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MOBILIZING MASQUERADES: URBAN CULTURAL ARTS IN SIERRA LEONE AND BEYOND

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

VISUAL STUDIES

by

Amanda M. Maples

June 2018

The Dissertation of Amanda M. Maples is approved:

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Tyrus Miller
Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Studies

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2018

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Abstract

Mobilizing Masquerades: Urban Cultural Arts in Sierra Leone and Beyond

Amanda M. Maples

Contrary to conventional academic knowledge, which considers African masked performance as a specifically rural or folkloric manifestation, masquerade has been and is still being invented in Africa's cities. Ordehlay masquerade arts were founded in the tense socioeconomic landscape of Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital city, by various marginalized migrant communities locally and later, abroad. Even though the youthful masquerade arts were seen as dangerous and subsequently banned by the governmend or shunned by the public, they eventually gained recognition and a foothold in the political, cultural, and economic cityscape. Particularly successful because of their open membership, organizational structure, willingness to adapt and adopt any cultural aesthetics, and ability to entertain, they became so successful that they were able to provide welfare and mutual aid for their members and immediate community.

Originally tied to the specificity of Freetown's locality, Ordehlay was quickly and eagerly adopted by rural towns elsewhere in Sierra Leone as part of population growth and urbanization strategies that mirrored those in Freetown, and because they were seen as being successful and integral to the country's cultural milieu. Feeding off of one another to create a local yet shifting sense of identity as cosmopolitan/urban or rural, the masquerades break down the urban to rural binary.

Similar masquerade societies are now cropping up in the diaspora as migrant

communities and masquerades themselves expand and contract through the agency of digital and social technologies. Drawing from and connecting to imaginaries of home and diaspora, social media becomes an empowering tool for Ordehlay and related Hunting society members to manufacture steadily increasing bonds outside of family, race, religion, or age—echoing Ordehlay's founding recipe. The dissertation argues that publicly performed Ordehlay masks are designed by an ever-increasing community of migrants and youth to creatively access, harness, and control the various fabrics of a globalized cityscape, at home and in the diaspora. They then influenced new, and inherently contemporary, cultural traditions as membership and masquerade aesthetics fluidly mobilize and are mobilized by the communities that need them.

This dissertation ultimately seeks to challenge disciplinary and categorical boundaries of art, history, and culture so as to contribute to a larger shift that incorporates and values multicultural intelligences, aesthetics, and worldviews beyond the confines of age, geography, space, and time. It additionally considers youth and marginalized communities as cultural and political actors that create and negotiate artforms, meriting scholarly—and public—attention. Actively engaged with their local and global environments, Ordehlay members do indeed have agency: in performing themselves, they perform—and shape—the city and the world.

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And now as Elisabeth would say: Onward!

Introduction

How Did I Even Get Here Anyway?

Picture this: you are a bright-eyed, young, up-and-coming researcher interested in African art and museums who recently landed a full-time position in the African Art department at Yale University. Luckier still, your boss-and-mentor hands you an extremely exciting project: researching the collection of African art that put the department on the map of university art museums. Then it gets even better. After about a year researching the collection, he offers you co-authorship for a full-length Yale Press publication on this very collection. Salivating at the chance, you take what you think you know about African art from your three years of museum experience—primarily with tradition-based Yoruba arts and other African anthropological collections—and dive in. Things are going just swimmingly—this initiation masquerade was important for such-and-such society, this *sowei* mask is discovered in a photograph from the 1930s (you even count the holes in the mask to make sure it's the same one), and these Baule pieces represent the epitome of "masterpiece" with their serene gazes, detailed coiffures, and *patina-de-usage*. You're looking deeply at the historiography of these objects after they left Africa and building a timeline of collecting African art. It all somehow seems so cohesive. Then a small collection of works from Sierra Leone stop you in your tracks and you practically drop your morning coffee trying to figure out what the hell they are and why they don't fit. Fit what? Well, fit that cleaned, polished, wooden sheen of "ritual" use; fit

that encrustation that shows repeated engagements with the object; fit that African version of proportionality where the head is exaggerated to show its importance. Without even realizing it, your research was detailing how the "canon" of African art was developing based on European or Western tastes and standards of art; how it was being sorted, categorized, cleaned, polished, and displayed to fit into a box. You were painting yourself into that box. In a moment, these wild looking, raucous, colorful masks with crazy and impossible superstructures of snakes, penises, pink faces, and feather boas lay bare your own assumptions and the world of African art that you thought you knew, shatters (Figures 1 and 2). And thank goodness it did.

This dissertation is born from my own experience of intervention and rupture when encountering the Sierra Leonean artform and masquerade known primarily as Ode-Lay, and to me more recently as Ordehlay. At the time I was beginning my career in African arts, which was launched through this fortuitous position in the African art department at the Yale University Art Gallery in 2006. This resulted in the mentorship by the distinguished Frederick J. Lamp, whom provided me with unrivaled professional opportunities for which I am ever grateful, and introduced me to the arts of Sierra Leone and Guinea. While researching our co-authored volume *Accumulating Histories*, I came across the collection of Jollay and Ordehlay masks that sparked the curiosity and passion that would shape the next decade or so of my own research (Lamp, Maples, and Smalligan, 2012). It also provided the cataclysmic moment that gave me pause and challenged my own presumptions, assumptions, and expectations of African art, which to this day has shaped my own academic and

professional museum practices. I hope to generate the same moment of rupture, confusion, and excitement that I experienced myself in an effort to also make those new to and familiar with the arts of Africa questions themselves—question everything. This was one of the defining moments that peeled back the surface to reveal my own reality of knowledge and presumption. And for me, these are the realizations that stick with you, and that teach you the most.

Questions

If I was surprised at what I didn't know, wasn't told, or wasn't shown about African art, then what more was skewed? Had the canon of African art ignored or scoffed at Ordehlay masks as too new and too acculturated in their cacophonous colors and incorporation of Western materials? Were they an anti-aesthetic in terms of "traditional," or "historical" African art? Was the disconnect in scholarship, in museums, or somewhere else? These questions certainly shaped the first few years of my research, and underpinned my own museum scholarship, but these were the kinds of questions I asked within and surrounding a Western museum set (Baxandall 1991, 33; Alpers 1991) and as informative of my practice. While this critical analysis provides my own professional methodological and theoretical framework, the dissertation moves past my initial questions, and tackles new ones that entail an intimate knowledge of the art in its foundational space—that involve how Freetownians view and understand the masquerade rather than how it is mounted in a gallery or vitrine, though this is not new in scholarship. I started to ask myself: Underneath these untamed aesthetics, what was the lived day-to-day reality that

prompted such an invention? What work do the masquerades and the societies do, and why do they present in such a unique fashion? Is it truly so singular? What importance does being different have to the masquerade? How does it move in performance? To what extent do they exist today, and how have they adjusted to a 21st century glocality? What does it mean to be "youth" in 21st century Sierra Leone, and is this bounded by age, or is it more freeform and tied to financial, social, and economic success? These are the basic questions that I entered the field with, and kick-started the process that wanted to dive so much deeper than the way Americans think about African art.

More than questions of canon, authenticity, and aesthetics, this dissertation seeks to ultimately unpack and dismantle the binaries that result and calcify around such questions, and thereby contribute to ongoing dialogues and debates surrounding African arts in scholarship and beyond. Many of these binaries are a result of the long arm of colonialism—still casting a shadow—and its abiding dance partner, the Museum, which during the colonial period served to prove and extend empire. From this time and throughout the 20th century, tribe and ethnicity were bundled into neat, discrete packages and styles—the "one-tribe, one-style" model as Kasfir explained in her pioneering 1984 article—contributing to notions of culture, art, and canon subject to an essentialized Western perspective. Museums have thus normalized cultural stereotypes, and Africa in particular has existed as a blind spot just out of reach; a hazy unknown at the edge of sight. If we could just look honestly and directly rather than askance, at ourselves as much as others, maybe the picture will become more

distinct, less nebulous. At the same time, I do believe that the museum can be, and often is, the very space within which to challenge and disarm these damaging models—a space for transparency and open dialogue. The contemporary moment in museums and African art, then, is in pushing back against such bounded, dichotomous models, and in decolonizing a Westernized mindset that has for too long not only manufactured such binaries, but perpetuated them.

Goals

With this in mind, this dissertation aims to accomplish several broad as well as specific goals. Ordehlay was formed by various migrant communities throughout Freetown's site-specific yet globally informed history, particularly as part of a unique urbanization process. Its multicultural, multi-religious, multi-ethnic hybridity extends not only to its membership, but its masquerade and performance as well. By exploring this specific history and the visuality of these vivid, kinetic masquerades beyond the confines of art historical and anthropological canons, with visual studies as my access point, the dissertation seeks to dismantle tenacious and durable binaries that today tend to be spoken about with air quotes: "traditional" versus "contemporary," "tradition" and "modernity," "Africa" versus "the West," "local" and "global," and "urban" versus "rural." The very nature of Ordehlay masquerades as local yet transnational arts that were 'invented' in the city, rather than migrated from the rural Hinterlands, challenges assumptions that masquerade exists only in small, rural African communities, or primarily as State-sponsored or folkloric performances that elevate nationalisms and package cultures. Ordehlay significantly

bridges the gap between "traditional" and "contemporary" arts and a major concern of the dissertation is to push these discipline-bound concepts further and disrupt this binary opposition in particular. It will further consider Sierra Leone's urban capital and cultural "center" of Freetown, which has a particularly uncommon history as a diaspora on the continent, challenging yet another taken-for-granted dichotomy.

Another core concern for this study is in regards to youth, and their opposition to patrimonialism, whether real or perceived, and as subject to the control of elder or State and political authority. Rather than passive governmental pawns, youth were, and are, actively participating in an informal political, social, and financial economy, and have been doing so since Freetown's earliest days—both out of necessity, and out of a desire to be, or appear as, model citizens. The earliest iterations of Ordehlay were formed from a space of exclusion, not only from the elitist, adult and elder secret societies, but also from those of the dominant Yoruba and Krio communities. Instead of looking in from the periphery, youth borrowed from these exclusive organizations and formed their own societies free from the constraints of age or ethnicity. This opens up a space for scholarly commentary on the agency and creativity of youth, particularly from what appears to be a space of marginality. As the decades progressed, members aged and membership became even more inclusive, opening up a further space for inquiry into the term "youth" and its constructed nature.

A final core concern regards the localized manufacture, understanding, and mobilization of "traditional" and tradition-based arts. Politicians, NGOs, governments, museums, youth, neighborhoods, migrants, and diaspora communities

have all at one time or another harnessed the notion, masquerade, or performance of Ordehlay as it relates to culture, nationalism, and tradition, and as a way to connect to what is desirable, or missing. Through its use, a particular narrative is built to provide stability, a vision of cosmopolitanism, or build tropes of nationalism or political success. As something being constantly produced and negotiated, "tradition" ceases to become a term burdened with historical implications and becomes something that can be drawn from at will, while simultaneously creating it. Tradition is not static or a calcification of the past—it is pliant, aqueous, and powerful.

Specifics and Summary

In more specific terms, the dissertation first historicizes the invention of Ordehlay and its masked "devil," framing Ordehlay within and against narratives of scholarship, and argues for the early political, social, and economic activities of youth through masquerade phenomena. Rather than a recent development, youth participation was part and parcel to the earliest foundations of the capital city and greatly contributed to creating Freetown as locality. As youth and the various migrant communities created and negotiated this locality, Freetown's specific history morphed into an uncommon and motley space that allowed for the manifestation of Ordehlay and the agency of youth. Even the term 'devil' itself was a characterization apprehended by youth and reappropriated with their own agency in mind. Originally used by Christian missionaries to demonize the masqueraders during the early missionary period who designated masked devils, and by extension the youth, as handmaidens and products of Satan, they hoped to deter their use and encourage

conversion. Instead, the societies used the appellation to their advantage to generate fear amongst non-members, and it is the local designation for all masquerades that process with a masked character. The term is now used as a catch-all for masquerade societies and their activities in Sierra Leone, as evident in the oft-used phrase "devil business" (King 2016; Nunley 1987, xv; Tucker 2013, 29).

As it shifted and changed, was negotiated and mobilized, so too was it a mobile artform in performance and geography. Ordehlay's successes and strengths, as well as its adaptability during urbanization, made it attractive to other communities outside of Freetown, and communities and branches upline formed relationships and developed dialogic conversations with parent organizations in Freetown.[1] Ordehlay was first used to 'make do' in the city, and further, does the work of making connections within and beyond city and rural frameworks that ultimately lead to financial stability—or at least, that is the hope.

Finally, the dissertation examines the performance of Freetown Ordehlay masks in the diaspora and concludes by examining this global movement, and the ways that communities extend beyond their original spaces to connect artists, aesthetics, and finances in a continuous, multilateral, rather than unidirectional, stream. No matter the location, this project ultimately hypothesizes that the now multi-ethnic, multi-religious, community-based organizations and their public arm—the masquerade—are a method for globally-connected yet often disaffected youth and

[1] The term "upline" is commonly in use in Sierra Leone and in scholarship regarding Sierra Leone. The origin and local understanding of it will be discussed in the Terminology section of the Glossary, but it generally applies to anywhere outside of Freetown.

society members to strategize locally to manage the extreme political, economic, and cultural landscape of their urban realities. Because it worked in Freetown, it is adopted elsewhere, pulsing further and further from Sierra Leone as communities become closer and tighter through global technologies.

Exploring African Art as a Field: From the Historic to the Contemporary

The history of African art as a field has been characterized by tensions surrounding European and American scholars and players that have largely controlled its discourse, drastically characterizing and shaping the reception, classification, and interpretation of Africa and its arts. It is this very characterization that has omitted arts like Ordehlay from its canon. Because these serious issues lie beneath the surface of this dissertation's goals and concerns, it should be examined before moving, and in order to move, forward.

