plain weaving and later to more advanced weaving, which included pattern arranging.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. The training program was arranged in such a way that if you did not master any stage, you were not allowed to move to the next, you had to complete some remedial work. For the

more advanced stages, a series of exercises were done.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. I was blamed a lot by the instructor, to the point that I nearly abandoned the training. In some cases, after weaving for a number of hours he would request me to undo the work and start again. After requesting an explanation as to why he was so high-handed, he said that getting students to undo their work was a part of the training. When he was sure that my standard of weaving had improved greatly, he resorted to praising and encouraging me to continue working hard.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. The aspect of my training which I enjoyed most was creating patterns and designs during the weaving process.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. The aspect of my training that I did not enjoy was undoing a woven piece because of a mistake.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. Realizing that I was now at the stage of becoming an artist came as a miracle to me, considering how difficult it was to find an instructor that was willing to train me. For

me, it was more about determination and hard work.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. I was free to abandon my training, in fact I nearly took that decision but changed my mind because I did not want my instructor to get the impression that women are not capable of been trained as weavers.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist, especially a weaver, is someone who operates the loom in the proper way. That person must be an expert in arranging colors, designing and material estimation.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their community by producing work to the specification of individuals within the community. Another means of helping is training other artists to serve the community.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist, I help my community by producing work that my community needs. What the community needs could be determined by commissions or from my experience of the likes within the community. I also train young people who show interest in becoming artists.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is appreciated by the community, otherwise they would not continue to commission me or buy the work that I produce. My concern in some cases is to produce enough work to meet the demands of my clients.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is important that as an artist I continue to train young people who want to become artists because it is a contribution to enhancing the culture of my country that I am proud of.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. The training I received from my instructor was well structured. It prepared me to serve my community artistically. I am using the same techniques to train my own students.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor is one who upholds the rules and regulations of the institution. He or she must be skilled in all aspects of the work and committed to guiding students to achieve their goal.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I admire the work of other artists in Sierra Leone. Unfortunately I am not good at remembering names.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I do not know much about the work of artists in other countries.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I have no particular country that I would like to visit. The opportunity to visit any country at all would aid me to learn more about my profession.

Personal Data and Interview with Eric Samai

Name: Eric Samai

Age: 27 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Weaving

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Mende\Moyamba

Length of Experience: 12 yrs.

Date of Interview: January 16, 1997

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. I grew up in a family of artists. Although I was exposed to art at a very early age and I knew from working with the artists that I was talented, I was not motivated initially to serve an apprenticeship. Instead, I was encouraged by my relatives in Freetown to get some Western type schooling. I was about to complete high school when I left the school to serve an apprenticeship at a motor maintenance workshop. After I had received two years of training, the workshop management changed and I was forced to abandon the program. I then went through a motor technician's certificate program at a technical school. At this time, I was noticing an awakening of the interest in my artistic ability. Nevertheless, at the end of the motor technician program I worked for two years before moving back to Bo to train as a weaver. My decision to train stemmed from my realization that I was artistically talented and that I would benefit from training.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. I spent four months observing the instructor and doing basic tasks which included preparing the warp and winding the bobbin. After the observation period, I was introduced to hand and foot control of the loom. I then went on to strip weaving before moving to more advanced work.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. The training was basically divided into three segments. In the first segment I observed the instructor and he taught me basic aspects of weaving. The second part was more about a hands-on experience. When he was satisfied that I could set up the loom and weave, he introduced me to design and pattern creation. Finally, in the third segment he taught me how to estimate materials for commissions.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. As would be expected in any training program of this nature, the instructor blamed me if I made mistakes and praised me when he felt I was getting on well. Since I was working very hard to achieve my goal, he did not blame me a lot. There were times when he challenged me to perform a task after his explanation. In such cases I impressed him by my performance.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. My favorite aspect of the training was creating patterns and lettering during the weaving process. I was so interested in this aspect that even when I was working on a simple weaving project, I developed a pattern to complement the work.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. The aspect of my training that I did not enjoy was preparing the warp for weaving. It is not difficult but time consuming and back breaking.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. Realizing that I was becoming an artist created a problem for my instructor who was worried that I would not want to stay on to help him with his commissions once my training was completed.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. I was free to abandon my training, but since I was enjoying it, there was no need to give it up. To take such a step would have upset my instructor who depended on me as his only apprentice.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist (weaver) is someone that is able to undertake the following: produce a variety of woven textiles, select materials and blend colors, create interesting designs, produce weaving equipment and interact favorably with clients.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their community by sharing their expertise through training others. They also help by producing quality work through commissions and occasional productions.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist I help my community by organizing training programs and producing work that will enhance our culture.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is appreciated by all age groups. The comments from members of the press and researchers both local and international are an indication that my work is well accepted.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is important for us as artists to continue training young people to become artists because those trained will generate income for themselves and help to enhance the culture of the nation.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. The training I received was structured to provide me with the capability to function and develop independently.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. The qualities of a good instructor are similar to those of a good leader. He or she must be a competent artist, capable of enforcing discipline, prepared to respect the views of the students and desire to help them achieve their goals.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I admire the work of Arthur Kappia, a Sierra Leonean textile artist who studied in Britain, and the work of some local batik artists.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I admire the work of Indian weavers because of its similarity to our own work.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit Denmark because their weaving technology is appropriate for the development of weaving in Sierra Leone.