The obsession with what came to be canonical arts began with the voracious collection of African artifacts in the late 19th century and onward—an activity determined by Victorian theories of progress, evolution, and Eurocentric notions of cultural superiority that have created a lasting, effective, and damaging stereotypical view of Africa and Africans. These perceptions were then cemented into metanarratives and the public imaginary through media and display of these harvested arts. For example, cabinets of curiosity and private collections of the 19th century presented a microcosm of the world to be collected, ordered, preserved, and contained, while World's Fairs at the turn of the century sought to present the exotic 'Other' to the world in their "natural" setting as a justification of the colonialist

project. This also assisted in creating a sense of a unified nationalist identity, and displays at the time presented notions of a modernity that sat in opposition to the primitive Other, especially of Africa, whose subjects were presented as backwards, sexual, sensuous—of the 'lower' senses and therefore the opposite of Euro-American ocularcentrism. This frenzy of collecting mirrored the collecting of Africa itself after the Berlin conference and was further solidified in the accompanying museum era of anthropology. This era, from roughly the 1880s to the 1920s, was characterized by major museum collecting expeditions to Africa under the guise of salvage anthropology, where a pure and primitive past was to be gathered, observed, and preserved before it disappeared forever.

In 1906, artists such as Picasso and Matisse also began to collect African art, kicking off several decades of effort to vault African artifacts to the level of "art" and privileging its appreciation as art through form, style, and aesthetics while greatly influencing the movement of Primitivism. These early twentieth century notions of "art" divorced the sculptural aspect from its messy contextual components, and dealers, collectors, and artists, however figuratively or physically, stripped and cleaned, polished and purified the sculpture so that it could be appreciated as artform. This idea was championed by not only art movements like Primitivism, but Stieglitz's exhibition of African art, the first in the country, at his Photo Secession Gallery in New York in 1914. Shortly after, the Barnes Foundation opened in 1925, displaying African sculptures astride Impressionist and other European paintings, clearly valuing African sculpture along the same defining lines as Western classical art and through

the confines of visuality alone. The next three decades were important and especially active times in the creation of African "art," with the Museum of Modern Art's *African Negro Art*, photographed by Walker Evans, opening in 1935, the opening of major New York galleries in the 1950s and the entry of various private African collections into important museums, including the Baltimore Museum of Art and the de Young Museum.

Then, starting in the 1960s with the influx of young researchers and Peace Corps volunteers into Africa immersing themselves in the *context* of African art, ideas about it began to transform and it was "discovered" that it could no longer be thought of or displayed in a static, inert, and "naked" state—on a pedestal, or removed from its "natural" setting and decontextualized. This era of travelers and scholars strove to push past a Victorian nostalgia for the disappearance of "natural man" and his "art." It was also during this time that three seminal professors in Africanist art history were hired at major American universities: Douglas Fraser at Columbia University, Roy Sieber at Indiana University, who was the first to complete a dissertation on African art history in 1957, and Robert Farris Thompson at Yale University. Since then, museums, curators, collectors, scholars, and gallery owners have continually redefined the presentation and interpretation of African art based on the newly gathered principles of contextualized non-Western arts. Here, the object itself is multifaceted and not the entire piece of art, but in fact is comprised of a village, a performance, people, costumes, dance movements, song, its sensory components, and so on—but still, art. It is evident that a preconceived notion of what

art entails and how it should be displayed always-already exists in the Western, Eurocentric model.

The public reception, collection, and exhibition of African art has been changing drastically for only the past thirty-five years, after breaking out of the cage of curiosity, artifact, and finally "modern art," where the object was viewed and appreciated for beauty alone, and devoid of any of its original context—a specifically Western way of viewing, thinking about, and valuing art "for art's sake." The trajectories in museums and scholarly publications of the 1980s and 90s moved towards not only reflexivity and examining the way art is interpreted in Western gallery and museum settings, but also towards the circulation of the objects themselves, the history of collecting, collectors, and the market. Shows such as *Primitivism in 20th Century Art*, which opened at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA) in 1984 are the apex and catalyst of such reconsiderations of museum display. "The MoMA show provoked not only criticism of the basic proposition of the exhibition but led to a re-consideration of museum culture in the west as a whole" (Malraux 1995, 27). However, *Primitivism* was still putting African art on the pedestal of Western idealism in its association with modern artists such as Picasso and Giacometti. It sought to view the African art in terms of its form and aesthetics alone, as a port of entry into the Western art world. Not "equal and interactive entities" as Nicholas Mirzoeff purported, I would argue that the curators and the museum sought to elevate African traditional art to an equal status "as art," but only on their terms—through the lens of noted Western artists (1999, 25). Further, the

juxtaposition, while ground-breaking, was problematic—in its effort to highlight visual similarities, it obfuscated cultural difference and values.

Other examples of reflexive historicity were aptly handled in exhibition and publications like *ART/Artifact* (1988) which focused on the psychology behind displaying objects, whereas the Museum for African Art's *Exhibition-ism* (1994) took the design approach, viewing exhibitions from the standpoint of the object and the museum space itself. Similarly, Fred Wilson's 1992 *Mining the Museum* juxtaposed objects from the Maryland Historical Society outside of their normalized categorization. By placing slave shackles astride European silver goblets, Wilson re-consigned them to a category outside of their normalized discourse of display, and disrupted its categorization. The viewer was made to feel uncomfortable, disturbed; but it is this punctum that is important, precisely because the ambivalence is revealed. It was this kind of intervention that has created a lasting impression on the field of African art and that began to peel back the surface of the West's predatory pedagogy and its narrow ideological focus.

A few other efforts from this time period have examined the Western invention of art and how the art "system" has come to pass, as well as how these efforts are struggling to find various ways to validate African art *within* this Western art world. For example, *Baule: African Art/Western Eyes* (1996) addressed culturally constituted visualities by examining one specific cultural group through various thematic museum display methods, thereby addressing the interplay of Western fixities and non-Western artistic renderings—a cross-cultural juxtaposition of sorts.

Even more recently, the Detroit Institute of the Art's *Through African Eyes: The European in African Art, 1500 to Present* (2010) illustrated the shift from Western views of Africans and so-called "primitives" to the African perspective; not only examining the museum's role, the artist's role, and the function of the Western gaze on African art, but looking at the African voice and view *itself*—Africans in turn exoticizing Westerners. These pioneering exhibitions, all of which had accompanying publications, can then be seen as not only using the reflexivity trend of the 1980s as a springboard from which to move forward, but also as a backlash against this "re-contextualization" of African and so-called ethnographic art.

Other exhibitions have recreated experiential scenes, such as altars and shrines, which were even devotionally and physically engaged with, including *Mami Wata: Arts for Water Spirits in Africa and Its Diasporas* (2008), *Face of the Gods: Art and Altars of Africa and the African Americas* (1993) and *A Saint in the City: Sufi Arts of Urban Senegal* (2003). These exhibitions created not just a documentary or dioramic space, but a living, fluid space that transcended the boundedness of the museum and its exhibitionary complex. Despite the aforementioned attempts and successes to liberate African art from its curatorial and art historical confines—with a look towards earnestly recontextualizing them in a crafted indigenous setting while still valuing them as art—problems of bounded categories tenaciously remain. So too do the polarities that the field has created remain. As Homi Bhabha states: "…what is being dramatized is a separation—*between* races, cultures, histories, *within* histories—a separation between *before* and *after* that repeats obsessively the mythical

moment of disjunction…the colonial fantasy does not try to cover up that moment of separation. It is more ambivalent" (Bhabha 2004, 118). It is precisely this ambivalence that makes it difficult to distinguish whether difference or similarity is being highlighted in our assumptive readings and writings of the African object. The anomalous and spurious collecting and subsequent display of the arts of Africa along a constructed Western notion of organization and value betrays a deep-seated notion of what defines "art" and subsequently, its collection, its value in a market economy, the method of its display, and the medium of its form. It has thus also perpetuated a separation between specific forms of art not only along geographic, categorical, and cultural lines, but around arts being created by living artists for international audiences.

It follows then that in the last decades while the field of African art was taking shape, the discourse around contemporary African and diaspora artists has been similarly controversial and polarizing. Within constraints shaped by the development of African art as a field, contemporary African and diaspora artists struggled to gain their own visibility in the international art world outside of an expected display of "African" identity as created by the traditionalist canon. Omitted from this canon, they didn't fit neatly into an easily digestible category or geography because many of them moved away from their "home" locales or juggled a multiplicity of identities that were difficult to grasp or essentialize. Yet, some contemporary artists have shown that "tradition" and African cultural ideologies of the past and the present can be an archival resource to mine. Recreating and reinventing issues of identity, race,

and culture they challenge notions of Africanity or tradition that can appear static and unchanging, as understood by the West. Scholar and curator Okwui Enwezor and artists Renée Stout, Godfried Donkor, Meschac Gaba, and Sokari Douglas Camp, for example, have all quarried and queried traditional or historical terrain and used it to make personal or political statements. Camp, who also plays off of Kalabari masquerade, has looked at politics by challenging the death of Ken Saro-Wiwa, where Stout has harnessed Kongo culture in her work, and Donkor has examined the historical obsession with African boxers by Europeans who champion, prize, and stereotype Africans and African Americans for their physical prowess.

Still others have resisted these ideas and abandoned any semblance of African culture altogether, preferring not to be labeled as such, but considered as an international artist. Yinka Shonibare was initially of this camp, but was not considered successful in his complete abandonment of African visual tradition. However, he later ended up being the most effective artist to counter the Eurocentric model by playing what scholar and artist Olu Oguibe has dubbed the "culture game" by which he recognized the West's expectation of an "African" identity in art and the necessity of this card to enter the international stage (2004). What made him so successful was his ability to not only recognize this game of "traditional African culture," but to subvert it by ridiculing it. This is particularly evident in his use of "African" wax cloth, which is in actuality originally made for and marketed in Indonesia, yet successfully imported to Africa from Europe. Here clarifying its very

non-Africanness, he instead highlighted the reality of the cloth's, and history's complex, shared, international nature.

The kick off of interest in such contemporary arts of Africa has been pinpointed by the groundbreaking *Magiciens de la Terre* exhibition at the Centre Pompidou and the Grande halle de la Villette in 1989. Making a strong case for the dialogue between artists of different cultural backgrounds, it was arguably the place where 'contemporary African art' made its first real appearance in Europe (Oguibe and Enwezor 1999). The Whitney Biennial of 1993 was the next most ground-shaking exhibition. Representing the advent of contemporary African art in the United States, it illustrated that for many of these artists, politics and aesthetics are inextricably mixed. Curator and scholar Susan Vogel joined the growing chorus and published *Africa Explores* in 1991, a textbook-like exploration of contemporary African arts similar to Sidney Kasfir's 1999 compendium, neither of which examined contemporary African arts through a critical, theoretical lens. *Africa Explores* has been disparaged because of its invention and use of categorizations, such as New Functional Art, Transitional Art, and "Extinct Art," which fail to adequately deal with the complexities of the contemporary experience and instead prop up a Westernized compartmentalization of the arts. The effect can render them mute rather than dynamic. However, both were foundational in publishing the works of the artists and in listing some of the major players in the mid-20th century and up until the 1980s with which contemporary and diaspora artists have conversed or debated. Within Kasfir's *Contemporary African Art*, one can get a sense of the Independence

movements of Nigeria and Senegal, such as Zaria and Nsukka schools, or the Négritude movement and the mobilization of a Pan-African identity, or the harnessing of modernism as a vehicle to counter colonialism (1999). While both publications were hugely important in raising visibility and knowledge and still used in teaching today, they are still primarily survey rather than deconstruction.

While these projects did not critically explore the artists, other important publications subsequently emerged that highlighted the urgency of improving the visibility and the efficacy of contemporary African arts and the importance they have for the politics of identity, race, and gender. One such project is *Reading the Contemporary*. Written at the 10-year anniversary of *Magiciens de la Terre* and largely revisionist, it primarily assembled existing written scholarship taken from *Third Text* and *Nka*, two of the major journals in ongoing debates on what contemporary African art is, what it does, and to whom it matters (1999). It further addressed the introduction and consideration of diasporic arts as part of rather than separate from such narratives. These journals stood in opposition to the strong-arms of *October* and *Art Forum*, the *Roundtable* post-Whitney, and in the control of art history and the intellectual ground of arts scholarship by Western centers.

Trying to embrace and respond to Africa's own Modernism and Independence movements as well as Pan-Africanism, *Short Century: Independence Movements in African Art* (2001) shortly followed thereafter as one of the most important mega-exhibitions for distinguishing African arts on an international scale. However, while this allowed for greater visibility of artists omitted from contemporary art canons,

such as queer, African, and artists of color, it did not allow the complexities of contemporary arts to really shine. As a visionary project, it responded to and countered the dogma that the 1993 Whitney Biennial created, which was championed by critics such as Rosalind Krauss who thought that the Biennial was far too politically charged and relied too heavily upon didactic materials. She, like others, came from a formalist perspective that sought to protect the intellectual side of art history. Criticizing Homi Bhabha's accompanying essay, which focused on the artists' statement and the subdermal meanings, she and her counterparts claimed it did not deal with or explore the art itself and its aesthetics. This betrays an explicit compartmentalization of art that includes elitist mediums such as painting and sculpture and values these classical mediums over the politics or meanings underneath them.

Here, one could point to yet another contentious debate in the trajectory of contemporary African and diasporan art which vascillates between artist as individual vs unknown or identified, or simply unrecorded artists. This was best ciritcally undertaken in *Authentic/Ex-centric*, an international, interdisciplinary exhibition project (2002). Using conceptualism as its vehicle it sought to embrace authorlessness rather than the West's centering of the 'originality' of the artist. In response to this, other projects have embraced the reintroduction of the previously omitted named African artist—*Seven Stories About Modern African Art* (1995) and *London '95*, for example—and continue to do so in traveling exhibitions such as the Smithsonian's *Earth Matters: Land as Material and Metaphor in the Arts of Africa* (2013) which

significantly brings together named contemporary artists with unknown historical artists in a themed exhibition.

It is evident in these bifurcated histories how very separate, yet inextricably enmeshed these contemporary and traditional histories of African art are, though together they collectively make up the Field of African Art. Now past this moment of gaining visibility, contemporary and traditional African arts and artists still face compartmentalization, and arts like Ordehlay that straddle the line between them still pose questions and problems about where they fall, if they are considered at all. How to move forward? Through the presentation and analysis of Ordehlay masquerade arts, it is the goal of this dissertation to position them, and myself as a scholar, as an interlocutor; a go-between that bridges the gap between these polarities, and between disciplines. I hope to offer one of the many ways that we as Africanists might move forward and push the field in a new direction by looking particularly at one such artform that is digital and analog, contemporary and traditional, urban and rural, local and global, yet to varying and changing degrees—a topic which I will revisit and continue in the Conclusion of this study.

21st Century Research Strategies

Digital technologies and social media apps are changing the way we, as a global society, communicate with one another. Connecting communities between and across borders, digital technologies transcend the confines of geographic space and time. Accordingly, it is fundamentally altering the way we as scholars collect, analyze, and disseminate research data, and ultimately the way we connect with the

communities we are working with and seek to represent. Such national and transnational research practices require that new technology become part of the research methodology too, though this is only recently developing as a viable research tool or methodology. For example, one of, if not the only, scholarly publication considering the mobile messaging application WhatsApp was published in 2016 by two doctoral students at the University of Basel. The essay explores how WhatsApp is shaping new ethnographic research strategies in regards to medical anthropology, but is applicable to any field-based studies (Kaiser-Grolimund and Staudacher 2016).

It follows then, that my own currently developing research is trying to keep pace with the fast and frenzied tempo at which masks are being created and moving outward. Significantly, the research is able to trace these agile movements and exchanges because of this very 21st century technology. Instagrams, cell phone texts, and WhatsApp messages whoosh and zoom between these places, generating sales, transmitting information, and begging questions about our new experiences of African arts as well as our changing research strategies in a 21st century globalizing, or perhaps global-ized, world. Because of the collapse of time and space that characterizes this global moment, conversations with foreign researchers while abroad, as between urban locale and rural towns, are expected to continue through email, the internet, phone calls, and assistance from afar. This is the way that artists, performers, and members expect to communicate with a researcher, so what was once down time from field research no longer exists.

This flow works in both directions, as seen in recent field research and interviews with members. I can't name the number of times I was shown "snaps" of such-and-such a devil while in the field, or the countless conversations that have been carried out between myself, artists, and members over Facebook and WhatsApp even while in Sierra Leone.[2] For example, a devil being created for a society in the upline town of Pepel (Pepel Education Social Club) by a Freetown artist was shown to me via cell phone images. The same program (WhatsApp) was used by local members to monitor its progress, debate price, and arrange for its pickup in Freetown before it came out a few days later (see Figure 44).[3]

In America, I have been looped in on Tiwaniokay Hunting Society's group WhatsApp forum, which feature both Maryland and Freetown images and video, in order to share, remember, and advertise performances past, present, and upcoming, no matter the locale. Performance posters and updates, directives and requests are sent through this forum, as well as reminders to pay dues and respect the importance—which indubitably means the finances—of the society and its mission. Members are implored to contribute to funerary expenses upon the death of a member or relative, and the same forum acknowledges these very contributions. And yet, certain topics are reserved for the executive forum, as certain knowledge is acquired through stages of membership. While I was enthusiastically invited to use the forum for questions to the greater community, I was then advised by the head of the organization to "keep

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[2] Devil is the common, local terminology for the masquerade—for almost all masquerades—and is discussed further in the Terminology section of the Glossary.

[3] Interview, Pepel, December 20, 2017.

them between us" because I might ask a question that would reveal restricted information. Not all knowledge is free and available, it seems, and one must go through the proper channels.

As evident here, the borders between Africa and the world are blurred, as are the shape and formulation of knowledge production, and the flow of artistic and stylistic influence. Suffice it to say that no matter where I am, my own research has continued unabated. Members in Sierra Leone send recorded greetings and well wishes to me, along with the latest news and updates on elections and goings-on. I send responses, greetings, photos, and questions in return. Sharing one's phone number and WhatsApp account were, and are, a rite of passage. Text messages, app messages, and phone calls were sometimes preferred, or more practical, than repeated personal meetings. Regardless, the personal meetings and official introduction—often by the head of an organization, or the organizations in a particular town—were still absolutely necessary to forming the bond that opened up these channels of communication and triggered the sharing of knowledge.

Hand-in-hand with the sharing of emails, phone numbers, and app details was the voluntary—yet obligatory—giving of "small *kola*." Happening around the same time that contact information was shared, this small amount of money showed my respect to the organization, to the society's principles, and to its devil. The gift was usually given directly to the head of the organization or occasionally to the artist, or offered at the feet or the snout of the devil itself. This signifies its allocation to the society, rather than any individual, and solidified my own continuing, friendly

relationship with the society. As such, I think of these continuous WhatsApp conversations from abroad as "small *kola*"—respecting and maintaining an exchange of friendship and bonds that will last in perpetuity and continue to mutually shape our futures. It is not lost on them that these small *kolas* may eventually turn into large *kola*—into financial support as patron of the devil business that relies on it. It is not lost on me that the knowledge that I get is itself very much a form of small and large *kola*, and no less valuable as I advance my career in this base.

Structure and Chapter Summary

Following this Introductory chapter, in Chapter One I lay out the basics of contemporary Ordehlay—as both masquerade and society—and how it draws from both local and global cultural, ethnic, and artistic heritage. I briefly explain what Ordehlay actually is, what a performance entails, and how and why the societies function. Next I summarize the methodological and theoretical frameworks that inspired this study, including a short discussion on John Nunley's established fancy-fierce dichotomy in regards to Ordehlay aesthetics of the 1970s and 80s. As the fancy and the fierce are still so important in Ordehlay philosophy, I push these terms past dichotomous confines and into considering them as a spectrum that is employed differently from society to society based on their own goals and financial abilities or constraints. I then summarize, build upon, and deviate from preexisting scholarship on urban masquerade in general, and finally explore it in conjunction with a short discussion on the importance of youth as a cultural spectrum beyond biology or cultural category.

Because Ordehlay was uniquely and significantly born in and because of the urban environment, Chapter Two introduces the capital city of Freetown as a diaspora on the continent with a complex, nuanced, and frankly, odd history. This vibrant, loud, competitive, and visually assaulting city of today is the complicated and uneven result of a British experimental colony of international subjects planted amidst indigenous communities, creating a culturally hybrid, creolized territory. I briefly describe the theory behind the notion of locality and how the particularity and peculiarity of Freetown itself is what provided the mixed and tenuous bag of ingredients that was the foundational recipe for Ordehlay. Because Freetown was characterized by subsequent waves of various ethnicities throughout history, I also include a summary of the terminology and ethnicities discussed and employed throughout the dissertation as a helpful introduction and reference node. The list of terms and ethnic groups can be found in the Glossary at the back of the dissertation.

Chapter Three traces the historical emergence of the Ordehlay masquerades from the earliest days of Freetown's founding, and the political and subversive qualities that have characterized it throughout its history. After briefly summarizing Freetown's urban locality as scaffolding for the invention of Ordehlay, I then examine the maskforms that serve as the social, economic, and iconographic parentage for the masks, looking specifically at the Yoruba-based Hunting and Egungun masquerades, and in the youthful Alikali, Jollay, and Ambas Geda societies that were Ordehlay's earliest iterations. As masquerade membership and activities transformed and divided in its own cultural form of mitosis, members and

neighborhoods used it to adapt to their locale, or create new ones. I here stress the malleable understanding of Ordehlay, and argue that its invention was an evolutionary process, rather than an instantaneous manifestation. At the time of writing I am merely tapping into a continuous flow of information, ideas, artforms, and performances that will carry on with or without me, and likely look rather different than it does today.

The chapter also explores the political threads that have woven themselves within and throughout the Ordehlay masks and societies, despite claims to the contrary. Looking at the history of potential violence and public disruption that often accompanies the processions of devils, historically and into the present, it argues that while devil business has often entailed some form of violence, it has altered throughout the decades and now centers around party lines, rather than around resistance to colonial or mission authority. Ordehlay masquerade societies are mobilized by the city's youth to access and control the fabric of the extreme cityscape for various political, economic, or social goals. Yet, as masquerades transform regularly, so do public perceptions of them. Ordehlay is now recognized as an integral thread of the city's vast interconnected web. Though the masquerade societies and their public celebrations were once banned, and still sometimes are, the masks have recently joined the Sierra Leone National Museum's collection, and are financially supported by politicians, corporate entities, and NGOs, demonstrating its migration from clandestine activity to national emblem. The chapter contributes to and builds off of previous scholarship on the Ordehlay masquerades, offering new

sources to debate the historical origin of the society and illustrate the changing, more positive, political contributions of youth. Politics are embedded in the very fabric of these societies—indeed in the fabric of the masks themselves.

In Chapter Four, I continue building on the changing role of the masks by exploring its movements from the city to outlying towns and cities upline—a substitute term for "provincial" or anywhere outside of the capital city. For two decades scholars have turned their attention towards contemporary urban expressions, but have largely overlooked the masquerade arts of African cities outside of their importation from rural, village contexts, or as state-sponsored festivals. This chapter contributes to such scholarship by exploring the relationship of urban-invented arts and their spread to towns in the rural areas of Sierra Leone. This is counterintuitive to the typical spread of masquerades, which according to scholars, spreads from the rural into the urban zone. If Freetown masks are used to serve individual and community goals in the city and as a source of neighborhood pride, how are they reimagined and mobilized in their iterations upline? What work does the mask and its performance do within and with-out the city—and what does city or urban even mean? By tracing the migrations, articulations, and aesthetic shifts of Ordehlay masquerade devils from the originating confines of Freetown, the chapter argues that masquerades move not just in performative contexts, but as part of larger urbanization processes outside of the capital, thereby challenging conventional and historical notions of "urban" and "rural." In order to do this, I look especially at the masquerade designs of one singular artist—or *kotu*—of Ordehlay masks, Sheku "Goldenfinger"

Fofonah, whose works especially have been commissioned from upline branches and whose ability to successfully marry the fancy and the fierce has been celebrated. Through his work, upline communities have been able to connect to Freetonians and manufacture their own cosmopolitan identity—as Freetown does—based off of what is difficult to come by, and therefore, what is most desirable.

While urban-based artists and members are interacting with communities upline, they are also interacting with international branches of the societies. This is the subject of Chapter Five. Both interactions are strengthened by the time-space accordion typical of the techno-global landscape of contemporary Africa. Similarly, both upline and diaspora communities are seeking to connect to the conceptual home of Freetown and by extension Sierra Leone, and thereby perform a cosmopolitanism that is both local and global, American and Sierra Leonean. By tracing the movements of a few key masquerade costumes from Freetown to Maryland, USA, and from Maryland to Freetown, this chapter will discuss the importance of masquerade to cultural education and community in the new and perilous status of the diaspora. Significantly, the existence of these societies relies upon the new technological landscape of global social media applications like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube, which introduce a cheap and expedient way for members both near and far to communicate, share an archive of masquerades and aesthetics, and shape their own realites. In this chapter I ultimately argue that as in the upline formations, these relatively new branches are similarly formed by migrant communities outside of age, race, religion, or gender as a way to mobilize within their

new socioeconomic constraints, while creating and maintaining interpersonal relationships with the conceptual "home" of Freetown via social media platforms. In return, financial support, skins, and masks are sent to Sierra Leone, ever-expanding the society's performances, membership, and reach.

Each chapter is interwoven with a set of polemics that I hope to disrupt, or even dismantle, through my analysis of Ordehlay as a masquerade organization whose very existence runs counter to these longstanding binaries. Its invention in an urban locale and adoption upline counters urban and rural paradigms that are centered around their opposition, but may also relate to urban as opposed to cosmopolitan. Its performance in diaspora communities abroad picks away at the Africa vs the West dichotomy, and forces reconsiderations of the where and when of African arts. Finally, its multidisciplinary, contemporary, and multicultural aesthetics and performance intervenes in canonical framing of contemporary arts, despite its format as a masquerade that could be hemmed in by words like "traditional" because of its grounding in a long, rich, cultural and historical past. Ordehlay falls between the cracks of what is 'traditional' and 'contemporary' and lays bare our Western assumptions that designate art and authenticity as something that excludes masquerade, as something that excludes what seems to have a lengthy history or a hearty tradition. By bringing together such polemical constructs into one masquerade, it pries apart the individual terms, while blending them into a pliable spectrum that reconciles such polarities.

A Note on Ordehlay and Visual Studies

Research in the African arts takes an interdisciplinary approach; it is not squarely anthropological or "ethnographic," nor is it singularly art historical. Similarly, Ordehlay maskforms are neither contemporary nor traditional, per se, neither ethnographic nor canonical. Examples can be found in recognized, or even "respectable" western art museums, such as the Yale University Art Gallery, the Brooklyn Museum, the Fowler Museum at UCLA, the Welt Museum in Vienna, and soon, the Smithsonian Institution. They also populate a select number of private and smaller museum collections in Los Angeles, Minneapolis, and New York. Ordehlay maskforms do therefore sell on the market, albeit at a low price and only by a limited set of interested collectors. As such, Ordehlay must be considered outside of these confining notions of art and anthropology. This is where Visual Studies, my methodological foundation, proves a valuable tool. Ordehlay is a hybrid, multicultural, and mutable artform performed by marginalized communities that are negotiating tenuous conditions and identities. As an anti-canonical African art, research of this vibrant masquerade necessitates a younger, more freeform interdisciplinary bag of tools, like those provided by Visual Studies. A rogue mask calls for a rogue Methodology.

As a relatively new field, Visual Studies is a somewhat ephemeral and transitory, if even slippery, interdisciplinary methodology. Its tractable approach to any given visuality, or vision itself, is a key component, along with its use of various disciplinary criterion and its focus on tension or rupture. It follows then that Visual

Culture has been accused of being "too hybrid" and "too multicultural" amongst other things but this is precisely what is needed for an "acculturated" artform such as Ordehlay (Elkins 2003, 23; Mitchell 2002, 162). This perceived weakness is actually its strength. Aren't the contested spaces, perhaps even the ones between disciplines, the most interesting, the most telling?