Personal Data and Interview with Alfred Sesay

Name: Alfred Sesay

Age: 25 yrs.

Gender: Male

Area of Specialization: Goldsmithery

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Limba\Kamabai

Length of Experience: 10 yrs.

Date of Interview: December 18, 1996

Relationship to Teacher: Unrelated by blood or family

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. My aunt who brought me up was a dealer in precious metals. She employed gold and silver smiths at her studio. Because of her connection with the profession, she arranged for me to serve an apprenticeship at the studio. When my aunt's European partner moved to Dakar, Senegal, I was requested to go with him. Arrangements were made for me to continue my apprenticeship there, under the tutelage of an experienced Senegalese goldsmith. The training methods were not different but I had to learn the Wollof language so as to communicate with the instructor and apprentices.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. My instructors involved me in any commissions which they were working on. In the process I was taught how to test the quality of precious metals like gold and silver. I was also taught how to design and produce all types of jewelry chains, rings, bracelets and brooches.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. I started off doing basic tasks such as operating the bellows that controls the fire. I then moved on to the technique of brazing, that is the joining of pieces of precious metals. After testing me on the technique of brazing to be sure that I had mastered it, my instructor introduced me to the designing of chains, rings, bracelets and brooches. This aspect of the training took a very long time because if the apprentice made a mistake the precious metal was wasted.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. I was praised by my instructors most of the time because the quality of my work was very high. They felt that I was a gifted apprentice. My second instructor only started blaming me when he discovered that I was undertaking commissions without going through him.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. My favorite aspect of work during training was the design and production of all types of jewelry. I really enjoyed joining the pieces together to create something unique.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. I did not enjoy working the bellows, the anvil, or stretching gold wire.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. I took my training very seriously from the start because I was aware that my instructors were very popular with their clients, and I also wanted to enjoy that popularity. Moreover, it was my wish that I would earn a decent living from the profession. With this at the back of my mind, I made sure that I performed well to impress the instructors. Somehow it worked out to my advantage.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. Although I was free to abandon the training I never saw such a decision as advantageous to my career, considering that I had opted to be trained.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist in my profession should be an expert in testing metals such as silver and gold. Designing and producing jewelry to suit the needs of the client are also very important.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. It should not be forgotten that a client's visit is an indication that your help is needed. A way of helping such a client is to produce good quality work. You can also help by

suggesting the type of work that will be suitable for the client. Charges for your services should not be based on the assumption that the client is rich or desperate to own your work. It is also important that you deliver work to clients on time.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. I help my clients with good designs and quality production. Their personalities are considered in my designs. I also consider the amount of funds they can spend. In some cases I may adjust the quality of the material to suit the final product.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. My work is admired and appreciated by the community. Most of my clients re-commission me, or introduce new clients. In some cases when new clients visit my studio they are amazed to discover that I am very talented but unassuming. There are times when visitors just want to sit and watch me at work. Overseas visitors and clients find it hard to believe that I produce such high quality work from a studio with such basic equipment.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is very important for young people to be trained to

replace the older artists. If steps are not taken to train the young, the profession will eventually be taken over by foreign artists who will not be obligated to train local students. Since their sole concern will be to earn a living, the clients will not be getting value for money. It is likely that the country will lose out financially through funds that these artists will repatriate to their own homeland.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. I am proud to say that my training was of a high standard and quality. It was such that I was sure I could hold my own in any work situation I found myself.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor should have patience and the ability to help the slow learners. The instructor must be knowledgeable in all aspects of the profession and be prepared to release the student at the end of the training.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. Some of the artists whose works have influenced me are Brima, Mr. Kay, Amadu and Hassan. I also met some Senegalese, Guinean and Malian artists whose work I admire.

Mr. Kay: He is a Goldsmith of repute whose work is well known within the community. Although originally from Guinea he has

spent his entire working life in Sierra Leone. Many of his former students are working in regions of the country.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. I admire the work of some Italian artists but I do not know their names.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. My choice of countries to visit includes Italy, the United States, and the United Kingdom.

Personal Data and Interview with Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara

Name: Haja Khadiatu Tejan-Kamara

Age: 65 yrs.

Gender: Female

Area of Specialization: Textile dyeing\Batik

Ethnic\Regional Origin: Temne\Port Loko

Length of Experience: 50 yrs.

Date of Interview: January 29, 1997

Relationship to Teacher: Family member

Interview

Q1. Why did you become an artist?

A1. I was trained by my mother to become a textile artist some fifty years ago in Port Loko. She was an established

textile artist in Port Loko even before I was born.

Q2. Describe the form that your training took from start to finish.