Growing scholarship in arts that integrate or reinvent "traditional" forms, such as that of urban masquerading, is indicative of a shift in the field that is removing the static boundaries between traditional and contemporary, the here and there, the then and now—thereby revealing more fluent and unfixed notions of the arts—concerns such as those seen in Visual Studies. Fracturing, displacing, and reinscribing constructed categories of art and culture is the future of not only African arts scholarship, but the social sciences and humanities as well. It is imperative that scholars study urban masquerade—as we should study less visible communities and their arts—in order to understand multicultural iterations of arts and "traditions" as well as stay current, and therefore relevant, to African, public, and scholarly communities. It is essential that rooted—often negative—generalizations and stereotypes of an imagined, mythical Africa are dislodged and shifted in order to make room for a broader understanding of the arts of Africa as local and specifically meaningful iterations of the global and as being in dialogue with a past and present that has mistakenly been, as it is now, considered separate. Ordehlay challenges, intervenes, decomposes essentialist notions that to a certain extent still prevail in art history. Adding to a growing chorus of voices, explored elsewhere in this dissertation,

Ordehlay and Visual Studies are paving the way to a more supple and nimble vision of African Art as a field, and to an understanding of tradition from an African perspective. It is my hope that this dissertation will contribute to such an exciting and ongoing scholarly dialogue, and continue to shape the field in such a direction.

Introduction Figures

Figure 1. ***Ordehlay Mask with Superstructure in the Form of a Female Figure*, Temne, Sierra Leone, mid- to late 20th century, textile, wood, plastic flowers, sequins, wire, and paint, 2006.51.43.**
Photo credit: Yale University Art Gallery

Figure 2. ***Ordehlay Mask with Superstructure in the Form of a Female Figure*****, Temne, Sierra Leone, mid- to late 20th century, textile, wood, feathers, wire, and paint, 2006.51.568. Photo credit: Yale University Art Gallery**

Chapter One

Contemporary Ordehlay: Theory, Methodology, and Scholarship

A Parade Scenario

People stand shoulder to shoulder in the balconies and streets of Freetown's Mountain Cut neighborhood—the epicenter of the designated parade route for the day (Figure 3). Voices murmur and laughter occasionally bubbles over bursts of music blaring from loudspeakers as tall as a person. Eyes dart anxiously past beer and water vendors, children trying to find a chair or bench to stand on, and Ordehlay Marshalls in bright yellow and orange blazers (Figure 4). The crowd is thick with bodies and anticipation. It seems that the tension is about to burst when the laughter and murmurs crescendo announcing the arrival of the first, or next, devil. Coming from both directions, the population density is thicker and more intense, traveling in a pocket that moves slowly but methodically along the road and further announces the devil's appearance. Just visible is a small punctuation of space surrounding a costumed figure that appears to be radiating color peppered with spikes and mirrors glinting in the sun, and what appears to be an animal head—the Ordehlay devil.

Surrounding this devil are a number of figures clothed in matching shirts called *ashobies*, roughly forming an irregular and pulsating circle. One figure carries a flat basket that he uses to fan the devil—that is, whenever he is not picking up

money that sails from balconies down to the devil, or from where it is placed at the performer's feet. Occasionally the entourage pauses as the devil spins and gyrates, or rushes towards the immediate onlookers. Eventually it lumbers and zigzags its way to the lowest point of Upper Mountain Cut Road, where it becomes apparent that this pause-and-dance is only executed when the leading processor places a shotgun—whether real or carved—on the ground directly in the path of the devil. Known as the *bila* man, this person seems to be controlling the movements of the entire procession. Once the gun is placed, the devil spins more furiously and circles the pit more aggressively, pausing to lightly step his feet in front of himself, alternating left right left right, forward back forward back.

Brave audience members approach the devil cautiously. He extends his left foot, placing his heel to the ground while lifting his toes so that the approacher may place small leone bills under the foot. The *ashobie*-clad member with the flat basket rushes over to collect the bills while the devil either poses for a photograph, or proceeds to circle, spin, and step with more animation in thanks to this gift of *kola* before proceeding to the next pocket of onlookers and potential gift-givers. Finally the *bila* man picks up the gun, approaches the devil touching the gun to its snout, and the procession continues on down the road until the gun signals the next brief interlude.

This short description, and an accompanying representative video, provide a typical example of the day's procession of between sixteen and twenty Ordehlay devils during any given holiday season (Video 1). It is only a modicum of the

characters that also process during the day, ranging from trucks loaded with a politician and her female supporters, to masses of children and youth running through the streets in excitement, to crawling traffic that chose to battle the parade, to flatbed trucks heavily laden with young men and women drinking and dancing to ear-splitting popular music. Occasionally a fight will break out and police in riot gear will manifest from nowhere to beat and remove the offending parties, or perhaps even set off pepper spray to clear the throng. The merriment quickly returns, but may take a little longer in the one or two times where the air needs to clear. The sweating, drinking, laughing, and music continue well into the night and possibly even the wee hours of the morning. If it's Christmas Day, another parade will occur the following day. If not, the next will occur on New Year's Day, and again later in April for Independence Day. What does this scenario tell us about the Ordehlay devil, its performance, its membership-based society, and its supporters?

Ordehlay Society Basics

The Ordehlay society of today is a cultural and social organization whose main *raison d'être* is entertainment and celebration through the processing, or 'coming out' of masked devils. This performance occurs at certain designated times of the year that coincide with public holidays: Christmas, Boxing Day,[4] New Year's Day, and since 1961 Independence Day—which for Sierra Leone is April 27th. Occasionally they will also come out on Easter and at weddings or political events,

[4] Boxing Day originated in the United Kingdom and is celebrated throughout the British Commonwealth on the first weekday after Christmas.

but this is only upon request and payment of a bottle of rum and a cash gift. As I was told, these devils come out especially in order to entertain those of lesser means, because although it is the holidays, not all have the money to go to the beach to celebrate:

> Ok now, we have different holidays on our calendars. So, when, let me elaborate, on New Year's Day, which is a public holiday, most of the underprivileged, they don't have nowhere to go, like those that don't have car to go to the beach or go somewhere to enjoy their holiday. The only thing they can get themselves involved with on that particular day, when they have the masked dancers coming out, they can go out and enjoy the holiday. So it's like a festivity thing for most of the underprivileged.

And so, they rely on the devil processions to provide them free access to partying and festivities which would otherwise not exist for them.[5]

Ordehlay societies are generally aligned to particular neighborhoods throughout Freetown, though each neighborhood can and usually does have more than one. They are thus directly connected to a localized and tightly-knit community that includes not only neighbors, but other neighborhood societies that share many of the same members. Their names often relate to their particular intentions or concerns, pop culture, local events, histories or stories, or a projected toughness. For example, Cline Town chose the name Gladiators Power because of the association of gladiators as being talented warriors and fighters. Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society of Susan's Bay was originally founded by sailors and seafarers who used to travel to Japan. They liked it so much that they named themselves after the area, and further hoped to entice people from Japan to visit Sierra Leone, demonstrating an interest in Japanese culture

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[5] Interview, Bob Anthony, April 30, 2018.

while hoping to develop a global relationship with them.[6] Other society names relate to their location, or to geographic specificity. Arie Bus Station is named so because of its proximity to Freetown's travel hub and Magazine because of its location in the neighborhood of the same name in Freetown. Masabone Ordehlay Society in Lunsar is named after the hill where an iron ore mine exists, and because they believe "there is a devil there, and that devil is called Masabone."[7] Two of Makeni's Ordehlays are named after the hills and the river there: Wusum Cultural Ordehlay Society and Arie Mana for the hills and Arie Mayaka for the river. Other prominent Freetown Ordehlay societies worth listing are: Bloody Mary, Firestone, Rainbow, Oju Feray, Tetina, and Arie Kakua.

In order to participate on a parade day, the Ordehlay society, of which there are currently more than seventy in Freetown, must register with and pay a fee to the Ordehlay Union. This organization began in the 1980s after clashes between Ordehlay groups as a way to ensure its peaceful continuation. It cooperates with the Sierra Leone Police, and includes and stems from the Parade Junction Peace Committee. This Committee was begun in 1987 "to control and keep the peace for the devils to process, so there was no fighting" and they "collaborate with the police to give out the certificates and the permits for dancing."[8] The Committee was also instrumental in bringing the Ordehlay processions back after the two and a half year

[6] Interview, *Kotu* Siaka Sesay and *Agba* Abdul Don Koroma, Susan's Bay, Freetown, December 22, 2016.

[7] Interview, Joseph S. Kanu, Masabone Ordehlay Society, Lunsar, January 14, 2017.

[8] Interview, Sullay Samura, Chairman of the Parade Junction Peace Committee and Sulaiman Kamara, Secretary General of the Ordehlay Union and Firestone member, January 2, 2017.

break due to the 2014 Ebola outbreak. The Ordehlay Union provides the list and order of the Ordehlay society processions and requests permission from the Sierra Leone Police for them to come out in a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). In this MoU they also agree on the behalf of all participating societies to abide by the rules of conduct prescribed by the police and the Union (Appendix 1).

In addition to providing entertainment to the greater city, as friendly welfare societies they are secondarily concerned with the well-being and mutual aid of their immediate communities. Each society actively collects money through yearly membership dues, the creation of identification cards, sponsorships levied from NGOs, businesses, and politicians, and the money gathered from devil processions. These funds are pooled each year to build the devil that they will bring out during only one of the year's designated parade days, though some more successful societies can afford to come out more than once. After the devil has been provided for or funded, the hope is that there is enough money left over to build a society house, a school, or create educational and skills programs for their youth. The idea is to provide services and training where they do not exist so that members and their families can lift themselves out of poverty and attain the jobs and success needed to marry, support a family, and thus ascend from youth to adult or elder status.

As social organizations, they provide an opportunity for those not related by blood, ethnicity, or religion to band together at times of need, further spending society funds for the care of grieving members or funerary expenses. The society provides a manufactured and networked infrastructure for members to gain access to the real

day-to-day needs of living in the city. If one requires something, likely there is a member of the society that knows someone that can help—a good and trustworthy mechanic to fix the car, someone who will trade food for services, a tailor willing to give a discount, etc.

Historically, Ordehlay is loosely derived from the exclusive, elder Egungun, Hunting, and Gelede Societies, all of which are modeled after the Yoruba versions that arrived with repatriated slave communities, and the youth-led Alikali and Ambas Geda Societies, which were formed because of exclusion from the aforementioned Yoruba ones. As Nathaniel King summarized:

> A shared history enabled them to draw on Yoruba-based secret societies as joint possessions (inherited common backstages). Yet, as time went on, these organizations' inclusivity metamorphosed into exclusivity, prompting the formation of perceivably more inclusive 'grass-roots' organizations like Odelays…mainly migrants who lacked the backstages of family pedigree and bequeathed wealth, for example, became members of Odelay organizations and used them as backstages, fortified by secrets, to give themselves relevance on Freetown's front stages." (2016, 63)

Originally created by the young men of Freetown as a method of obtaining stability in the stressful socioeconomic environment of the city, Ordehlay associations have moved well beyond the original borders of use and intention. Their membership is now both men and women, young and old, Muslim and Christian alike—an intentional hybridity mobilized as a strength to overcome challenges and difficulties of migrant and urban communities. Their public arm, the masquerade, is of course the subject of this dissertation, as is the various ways it has been mobilized across temporal and spatial boundaries to address the uncertainties of the urban environment.

Because Ordehlay is a veritable chameleon in membership, masquerade aesthetics, and historical implications, I will break its more detailed explanation up into several key aspects: Performance, Aesthetics, Membership and Organizational Structure, and Relationship to Other Societies. Since the origin of the term Ordehlay/Ode-Lay itself and its evolutionary birth have been discussed above and will be discussed in greater detail later in the dissertation, I will move past it and launch directly into these key logistical components. Suffice it to say that scholars primarily cite Ordehlay as emerging during the 1950s (King and Albrecht 2014; Abdullah 2002, 27; Nunley 1987, 1988), but that I take a much more processual, layered view of its origin, as of its structure, and think it likely developed earlier. The oldest cited Ordehlay societies in living memory include Eastern Paddle, Lawd Da Masi (Lord of Mercy), Firestone, Bloody Mary, and Black Arrow (Abdullah 1998).[9] Paddle is still the largest and most widespread of these, and its branches have the most extensive and comprehensive reach, spanning from Freetown, across the country, and into London, the Netherlands, Ohio, and Texas, USA.[10]

The Anatomy of a Performance

The public, performative aspect of Ordehlay masks is key to the success of a devil, and to upholding and transmitting Ordehlay values. Rather than preserving

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[9] Interview, Siaka Sesay, Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society, Freetown, January 11, 2017; Interview, Alimamy Bangura, December 21, 2016; Interview, Abie Musa Kamara, Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, Freetown, December 30, 2016.

[10] Many upline members noted that Paddle was the oldest and most widespread Ordehlay society, even noting it as the "national" Ordehlay society and masked devil (Makeni, January 14, 2017; Interview, Arie Kakua Jollay and Ordehlay Society, Bo, December 17, 2017; Interview, A.O. Bangura, Port Loko, December 20, 2017).

cultural heritage as westerners are accustomed to doing, it is the performance itself that is central to preservation, the passing on of tradition, and the massaging of creativity. As A.O. Bangura put it: "The way westerners preserve [pauses]; instead they [Ordehlay] preserve cultural heritage by performing every year! They don't worry about keeping the mask, they take it apart. The play is important. People coming together is more important, it is the tradition."[11] Here it is the ephemerality of playful celebration and the uniting of communities, sometimes returning from abroad, that is the cultural stuff of preservation. It lives on in memories, and significantly of course, in the photographs and "snaps" that are regularly taken by cell phones and iPads. Widely circulated and revisited in the weeks and months to come both in Sierra Leone and in the diaspora, they help remind who was the best and what can be improved upon in the future. These digital images additionally visually reinforce social, economic, and political ties, a topic I will address towards the end of this study.

Further fundamental to the performance and to stoking creative ingenuity is the building up of community through competition between neighborhoods and their associated Ordehlay societies. A unique animal or theme is chosen each year and a devil is never used twice in the same city. The most memorable, and therefore successful devils are those that incorporate an animal, figure, or aspect that has never been seen before. However, while newness and innovation are central to the competitive terrain, too much innovation too quickly risks disruption of vested social

[11] Interview, A.O. Bangura and Abubakarr Bangura, Port Loko, December 20, 2017.

organizations. Performances are therefore still closely tied to the older masquerade society models. For example, the masks process in public after libations of alcohol—usually red rum—are poured to bless and protect the devil and the performer. This usually occurs in the society house, or in a nearby space. Unlike secret societies, however, it does not need to be done in an entirely undisclosed location, and unfinished devils can be viewed safely after paying a small fee, as can the libation ritual. Normally the libations are performed by the *kotu* and apprentices and perhaps a few other members of the society, while the rest of the members and supporters anxiously wait outside for a view of the devil's first appearance—its "coming out."

Once it has appeared to much fanfare, drumming, picture taking, and cheers, the devil will briefly perform in the immediate courtyard of the society compound or in the street outside of it. A circle of members in *ashobies* surround the devil, whose performance begins with a spinning motion, followed by light, small steps forward and backward while shaking tall, thin tail staffs or brushes which he holds up beside his head (Figure 5).[12] These are called *esha* in the Ordehlay society, and *egbaleh* in the Hunting society. The devil then pauses for money to be placed under the left foot, which is the society way of offering money to the performer directly rather than the society collectively.

The most important members of the performance, other than the devil itself, which can be considered the Heart of the performance, are the *bila* man, which is the

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[12] Though women aren't excluded from performing the devil, it is extremely laborious and requires deft acrobatic skills and strength. Men are almost always the ones dancing, but I've heard whispers of women performing Jollay, and when I asked if I could learn to dance the devil, the skepticism was high that I would become strong and adept enough to carry it, let alone dance it in the heat.

person carrying the real or mock gun that controls the movements of the devil and the procession—the Head of the performance—and the *owoh akorie*, which is the person carrying the flat basket (*akorie*) that collects the small cash gifts that the devil will accumulate throughout the procession—the Arms (Figure 6). This money can be given directly to the performer under the foot as mentioned, or offered collectively to the society in various ways, including placing it on the animal's snout or head, tossing it from wherever you are standing, including balconies, or just placing it on the ground near the devil. The *owoh akorie* also regularly fans the devil, presumably to keep him cool. Other members help guide the performer, helping him to maneuver tricky bends and pot holes because visibility in masquerade costumes is extremely limited. They are the Legs, and possibly also the other Arm of the procession. The crowds are the cheerleaders and the reason for coming out. While not directly constitutive of the performance anatomy they are still absolutely essential, creating the communal Family that every individual needs.

After the devil's first dance, the *bila* man will hold the gun up and walk at the head of the procession towards the designated parade route, which he and the group will follow. A great deal of the neighborhood and society supporters will come along, some for the entire day, creating quite the thronged spectacle of revelers. The *bila* man, which can be a woman since I was once a *bila* man, will then decide periodically to stop the devil by placing the gun on the ground in front of him. He will proceed to spin, step, and shake the *esha*, pausing only to receive money under his left foot or for a photo. Once the *bila* man picks the gun up and touches it to the snout

of the devil, the procession continues, stopping again, then continues in this slow crawl punctuated with performance pit stops until the Ordehlay reaches the end of its route. The parade passes through Mountain Cut, which is the midway point for all parade routes and where devils may deviate off of the path and switch performers out of sight, and then proceeds on to Circular Road. This is the end point and here the Ordehlay devil and key members receive their certificate of participation from the Ordehlay Union (see Appendix 2) and thus conclude their parade. The partying, drinking, and eating that has also been happening throughout the day will continue into the next day's light.

Aesthetics: The Devil is in the Details

Intimately tied to performance is aesthetics, and the individual qualities of each masquerade costume are ultimately judged by, and designed with, performance in mind. Again, the most vital aspect of the performance is that people are present, as they come together to celebrate the holidays, and that they witness and participate with the devil's procession. What people ultimately think of the devil and its performance is important to it living on in memory, and to a positive and successful celebration that day. Therefore, while the devil should still align more or less with Ordehlay aesthetics, it must still demonstrate some kind of unique variation on the theme. Like the contemporary Air Youth performance groups of 1960s and 70s Cameroon discussed by Nicholas Argenti, in addition to expected innovation of designs, Ordehlay societies can and should retain strong ties to the longer-established

masquerade groups that still operate in the area, and to "long-standing models of danger, locality and the foreign" (1998, 753-754).

The general aesthetics that identify an Ordehlay devil then are typically comprised of local, usually organic materials and anything that reads as "cultural" in Sierra Leone. Such things include but are not limited to: porcupine quills, gourds, wooden combs, giant snail shells, star fish, cowries, fabric, real or faux animal skins, the Sierra Leone flag, teeth or horns, bullet casings, and more recently as a particularly memorable twist: rice and peppers—common foodstuffs (Figure 7; see also Figure 42). These items decorate the shirt and trousers of the devil's costume, which are made separately to match the main theme of the devil, and are layered onto the superstructure, creating an enormous and bulbous protrusion at its back and on top of its head (Figure 8). The names of the superstructure, trousers, and shirt still retain the Yoruba roots of its founding Egungun and Hunting societies: *asho* for the clothes/costume and which relates to the matching *ashobies* (also a Yoruba word), *hampa* or *hamper* for the body and superstructure of the costume and which includes the simple undercloth of rice or burlap sacks, and *akapair* for the head.[13] *Arie* means "the whole devil" and so is the collectivity of all these costume elements, but it also applies to all the different kinds of devils.[14] All are Yoruba words or variations on them.

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[13] Interview, Abdoulaye "Taylor" Kamaru, Oju Feray Ordehlay Society, Freetown, December 21, 2016.

[14] Personal correspondence, Alpha Kanu and Alimamy Bangura, May 21, 2018.

One or more animal heads, whether carved or taxidermy, or a carved wooden anthropomorphic figure are also absolutely essential to the devil and are the central element. These crest and/or are nestled amongst the voluminous local elements (Figure 9). So important are the heads or the skins that, as Bob Anthony stated: “You cannot completely design an Ordehlay without using an animal skin or an animal head. You cannot design an Ordehlay without using them because that is the purpose of the devil.”[15] He explained that this purpose was in order to translate to the public what that particular devil was, and place it within, or deviate it from, a spectrum of existing genre of animals. These animals include but are not limited to springbok, deer, elk, moose, caribou, pigs, and bears; animals which would be hunted and provide sustenance. The overall appearance of an Ordehlay devil with its animal heads and skins and plethora of materials protruding out from all angles around the head, shoulders, and back of the performer is quite imposing and impressive. Whether or not the devil is moving towards you, it feels as if every element of its costume is coming directly at you.

Other localized aesthetics manifest in the carved human figures that grace the top of the Ordehlay devil and relate to treasured historical figures, like Bai Bureh the Temne chief that resisted colonial authority (see Figures 36 and 37), or a female figure supporting a male one, because “Woman Tote Man” (see Figure 38). This common phrase acknowledges the tenacity and fortitude of women as men rely on the strengths of their backs and their moral characters for survival and stability. The

[15] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, USA, April 30, 2018.

woman supporting a male on her shoulders cropped up in 2016 celebrations as well as in John Nunley's 1987 book (xvii, 108). Other figures whether carved or a printed reproduction relate to admired politicians, community members, or sponsors. Some representative characters I've come across are now-President Julius Maada Bio and community pillar Desmond Paul (see Figures 25 and 23). The *agba* (head) of Masabone Ordehlay Society in Lunsar, Joseph S. Kanu, even joked that the next devil they commissioned should have a carved representation of me—the *Amanda* devil![16]

In addition to these local materials, foreign elements are extremely prized, and at least one or two foreign or imported goods are included, or sometimes even dominate a maskform. For example, monetary notes both local and foreign, from the USA and Europe, are often seen gracing a devil's head, and Christmas tree ornaments and tinsel, feather boas, pipe cleaners, and plastic circlets or straws are all elements that have been purchased for use in an Ordehlay mask (Figures 9 and 10). These in general relate to a more fancy aesthetic. However, both the local and foreign components can variously relate to "fancy" and "fierce" aesthetics, and to imaginaries of the rural and the urban. Sometimes this foreign connection lies in the animal heads themselves, which can be imported from abroad, especially the United States.

Other elements from abroad which have variously characterized Ordehlay aesthetics are more iconographic and include carved and brightly painted representations of Mami Wata, the famed mermaid water spirit who brings wealth and good fortune to her supplicants; winged creatures like dragons, bats, and vultures;

[16] Interview, Lunsar, January 14, 2017.

winged machines like planes; the British crown or seal which includes a lion and a unicorn; Hindu women or busts with *bindis* on foreheads; Jamaican lions and flags; and American Indians, often depicted with large feathered headdresses, to name a few of those more frequently used historically and in the present (Figure 11). Ordehlay societies and their *kotus* have long been interested in the world's cultures and aesthetics, and show no hesitation in incorporating them in their masquerades, whether to invoke the desired qualities that the character or theme embodies, or as a playful nod to pop culture and history, or as a way of showing admiration for a character or archetype.

Who Are They?: Membership and Organizational Structure

Ordehlays are peculiar to Freetown and the urban centers throughout the Hinterland, and now the diaspora. Membership structure, however is largely cohesive. While Ordehlay is related to more historical secret societies whose membership can often be compulsory, membership in both city and town Ordehlay societies is not. It is entirely voluntary and congenial, functioning largely as a matter of strategy and tactical choice (King 2016, 60). In fact, this open membership, inclusive of all ages, all religions, all genders, all ethnicities, and all nationalities is its strength. The broader the membership, the stronger the core. Members residing in the diaspora are particularly helpful as they can contribute greater monetary assistance and create new branches abroad, thus broadening the society's membership and making it more financially robust. This of course provides a greater level of funding for the best

devils and as we will see, a new venue for devil performances, further strengthening economic and social bonds.

However diverse the memberships, the societies are still more or less organizationally structured across borders and branches. For example, when an upline society adopts an Ordehlay or a Jollay, or decides to form a new organization or branch, the founding member(s) visit Freetown for training, to learn the organization of the society, and the best practices for running said society.[17] Another way to strengthen the society is to encourage as many members to participate as possible. The best way to do this is to provide numerous official titles and roles so that the maximum number of members feel key to the operation of the society—so that they feel needed and integral to the community but are also able to secure prestige in a tenuous environment that necessitates it. As Banton states about Ambas Geda, one of Ordehlay's precursors: "This organization [of the maximum amount of members holding a position of office] permits individual members to win status and prestige; it introduces neatly differentiated order where economic pressure might create uniformity without leadership" (Banton 1953c, 995; Little 1957, 588-589). So what does this organizational structure entail?

There are several wings to the Ordehlay organization structure. There is a woman's wing, a youth wing, and the founding members wing—essentially the 'elders' of the society who tend to have the most knowledge and who often train the upcoming members and officers. The youth wing has the exact same organizational

[17] Interview, Arie Kakua Jollay and Ordehlay, Bo, December 17, 2017; Interview, A. O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, Bolobine Ordehlay Society, Port Loko, December 20, 2017.

structure, but their Ordehlay devil is smaller and has a special name: *kekere*. There is also a separation between the general memberships and the executive membership. The general membership is tiered, as some members cannot or do not pay dues and are only loosely associated with the society or simply come out to support on public celebrations, while others are paying members with no executive titles, and still others are working towards officially joining or becoming an elected official of the society. To join, one must show up to a meeting, state one's intent, and then undergo review of one's character and intention for joining. The society will discuss this person and let them know whether or not they will be accepted into the society.

The executive structure of Ordehlay is roughly divided between official titles and roles relating to performance, and those that relate to the daily operations of the societies and to governing the meetings. The head of the society is known as the *agba*, but he oversees the performative side of the Ordehlay and ensures that all activities leading up to and including the day of the performance runs smoothly. He is thought of as the cultural head. The Chairman, who is thought of as the administrative head, actually runs the daily operations and presides over meetings, including the agenda.[18] He is sometimes called *Baba agba*. A related position is that of Secretary General, who performs all the duties expected of a secretary, such as recording meeting minutes, documenting and disseminating society activities, and managing all society paperwork. The Secretary General is essentially the custodian of the documents. Finally there is the *kotu*, who is the society's chief builder and designer of

[18] Interview, Ordehlay members, Pepel, December 20, 2017; Interview, A.O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, Port Loko, December 20, 2017.

Ordehlay devils. He—I know of no female *kotus*—will have several apprentices and assistant *kotus*. In charge of the women in the organization and the management of all society finances and funds, including the allocation of how such funds are spent, is the Mammy Queen. She often has an Assistant or even two Assistant Mammy Queens. The most closely related organizational structure to Ordehlay today is the Hunting society. The membership ties between the two are historically and presently the strongest, and many members of a particular Ordehlay society are members of a Hunting society parent. One could thus think of Ordehlay as Hunting-lite, which will be unpacked next, along with Ordehlay's relationship to other societies.

The Role of Ordehlay and How It Rolls: Relationship to Other Societies

I briefly mentioned that Ordehlay is historically connected to and modeled after the Yoruba-based elder societies of Gelede, Egungun, and Hunting, as well as the youth-led Ambas Geda and Alikali. Since both of these youthful societies will receive further treatment later in the dissertation, I first address the historical precursors of the Yoruba elder societies. Then I proceed to examine the current relationship of Ordehlay to other masquerade societies not already summarized, including Jollay and Ojeh. Though there are many different types and variations of Egungun (Drewal 1978, 18), presumably Hunting, and definitely Jollay, I will try to broadly encapsulate the general meaning, purpose, and aesthetics, particularly as it feeds in, or relates to, Ordehlay.

Both Hunting and Egungun societies first appeared in Sierra Leone in the early and then mid-19th century respectively (Nunley 1982, 45; Cannizzo 2006, 172).