A2. I started my training by doing simple tasks using raffia, rope or thread to tie designs on cloth that had been worked out by my instructor. As part of the process I was encouraged to ask questions related to aspects of the technique that I did not understand. Later on, I started laying out my original designs on cloth and then tying them. When she was sure I had mastered the tying and knotting techniques, she invited me to assist her with preparing the dye which, technically, was the most difficult process in the profession to master. After going through all the stages of dye preparation, I moved on to the basic forms of dyeing. As my skills improved, she taught me how to create special effects in dyeing. I later moved on to drying, undoing thread and pressing.

Q3. How did your instructor organize the training program?

A3. Since my mother wanted me to achieve a standard comparable to hers, she made sure I was thoroughly trained. She would willingly go over the various stages until she was sure I had mastered them. She was always testing me to make sure I understood. In some cases, the tests were meant to surprise me. I remember her saying, "If you master this profession, you will earn the respect of your clients and a decent standard of

living." When she was satisfied that I had mastered all aspects of the profession, she informed me that, although I was capable of working on my own, she was not prepared to let me do so until I got married.

Q4. How did your instructor make sure you understood what you were taught? Were you praised or blamed?

A4. I was not blamed a lot by my mother during my apprenticeship because I was conscious of not making mistakes or spoiling the work since I was aware that the materials we used were expensive. As a good teacher she was always encouraging me to work hard so as to enjoy a brighter future as a textile artist. She always stressed that if I became a competent artist, I would not have to roam the streets begging or stealing.

Q5. What aspects of your training did you enjoy most?

A5. It must be realized that whatever profession one enters as an apprentice, some aspects of the training will be easy and others difficult. I can confidently say I enjoyed every aspect of my training.

Q6. What aspects of your training did you dislike most?

A6. Although some aspects of the training were difficult, I was determined not to dislike any aspect of them. All aspects of the work in our field are important, even ironing the dyed

fabric. If it is not done properly, the finished product will look shabby and your clients will not appreciate your work. I was always conscious of my mothers comments that a competent textile artist is one who can handle all aspects of the profession very well. Once when I was teaching a white lady from overseas, I asked her to dip the waxed cloth into the hot bath to melt the wax she was so afraid of the heat that she remarked, "this aspect of the work is very difficult". I was in sympathy with her because she was not trained to handle such a difficult task which, nevertheless, is an important aspect of the dyeing process.

Q7. Describe the point in your training when you realized that you were going to become an artist.

A7. As my mother put me through the various stages of the training, I realized that I was achieving my aim of becoming a textile artist. I also became aware that I was getting close to fulfilling my mothers wish that I should be able to earn a living as an artist. I became even more thrilled when the work I had produced for some of my mothers demanding clients was appreciated.

Q8. Were you free to abandon your training?

A8. The respect and esteem that I had for my mother as instructor would not have allowed me to inform her that I wanted to abandon the training, even if I did not like it.

When I was overworked during my apprenticeship, I could only grumble to myself in a corner.

Q9. In your opinion, what constitutes a good artist.

A9. A good artist is someone who is competent in all aspects of the field, from design and tying, waxing, and stamping to garra preparation and dyeing. He or she must be capable of creating new designs at the request of clients.

Q10. In your opinion, how do artists help their community?

A10. Artists help their communities by producing good quality work that is admired and appreciated. Artists should also produce cloth which members of the community would be happy to own or give as a gift.

Q11. How do you, as an artist, help your community?

A11. As an artist, I am helping my community through my production of high quality work. There are times when I work according to the request of my clients. I always treat such requests seriously: I produce work that I would myself be proud to own.

Q12. How is your work regarded by your community?

A12. I am aware that my work is admired and appreciated by my clients because of the number of repeat commissions that I receive from them. I even get letters from oversea clients

thanking me for work I had done for them. Some of my overseas clients have invited me to serve as a visiting artist at their colleges.

Q13. In your opinion, is it important for artists to continue training young people to become artists?

A13. It is very important for artists to train students to become artists because it will bring progress to the country through job creation. Also, more people will be better dressed.

Q14. Assess the training that was provided for you by your instructor.

A14. I am convinced that the training my mother offered me was of a high quality. If the quality had not been good, I would not have excelled at the profession to the point of being invited to train students in the developed countries. I am proud to say that my training was good.

Q15. In your opinion what constitutes a good instructor?

A15. A good instructor is someone conversant with all aspects of the profession. He or she must be patient and able to direct and help students when requested.

Q16. Can you name some African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you.

A16. I appreciate the pottery production of some female artists. I also like the drawings and paintings of some local artists. I can tell from the work that they put in a lot of effort to achieve the good results I see and admire.

Q17. Can you name some non-African artists whose work or opinion may have influenced you?

A17. Although I went to some art exhibitions during my visits to Europe and North America, I cannot remember the name of any of the artists. My inability not to remember the names of these artists does not imply that I do not admire their work.

Q18. If you were to visit any place in the world, where would it be? Why?

A18. I would like to visit India because the textile artists in that country produce work that is similar to what I produce here. Moreover, I am convinced that we would both benefit from the exchange of experiences.