In Yoruba philosophy, *egungun*—or supernatural power concealed—and its associated masquerade societies honor and represent spirits of deceased ancestors (Drewal 1978, 18). In general, the 'dead' are not entirely gone. Instead they come back to earth as grandchildren or Egungun masquerades, relating Egungun to the concept of the 'living dead' amongst Yoruba peoples, thus simultaneously serving as a status symbol for the living. The souls of the departed ancestors return to earth in physical form to attend to the welfare of those left behind through the agency of the Egungun costume in a continuous reciprocal relationship of the living and those from beyond (Aremu 1983; Drewal 1978). These costumes are voluminously textured by layers and layers of sumptuous fabrics and brocades that magnify the importance of both owner and lineage. In performance these lavish strips whirl and fan out from the dancer as they twirl and spin. The costume is usually crested by a large carved and painted head or animal and the dancer's face is obscured by a netted fiber or beaded covering. In the Sierra Leone context, Egungun was also known as Ogugu or Agugu.

Hunting society developed just afterwards as a creolized secret society in the mid-19th century. I was told by several Freetown members that it was brought to Sierra Leone by recaptives and handled—I assume they mean controlled—by the Creoles. The first Hunting in Sierra Leone was Odile Hunting Society. According to the members I interviewed, it is a secret society for different families and is found in the bush; indeed all that is necessary for the society takes place in the bush. The main purpose then and now is "oneness. It brings people together; different tribes,

community and it serves as a training ground for youth to learn the different leaves in the bush and their purpose—especially how to cure and protect people."[19]

The organizational structure of Hunting still most closely aligns with that of Ordehlay. Where Ordehlay has primarily three to four executive members (*agba*, Chairman and *kotu*, but also Mammy Queen), Hunting has seven. These include *ashigba* (Ordehlay's *agba*), *ajadeh* (Ordehlay's Chairman), *olukutu* (Ordehlay's *kotu*), *akoway*, *oluquasie*, head *aboja* and head *iyaamie* (Ordehlay's Mammy Queen). Additionally, the attendant carrying the gun, known as the *bila* man, "represents the *bila* man of the Hunting society, the one who protects the masquerader or at times feigns the hunter" (Nunley 1982, 46). Hunting now presides over Ordehlay as a sort of umbrella organization and according to Nathaniel King, the contestation of Hunting vs Agugu/Egungun was what formed the basis of Ordehlay as a new society: "a cross between the two older societies that enfolded those they had rejected and marginalized: the Odelay" (2016, 59). This still holds true today.

What also holds true is the Hunting aesthetic, which is fierce, relating to hunting activities and the bush. This manifests in masquerades as animal heads, porcupine quills, gourds, and wooden combs and paddles. Freetown Ordehlay societies are currently modeling their masquerades more and more along this Hunting aesthetic and trying to relate more to their Hunting parent. As Bob Anthony puts it:

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[19] Personal correspondence via email and WhatsApp, May 20-21, 2018. While in California, I emailed further questions to my assistant, Alpha Kanu, who took them to Hunting and Ordehlay members to answer. A snap of the handwritten answers was then emailed back to me by Alpha the following day, as well as a list of all members contributing to the responses: Njawa, Alimamy Bangura, Alhassan Koroma, Mamoud, Taylor, and Bakarr.

> Initially they usually design the Ordehlay in two different ways. They design it in the fancy way. Then they get another one that they design like a Hunting. But, anytime you take a look at them, if you know something about it, you know that there's a difference. I don't care how it looks like, because the things that we put on the Hunting, there are some things that we don't put on the Ordehlay. Because we don't want the Ordehlay to look more attractive than the Hunting.[20]

According to him, if you are presenting an Ordehlay devil, it should not overly incorporate Hunting materials, especially because it can detract from the materials available to create a Hunting devil. However, the differentiation between the materials is nebulous and appears to be esoteric. It may be that the close association of Ordehlay members to their umbrella Hunting societies, and the society's values of secrecy and knowledge of the bush have caused Ordehlays to look up to Hunting and try to increasingly appropriate their aesthetics, and possibly the status and prestige that that entails.

The other notable Nigerian society that has provided cultural and performative scaffolding for Ordehlays is Gelede. In a Nigerian context, cross-dressing male masqueraders come out in pairs and imitate the feminine dances and gestures of women. The central idea is to honor them, particularly in their roles as mothers (Drewal 1974; Drewal and Thompson 1990). Carved faces adorn the superstructure of these masks and a great deal of cloth is used in the costume's construction, but not nearly as much as in Egungun.

In Sierra Leone, Geledeh still exists today and I had the chance to speak with one *agba*, Ousman Bangura, of the Foulah Town Otta Society, which is a Geledeh. Bangura stated that the membership included both men and women and strongly

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[20] Interview, Maryland, USA, April 30, 2018.

hinted that the women do exactly the same thing as all of the male members of the society, including masquerading. In fact, 70% of the society's membership is female. Similar to other masquerade and secret societies, including Ordehlay, in order to become a member, one must pay a prescribed amount of money in addition to yearly dues, a bottle of rum, one live chicken, and red and white kola nuts. All of these are part of the gift and part of the oath one gives to the society.

In terms of the masks, while all of them depict beautiful women, they come out in threes rather than twos in order to celebrate as well as sympathize with members of the society who have died, and their surviving families. They also perform at marriages, but like Ordehlay societies they reserve a special day each year that does not relate to funerals or marriages to come out. Their Geledeh however, and presumably others, is not a youth society—members must be 25 and up—and the masquerader is not young and athletic but advanced in age. In comparison to Ordehlay, the society is more secret in nature, less cultural, and possesses powerful medicine and the knowledge to manipulate it. Such medicine is created and spoken over by a ritual practitioner and comes out with the women in a calabash held on their heads. The identity of the performers and the nature of the medicines is a well-guarded secret. Bangura wouldn't even show me the masks themselves, because they should not be seen by ordinary people.[21]

As I am beginning to hint at here, masquerade societies exist on a spectrum of secrecy which ranges from the most cultural and entertainment masks and therefore

[21] Interview, Ousman Bangura, Foulah Town Otta Society, Freetown, December 22, 2016.

the least secret, to the most esoteric and guarded of secret societies with their own powerful knowledge and associated activities. All however are related to one another and cooperate to create one analogous, if slightly amorphous and interwoven culture of masquerade societies; each with their own concerns, aesthetics, and roles and each sharing members and artists across the board—though of course not wholesale, but overlapping. Though it does not masquerade as such, Ojeh is at one end of the spectrum as one of the most secret. At the other is one of the societies that today especially relates to Ordehlay in terms of its role of entertainment and celebration, Jollay.

Jollay's members include some of the youngest of any society: the *pikins*, or small kids, as well as adult members. Meaning "peace," Jollay is almost entirely entertainment and fun with minimal amount of secrecy, and comes out at weddings and in street processions, or if hired at cultural events. Young acrobatic male dancers dress in brightly colored fabric costumes that cover them from head to toe, and they take turns jumping, flipping, and moving their feet and arms quickly and deftly, each trying to outdo the previous performer. Jollay also has one of the most iconic masqueraders in Sierra Leone and beyond: the *fairie* (fairy). *Fairie* is a stylish, buxom and attractive woman with a prettily painted facemask (Figure 12). It can apparently be performed by anyone that is able to learn the appropriate coquettish, flirtatious movements, which includes a healthy amount of rump-shaking.

Like Ordehlay, they also have a society house where meetings occur, masks and costumes are assembled and stored, and the shrine is created and engaged with.

According to Abdulai Kamara of the Highway Jollay Society of Freetown, the main difference between Jollay and Ordehlay is that there is mixed entry into their society house, while for Ordehlay, it is only men that are allowed.[22] This may be true, but I was allowed into the Oju Feray house, and several others. This is likely because of my status as an international researcher able to skirt and subvert rules, but it may also be that the rules are elastic.

I have provided a brief sketch of some of the major masquerade societies in Freetown and their relationship to Ordehlay as a way to extricate some of Ordehlay's own pecularities. I am still finding it puzzling and difficult to tease out, but in general Ordehlay lies somewhat closer to Jollay in its efforts to provide entertainment and celebratory fervor, but prefers to align itself more closely with Hunting. In my opinion, it sits somewhere right in-between—a situation evident even in its name, which means 'he stays, or hunts in the city rather than the bush.' As an example of the complicated, imprecise, amorphous terrain of Freetown and Sierra Leone societies, consider this brief excerpt from an interview with the *agba* of Paddle Ordehlay Society in Pepel, Ibrahim Ali Kamara:

> AM: What is the relationship of Ordehlay to Jollay and Hunting and Ojeh? How are they related or different?
>
> IK [laughs]: They are all different societies. Hunting is a Society. For the Ordehlay, anyone, being a member or not, you can join the group and dance. But for Hunting only selected people, those involved in the society can join it. Similarly, Jollay. Yeah. Jollay is somewhat secret, but not so much as compared to Hunting.[23]

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[22] Interview, Highway Jollay Society House, Freetown, December 22, 2016.
[23] Interview, Pepel, December 20, 2017.

Regardless of its entanglements, Ordehlay's mobilization of local and international imagery, materials, and visualities, as well as its willingness to borrow from a multitude of secret and entertainment society platforms and memberships is an effort to claim and assert a form of cosmopolitanism in the city. Through the mobility of their masquerades, the often youthful members have been able to navigate the overarching patrimonial system that originally characterized Freetown's earliest societies. By opening itself up to a plurality of social, cultural, and aesthetic choices and creating a fancy and fierce spectrum that will be analyzed in the next section, Ordehlay continues to channel its energies into expressive visual forms that supersede yet interact with the Yoruba models of Egungun, Gelede, and Hunting societies, as well as other local and youth masquerade societies. Ordehlay members and particularly its youth are thus cultural and social actors that create and negotiate art forms in earnest to meet daily and long-term challenges. Actively engaged with local and global imaginaries, youth do indeed have agency: in performing themselves, youth perform—and shape—the city.

Ordehlay Literature

Before moving on to the urban masquerade scholarship that provided the theoretical and methodological scaffolding for this project in a broader sense, I of course need to summarize the indispensable and foundational research of scholar John Nunley, whose work and encouragement has been essential to my own. Nunley conducted ethnographic studies on Ode-Lay politics, masquerade, and youth in

Freetown in the 1970s and 80s, historicizing these masquerades with rich archival sources, personal experiences, and rigorous fieldwork (1981, 1982, 1987, 1988). In addition to his numerous articles on Ode-Lay, his full-length publication *Moving with the Face of the Devil* has stood the test of time. Thumbed by many an Africanist and many a Sierra Leonean to boot, it has been cited *ad nauseam*, and rightly so—it is one of the few sources on this masquerade out there, or so it seemed. Most useful for me, he illustrates that not only did Ode-Lay incorporate the various grounds of knowledge and history the youth were confronted with; it also gave the youth the power to *deal* with that distinct history—as I discuss it, they *mobilized* it. But this explanation is perhaps too simplistic. The government and police often used the youth associations to curry favor, as they had a wide-reaching public aspect, so politics is inherent in the performance and aesthetics of the mask, and in the sheer existence of the *Ode-Lay* association. Further, the view of the mask as a coping mechanism alone leaves little room for this political agency, and as will become apparent throughout this dissertation, the economic, historic, and political bricolage within which Ordehlay and its material manifestation emerged can be harnessed as a way of appropriating, mobilizing, and *controlling* from marginal positions.

Nunley also notably explores a so-called "fancy" aesthetic at great length, which he juxtaposes with a "fierce" aesthetic (1981, 1987, 2010). This opposition was a common way to categorize and explain the function and aesthetics of such masks, and comes from a structuralist theory prominent in anthropology. From it emerged dichotomous categories such as 'village' vs 'bush,' 'raw' vs 'cooked,' that was very

much influenced by the work of Claude Levi-Strauss (1962; 1964). Though one of the primary aims of this dissertation is to dismantle the binaries that categorize the discipline and canon of art history, it is still a useful framework for exploring Ordehlay masks. In fact, it is still evident in Ordehlay masked devils today, but this may say more about the impact scholarship can and does have on the communities it calcifies into written theories of culture, than about the masks themselves. Though many interviewees characterize the masks by fancy or fine, and fierce, fearful, or bush, these ideas still operate more on a continuum as opposed to a binary, as one can witness both in the same mask. A great many of my interviewees corroborated these categories, though visually, the majority of the masquerades lean towards the fierce or bush aesthetic. I was told that this was largely due to the expense of bush/fierce devils being less than fancy devils, a topic I will return to later.[24]

The fancy aesthetic as defined by Nunley especially applies to Egungun, Alikali, Ambas Geda, Jollay, and sometimes Ordehlay, and it can briefly be summarized as pretty, pleasing, flashy, and brightly colored. Fancy masks often incorporate plastic flowers, beaded veils, sumptuous brocades, shiny materials like sequins and mirrors, cowries, and carved representations of females or mythical creatures like Mami Wata or Medusa. Fierce, or fearful, masks on the other hand incorporate bush animals, such as lions, bush cows, sheep, and imported deer and

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[24] Interview, Abdul L. Muctarr, aka: Ajaniokay, Freetown, January 9, 2017; Interview, A. O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, Bolobine Ordehlay Society, Port Loko, December 20, 2017; Phone interview, Bob Anthony, April 30, 2018.

bears and feature an excessive array of aggressive and potentially dangerous implements, such as pointy porcupine quills to ward off onlookers.

In Nunley's work, however, the Ordehlay's fancy precursors, Alikali and Ambas Geda, receive only passing attention, as does the political involvement of youth, apart from the masquerades, during these times (Nunley 1987, 44, 48, 51, 103, 105, 108, 256-257). For example, Nunley publishes a rare photograph of "wharf rats" following the Alikali masqueraders which is strikingly similar to Ordehlay processions (51, Fig. 18). Another Alikali masquerader is pictured on page 57 (Fig. 21). While he importantly cites "one of the first written references to what have been called the Alikali societies, the Ode-lay prototype," there isn't an in-depth connection drawn between Alikali and Ode-Lay, and no dates given for Banton's Alikali photographs to connect them to his sources (1987, 51).[25] In addition, Nathaniel King seems to disagree with Nunley by citing Alikali not as Ode-Lay's *prototype*, but as its "*forerunner*"—more processual and less static (2016, 64, my emphasis).

Ambas Geda, on the other hand, receives slightly more attention, particularly in its relationship to the fancy aesthetic it may very well have pioneered, and Yoruba masquerades such as Gelede (1987, 103, 105, 108). It is light on archival references here, but does mention Banton 1957. Nunley also briefly discusses Ambas Geda in his 2010 chapter in *Activating the Past*, again citing Banton 1957, but missing his other works from 1953, and the scholarship of Abdullah (2002) and Little (1957 and 1962) on the subject. Similarly, Nunley focuses on the performative potential of

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[25] "Members of Alikali Society Fined 3 Pounds for Unlawful Assault," *Sierra Leone Daily Mail*, 3 May 1947.

danger and violence that drenches the masks with meaning, yet does not have the opportunity to investigate the subsequent banning of Ode-lay at length.

In terms of Ordehlay mentions in contemporary African arts scholarship—I consider Ordehlay to be current, and therefore contemporary—scholars have not particularly addressed it, either as art or performance, except in a few instances. Most significantly, Susan Vogel included them in her seminal, yet highly criticized publication *Africa Explores*, where she categorizes them as "New Functional Art" (1991, 11, 23, 101-105). Curiously, she separates New Functional Art from Urban Art, defining New Functional Art as what will become traditional even though it is distinctively different from traditional art, as being made in rural villages and small towns, and as generally used in public and performative contexts. Ordehlay masquerades and societies are certainly and specifically urban in nature, and are absolutely related to yet inventing traditional as much as contemporary. They will not become traditional, they are inherently so, and further push the boundaries and understanding of what traditional actually means. As far as Vogel's defining of Urban Art goes, she here includes "popular" arts and the commercial signs and paintings of city-based craftspeople created to earn a living (1991, 23). Ordehlay blurs the lines of distinction between both of these categories, underscoring the inadequacy of categorical borders. It is urban, it is functional, it is popular, it is performative, it is commercial, it provides income, and it is contemporary.

The most attention they receive elsewhere is a paragraph or two in surveys of contemporary African art, such as Kasfir's *Contemporary African Art* (1999, 14-17).

Yet, there is no mention in the most prolific, essential, and comprehensive publication on contemporary African art, Enwezor and Okeke-Agulu's *Contemporary African Art Since 1980* (2009). In fact, there is no masquerade in this publication whatsoever, unless pictured in the work of one or two photographers. I imagine that this oversight might be due to the masks not fitting easily into Westernized categories of art, or those taught in art schools, such as painting, collage, drawing, or sculpture, or perhaps because in-depth studies have not been widely publicized since Nunley's work.

This dissertation therefore addresses these oversights and builds upon Nunley's pioneering work through archival and collections-based research. Fieldwork was conducted in Freetown, and in various upline Sierra Leone towns from December 2016 through January 2017 and December 2017. In 2018, fieldwork was extended into the diaspora community in Maryland, United States. Since fieldwork began in 2016, it has continued unabated through 21st century global technologies, and conversations have flowed continuously with members, friends, colleagues, and interviewees through WhatsApp, Facebook, email, text messages, and phone calls. Newspaper, article, and photographic archives at The British Library Newsroom, the Methodist Missionary Society Archives at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) library, University of London, and the Hoover Institute, Stanford University (*Africana Research Bulletin* and *West Africa* archives) were consulted, as were over three hundred masks in public and private collections (Los Angeles, New Haven, Minneapolis, Vienna, and New York), offering a richer depth to the earliest developments of what came to be known as Ode-lay, and now Ordehlay. I flesh out a

more contemporary global understanding of Ordehlay by further offering additional archival and object-based sources, as well as more recent secondary sources. Together they trouble the accepted date and manner of Ordehlay emergence, and offer a more mellifluous understanding of the fancy-fierce, urban-rural, traditional-contemporary dichotomies.

Urban Masquerade in Scholarship

Several key texts have been influential in my research of Ordehlay masquerades, much of which relied on urban masquerade phenomena in other parts of Africa. Because of the long-standing rural paradigm in Africanist scholarship and a more recent, broadly felt notion that studying tradition-based objects, even in an urban cityscape, is "old-fashioned," there have been, up until the last decade, very few documented urban masquerading traditions in Africa and little discussion of these urban performances (Fenton 2012, 21; Phillips 2002; Grabski 2007; Kasfir, 1992, 2013).[26] This spotlight on the rural stems from African art's disciplinary foundation in anthropology, with regional context and localized ethnographic research playing a central role, and art history, with its focus on group styles, aesthetics and the "object" of art. Here, the art object is primarily relegated to wooden sculpture older than the 1930s, or at best the 1950s, and found in Africa's villages—taken as evidence of a pure, "primitive" culture and as a testament to man's pristine and "natural" past, now "lost" to the modern world (Enwezor and Okeke-Agulu 2009). Dating African art

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[26] Indeed, a great majority of the young, up-and-coming scholars tend to focus wholly on contemporary arts, leaving the rural paradigm untouched and intact for the older generations.

objects in such a way is common in museums and the art market and locates the work, primarily for dealers, collectors, and connoisseurs, into a category of authenticity that is "tied to the increasing value of African artworks of proven antiquity" (Ogbechie 2012, 55). Here the value of the art object lies in proving its relative age—primarily a pre-colonial, and therefore "pre-contact" age which is assumed to have had no cities—and all too often arts from Africa from anytime after the 1930s are disregarded.

It is not the privileging of context or an interest in aesthetics that is the issue here, but an essentializing that overlooks the rich, dramatic, and dynamic visual arts that are a testament to the extreme social and political conditions of the contemporary urban experience. Newer, dialogic interventions have widened, yet not excluded, the stylistic horizon and allowed for a conceptual smorgasbord of techniques and design mediums, resulting in an unparalleled creative freedom that includes figurative sculpture as well as incorporation of newer and historic, yet less "canonical" techniques (collage, float-inspired superstructures) and materials (manufactured, imported).

Yet, scholarship is increasingly turning its attention towards these unique urban masquerade occurrences, perhaps shedding light on the fads of scholarship rather than the actuality of lived experience in an African city. As a dynamic, performative masquerade "tradition" that is contemporary, cosmopolitan, and globally-connected, Ordehlay is one such instance. This particular masquerade shares, yet differs from, several other urban masquerades in Africa that have recently been

documented, from Nigeria to Burkina Faso to Guinea Bissau, to be discussed below. The urban experience, which is both predicated on and contoured by the visual experience, as shown by Joanna Grabski, therefore needs a distinct toolbox not tied to any one discipline or binary in order to grasp and begin to understand its particularities (2007; 2017). Some of the tools that have broadly proven useful are considering the particular history, or locality, of the cityscape as part of a globalizing world; the consideration of youth (as having agency), often the practitioners of urban masquerade societies, and their particular circumstance in said globalizing world; the mobilization of mythic "traditions" and "modernities" to accomplish or create a lived historical space; and the actual space of the city as the glue that binds all of the disparate communities, ethnicities, cultures, and religions together, while also connecting them to peripheral and diasporic communities. All constitute the cosmopolitan urban experience, and all find ways to manifest themselves visually, or are themselves generated by the visual experience.

While scholarship is thin in urban masquerade in comparison to the thousands of studies on "rural" or "village" expressions, a number of noteworthy studies should be explored and credit given where it is due, as all of these in one way or another had an impact on how I thought through this project. After John Nunley's in-depth study of Ode-Lay examined above, I must first cite the brief work of Jeanne Cannizzo on the Alikali Devils of Sierra Leone, which I found terribly helpful for historical information on Ordehlay's precursors, and also helped to frame and encourage my exploration of youth masking societies outside of Freetown. Ottenberg and Binkley's

2006 edited volume on children's masquerades was similarly useful in framing theories of youth and child-run masquerades. While I am unable to discuss *kekere* masks at length in this dissertation, they certainly do exist and are considered as branches of Ordehlay that will grow into more adult roles. Ottenberg and Binkley also explore the carnivalesque, pop cultural aspects of such masquerades such as movies, comics, and fantasy, which is another thread that weaves in and out of Ordehlay masquerade, as does their emphasis on innovation and change as an essential characteristic of postcolonial Africa. Similarly, the relatively recent work by Courtnay Micots on young men and women's fancy dress and carnival masquerades in coastal Ghana have offered insights to the transformational possibilities and competitive terrain of publicly performing fancy aesthetics as well as its connections to a larger Black Atlantic world (2012; 2014).

As mentioned above, Arjun Appadurai and Ferdinand de Jong, have both demonstrated the ways that the vehicles of "tradition" and "modernity" are mobilized for different political, economic, social, or cultural ends through the creation of "locality" in the city, and the ways that this is both informed by and shapes the global experience. What is further useful here is that, in the production of locality, a particular nonlocal ethnoscape is constantly pushed back against in order to continually maintain a manufactured modernity, or modern identity. Often this particular "modernity" is juxtaposed to tradition, and both are variously called upon in order to gain ground. For example, de Jong demonstrates the co-opting of traditionally "secret" initiation and masquerade practices by the government in

Casamance, Senegal in order to diminish their power and thereby contain and control the secrets that give city and rural societies so much power to govern, both socially and politically (2007).

Similarly, the negotiation and performance of traditionally-rural and rural traditional masquerades in state-sponsored city festivals of Nigeria, as seen in the work of Bess Reed and Benjamin Hufbauer, manufacture a particular nationhood and unifying "identity" of newly independent countries (Hufbauer 1994; Hufbauer and Reed 2003). Their work concerns the assertively feminine contemporary Igbo maiden masquerade known as Adamma, and how masquerading can be used as a tactic to control or subvert gender roles. Also useful, Bentor's relational work perhaps better explains the Igbo experience after the Civil War (1967-70), in that the Igbo felt they had failed to become Nigerians by giving up their ethnic identity, and the naïve slogan "From Tribe to Nation" of early independence days gave way to the "Unity in Diversity" model (2008; 2011). This, to my ears, smacks a bit of "multiculturalism" that still in some ways prevails today. While localized identities that had been in decline were revived, or one could say mobilized, this revival is now a thing of the past. As in the work of Reed, Hufbauer, and de Jong, we see a tension between the "traditional," aka: the village, and the public and political as part of a globalizing world that results in creative new formulations. Yet both are tropes and neither is the reality. All four scholars thus demonstrate that tradition and diversity can both be mobilized to different political ends in the specific locality of the city, and that this mobilization can at times be short-lived.

Other scholars focused on urban masquerade include Lisa Homann who, like John Nunley, has shown that the threat of violence is often a force integral to the performative potential of the masks. Through her exploration of Lo Gue masquerades in southwestern Burkina Faso, she illustrates that whether or not the violence actually occurs, it keeps audiences stepping nimbly around the devil by anxiously anticipating, as well as participating in, the drama of purported violence. Without the threat and the tension, the masquerade would not be seen as successful. In the dialectics of fancy and fierce in Ordehlay, the fierce aesthetic has been called upon to manufacture the fear of violence in order to maintain a distance between the devil and the crowd, to protect both the masquerade itself, and the performer. Another useful aspect of Homann's work with Lo Gue masquerade is its mobilization by Muslim communities to fight colonial annexations of the city by harvesting a so-called "African tradition"—relating to the above discussion.

Lately, scholars have turned their attention to the commodification and economic value and potential of urban masquerade phenomenon. Peter Weil, and most recently Jordan Fenton, assert the importance of making money, and the economic implications inherent in urban masking traditions (2006; 2012 and 2016). This is especially evident in the city, as opposed to the rural, since competition is so fierce. Further, transmutation in the city changes the nature of previously rural masquerades, where once community-owned masks are now commodified, owned, and mobilized by individuals, and the types of masks and performances created now cater to the tastes of dignitaries, politicians, tourists, and the market. What is most

striking about all of this scholarship is that none of these urban masquerades, save the children's Carnival in Guinea Bissau and the Lo Gue masquerades of Burkina Faso, were *invented* in the city. Instead they were negotiations of rural traditions within a globalizing, chaotic cityscape, or were seen as ways to prove and negotiate contentious modernities. All are useful in thinking through the evolutionary invention of Ordehlay, its relationship to local and global artistic dialogues, and the various ways it is called upon by youth, politicians, museums, and communities to assert, gain, or maintain control, and manufacture a particular identity.

The Importance of Youth to the Past, Present, and Future of the City

In Western popular imagination, African youth are thought of in terms of child soldiers, drug and diamond trafficking, insurrections and riots against authority, and as emaciated victims of famine with imploring eyes; in short, in terms of violence and poverty. This view of Africa's youth, the largest population of young people in the world per capita, leaves little room for considering youth as actual actors in Africa and beyond. For example, in 1998 43% of Africa's population was under 15, and Africa has the fastest growing population of youth in the world (Durham 2000; Christensen and Utas 2008; Christiansen, et al 2006). The youth of Sierra Leone are in the crux of a postcolonial, post-civil war state, where first the British monopolized violence and dissent through indirect rule, resulting in a top-down system that pitted elder against youth, urban against rural, ethnicity against ethnicity. Then in a revolt against neopatrimonialism, children and rural youth were co-opted as soldiers to perpetuate a violent conflict that the postcolonial state was ill-equipped to manage

(Tucker 2013; Gberie 2005; Beah 2007; Richards 1996; Anderson 2015). During these times, making a political statement with nonviolent art was, and still is, seen as being dangerous, and cultural hybridity itself became a form of dissent. Ethnicity, youth, and art itself became a form of dissensus, and Sierra Leonean political structure still retains an organization of elder elites conscripting hordes of youths at the bottom.

It follows then that anthropologists, art historians, and particularly Africanists, are increasingly turning their attention towards youth as a cultural category, as opposed to a biological or liminal stage towards adulthood, and as having agency as cultural and political actors that produce *and* negotiate cultural form, including the arts (Bucholtz, 526). Structural adjustment programs, NGOs, and governments are all increasingly concerned with youth as well and find ways to co-opt them, organize them, or even dis-organize them. Moving through the topography of development programs and globalization, and towards analyzing the web of power, reinventions of identity and agency, it is apparent that youth stand at the center of the dynamic, imagined, social landscape of Africa, and in their bodily performance of urban masquerade, are actively negotiating it.

However, such scholarship in youth culture is more established in Anthropology and History than in Art History. For example, Mamadou Diouf and Mary Bucholtz have both shown that there is an increasing interest, primarily in anthropology, in considering youth as cultural categories of their own, and as having an agency in determining their trajectories. In art history, Simon Ottenberg has

similarly written about the importance of masquerade and Carnival for children to claim a space and have a say, and in considering children *as children*: as cultural actors themselves that produce and perform the space of the city, using international pop culture like monsters and comics to assert their cosmopolitan creativity (2006). However, in a separate article, he notes that children rarely engage with politics. This sets it apart from the particular urban masquerade of Ordehlay, which is dynamically connected to politics (2011). Other notable exceptions include Ottenberg and Binkley's book and exhibition *Playful Performers*, which includes the work of Jeanne Cannizzo with Alikali devils in Bo (2006), Mary Jo Arnoldi's on youth festivals in postcolonial Mali (2006), Courtnay Micots' work on youth fancy dress and Carnival (2012; 2014), Krista Thompson's study on youth culture in the Bahamas (2011), and David Pratten's 2008 "Masking Youth: Transformation and Transgression in Annang Performance," which importantly argues that young people appropriate contradictions in colonial and patrimonial power to contest their political marginality—coding themselves within and against masked identities. Additionally, Nicolas Argenti has expanded anthropological analysis into visual and performative cultures as they relate to youth in opposition to the Cameroonian state (1998).

Research in African youth performance arts, particularly in urban settings, is thus still developing and new interpretations of tradition-based arts have until now received scant attention in comparison to more powerful and visible expressions, such as secret and judicial societies, or those more easily confined to a particular ethnic group, formal aesthetic, or museum vitrine. This is arguably because contemporary masks, such as Ordehlay,

aren't considered "art" in the dominant hierarchical and institutionalized understanding of it. This in turn affects the market, where resonances of the European split between the high and the low, the authentic and the fake, can still be felt. Similar arguments have been made in scholarship and could be the subject of its own article or study (Dean 2006; Kasfir 1992, 2007, 2013; Kreamer 2009).

It is becoming apparent in this short exploration of youth—the founders of Ordehlay masquerades—that the word 'youth' and its definition, might need to be rethought, or re-tooled from a West African perspective, and in the context of Ordehlay. While the above discussion frames the importance of youth from a numerical point-of-view hemmed in by a specific age range or by a cultural "category," it may not be appropriate in the context of the marginalized communities that make up the membership of Ordehlay. In this case, expanding the understanding of 'youth' beyond confines of biology and category to an ascribed social position that is constantly being negotiated may be more appropriate. As Tucker has noted, citing Christensen and Utas 2006, "in West Africa youth is a category not contained by biological age," nor is it a calcified term that can continue to exist opposite the similarly concrete notion of "elder" (2013, 27; Christiansen, et al 2006; Christensen and Utas 2008). Rather, both are fluid and malleable signifiers and in terms of 'youth' can broadly apply to any marginalized person that is not able to, or has not yet, achieved the status of adulthood. This status is signified not by reaching a certain age, but by achieving the upward social mobility necessary, usually by finding a job and

steady income—often difficult in an informal economy—to afford to marry and support a family.

Economics, adulthood, and social status are thus flexible, tenuous, and intertwined and can often delay obtaining elder status, or perhaps return one to such a status (Tucker 2013, 28). In the context of urban Freetown, the loose category of "youth" is often prolonged far longer than expected or hoped for and might actually explain why Ordehlay members, which were originally youth and young people, now also include a much wider swath of members which includes those in their 40s or 50s (or perhaps they always did, but it was not recorded as such). They are not necessarily young, but socially, economically, and sometimes even culturally or ethnically marginalized. Further, with migrations of people snowballing into the city and with inter-ethnic competition, youth have fewer opportunities to achieve or maintain "adulthood." As such, informal social and economic networks beyond ethnicity or political authority knot together to form a safety net, and become increasingly significant.

It is therefore of utmost importance to continue to look at the roles of youth, and the perceived opposition of youth and adults/elders in politics, informal sectors, and in the creation of locality in the city. Since Nunley's pioneering fieldwork on youthful arts, children and young people co-opted by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) perpetrated and perpetuated a bloody civil war (1991-2002), largely because they felt excluded from opportunities to participate in society in the wake of former President Joseph Saidu Momoh's shadow state (1985-1992). Because of the

prevailing system of patrimonialism, they were an easy target to exploit, and to a certain extent still are today, though today 'youth' are aligning themselves much more with global ideals of individuality and a transnational culture of consumption (Tucker 2013). Sierra Leone's history of patrimonialism stems from British indirect rule and the transfer of power from the previously dominant Krio, who then became marginalized, to the indigenous chiefs of the Protectorate, which was annexed by the British in 1896. This is another instance of the mobilization of tradition; in chiefly rule, against hybrid, cosmopolitan culture that was seen as dying out, and as a muddied down parody of Western culture. The spurning of Krio culture here may also have contributed to the creation and maintenance of a non-Yoruba, non-Krio Alikali and then Ordehlay youth masquerades.

During the civil war, the world was turned upside-down as youth ordered, and murdered, adults and forcefully and violently made claims to society and the economy. It may then be important to consider Freetown's specific past of youthful harnessing of adult, elitist masquerades, and the creation of youth organizations and societies, such as the West African Youth League (WAYL) amongst others. This might also extend to the expected and unexpected violence of public street performances as evident in the fearful aesthetic. Ordehlay past, present, and future can then be seen as a manifestation of violence, play, and cultural hybridity in a much less forceful and bloody way than the civil war but as part of a broader youth legacy of pushing back against controlling processes in a steadily globalizing, if not global*ized* world (Bolten 2012). This is complicated by the treacherous terrain of the

city and how delicate and challenging it can be for youth trying to economically, politically, and culturally survive.

As noted, Freetown youth and their visual experiences are both context generative and context driven (Appadurai 1996; Grabski 2007, 2017) and both shape and are subject to histories and localities of the city. The context generated and challenged by them then concerns a fractal kaleidoscopic landscape of politics, identity, economics, media, and a mobilization of traditional and contemporary mediums of exchange to meet various and changing needs of the present. This fractured locality as performance and subjective reality, this unique city created in no small way by youth experience is precisely what allowed for the birth of Ordehlay, making it significantly and essentially an urban phenomenon. Because Ordehlay is a product of this city and its singular history, the next chapter will detail the birth of Freetown, and subsequently, Ordehlay.

Chapter One Figures

Figure 3. Ordehlay devil procession in Mountain Cut, Freetown, Boxing Day (December 26), 2016.

Figure 4. Ordehlay Marshall, Freetown, December 26, 2016.

Figure 5. Young boys and their *kekere* devil holding the *esha* staffs, Freetown, December 27, 2016.

Figure 6. Ordehlay procession with *bila* man at the head, and a member fanning the devil with the *akorie*, Freetown, December 26th, 2016.

Figure 7. Back of a *kekere* devil showing the gourds, porcupine quills, wooden combs, cowries, and starfish commonly seen in fierce Ordehlay devils. Also visible at the top of the photograph is money strung between the antlers of the taxidermy animal head.

Figure 8. An Ordehlay devil poses for a photograph, which is partially blocked by the *bila* man. The superstructure, bulbous protrusions and matching costume elements are all visible. Freetown, December 26, 2016.

Figure 9. Back of fierce *kekere* devil with large snail shells, cowries and gourds, but with wooden sticks in place of the expensive porcupine quills. The rest of the costume is made from plastic rings, adding a bright, fancy element, Freetown, December 27, 2016.

Figure 10. Fancy Independence Day devil with Christmas tree ornaments, mirrors, tinsel and carved superstructure. Freetown. Photo courtesy of Alpha Kanu and sent via WhatApp on April 29, 2017.

Figure 11. Cell phone snap of a physical photo of *Kotu* Sheku Fofonah's *Red Indian Devil*, taken in Makeni, January 14, 2017. Original photo courtesy of Sheku Fofonah.

Figure 12. A fancy *fairie* (fairy) masked devil of the Central Professor Jollay Society, Freetown, December 27th, 2016.

Chapter Two

Setting the Stage

"To reach the heights of human possibility, one aspires to be like the cotton tree: tall, old, nurtured into a state of permanence defying the vagaries of history and fortune, and offering under its canopy shelter and security. This permanence transcends death in the legacy one leaves as an ancestor. People aspire to be revered elders,…to be remembered and praised in death because they nurtured many people." –Catherine *Bolten (2012, 8)*

Introducing Freetown

Old Caribbean-influenced wooden Krio houses sit drunkenly, yet proudly, on stilts astride brutal-looking 19th century British colonial architecture. An enormous stately Cotton Tree commands the center of town, hemmed in by a concrete roundabout; its trunk choked by colorful advertisements and political billboards. Law courts, banks, a museum, and a civil war memorial look on. As historic symbol of Freetown, the tree is rumored to have stood for over 500 years, and is said to have provided shade and respite to former slaves, recently repatriated after serving the British in the American Revolutionary War. The streets around it are full of honking taxis going nowhere, haphazard foot traffic, and men slowly pushing carts laden with goods in the mid-day heat. *Okadas*—moped taxis piloted by young, often ex-combatant cyclists—recklessly weave their way through the clogged arteries, also choked by hawkers and street stands of women selling shoes and second-hand clothing, books, and even suitcases from piles and mounds. Scents of fried chicken, Jollof rice, and Lebanese coffee (if you're lucky—Nescafe if you're not) fill the air. A

short, sweaty walk in almost any direction from this most famous of Freetown monuments—one could say the Cotton Tree is the heart of Freetown—will result in seemingly endless hillsides crammed with *pan bodi* structures—homes built from discarded bits of wood and corrugated iron. Concrete arteries quickly give way to dirt roads and winding, mazelike paths of earthy, orange-red veins littered with refuse and bathing children. These dizzying paths connect the *pan bodis*, whose pockets of adjoining rooms and parlors are loosely connected to one another. Added as chance allows, structures continuously evolve and crowd into one another. When dry, the dusty path-veins stubbornly cling to clothing and skin. When wet, they threaten to stain the earth a different sort of red from the frequent mudslides that result from such precarious circumstances and habitats.[27] In short, Freetown is a frenetic, frenzied, feverish place. And one of the craziest, yet most natural things to come out of such a place is Ordehlay.

The Cotton Tree as heart of Freetown, with its aimless and unchecked veins and arteries sprawling out amidst composite architecture, is a useful metaphor to begin discussing the history and founding of Freetown—for it too provided shade from the transatlantic slave trade and a home to regional and global migrants, both willing and forced. It too is a hub of hybridity, a mishmash of political intrigue, a cultural amalgamation—all of which similarly characterize Ordehlay. And Ordehlay resulted precisely because of Freetown's historical, political, and financial fever

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[27] The most recent flooding disaster in Freetown was August 14, 2017, resulting in massive loss of life (several hundred at least, with the most recent count topping 1,000). The floods were almost entirely as a result of unchecked and unregulated building of *pan bodi* homes, and a lack of, or implementation of, housing policies.

pitch. History, however, should be understood as a living force mobilized to understand and shape the present (Bentor 2011, 276). Freetown, and its actors, must be considered as a historically separate, yet globally interconnected entity, and its own political and historical machinations investigated. Ordehlay is similarly informed by such perspectives, and is more fully understood through an examination of Freetown's specific history, and the discursive systems that both shaped and were shaped by it.

Framing Freetown as a Locality

Before launching into the history that summarizes and analyzes the founding of Freetown as a diaspora on the continent, I would like to briefly introduce the notion of "locality" as a theoretical jumping off point. I borrow the term from the work of Arjun Appadurai and Ferdinand de Jong, both of whom discuss locality as specific to social and political histories of a place (1996; 2007). However, locality is also a *performative* structure of feeling that has been created by such historical events and that is used to create and interpret meaningful spaces for social action, usually on the local level. Yet this local level balances within a global landscape, and often uses it as a counterweight to inform, shape, shred, and re-form this localized history.

Another useful theoretical framework for introducing the locality of Freetown, and by extension its masquerades, comes from Achille Mbembe's discussion of the postcolony as a "chaotic plurality" with a paradoxical internal coherence of corporate institutions (1992). The postcolony is here a dramatic site where wider problems of subjectivity are played out, "characterized by a distinctive art of improvisation, by a

tendency to excess and disproportion as well as by distinctive ways in which identities are multiplied, transformed, and put into circulation" (2). This tendency is absolutely apparent in Ordehlay membership—which is multiethnic—and aesthetics—which are multicultural, as is the improvisational and the mobilization and circulation of the mask to achieve social, political, and financial goals. A central thread to this production of locality in the postcolony then involves unfixing notions or trajectories of history, as much as those of "traditional" and "modern," and seeing them in relation to one another and as mutually constitutive of a place that is constantly in motion.

For example, as Freetonians, or Ordehlay members, become increasingly globalized, and nationalisms become more and more sustained by transmigration and diasporic connections, awareness and assertion of identity become that much more pressing, as does the production of cultural difference. As Homi Bhabha has argued concerning fixity "as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism" and its primary vehicle, the stereotype; they are the always-already truths, anxiously repeated (1983, 18). And yet, articulations of cultural *difference*, as opposed to cultural diversity—which doesn't recognize its normative stance, and fixes identities—forms a "third space." This third space allows us to see our own positionings, but also to displace them, allowing for new positions, new politics, new structures, to form. We are all continually in a process of hybridity. "It is only by losing the sovereignty of the self that you can gain the freedom of a politics that is open to the non-assimilationist claims of cultural difference," which is the third

space—the concept of a people, of a culture, is not a given (Rutherford 1990, 213). Neither is locality a given. Rather, the only thing that can be relied upon is its plurality, its hyper-hybridity, and its persistent manufacture of culture and difference as a way to shape a local present that is informed by historical and global awareness, while pushing against such diasporic realities to give locality its shape.

A Diaspora on the Continent: The Invention of Freetown

Freetown's locality began as a utopian ideal to create a culturally diverse space for freedom in a destination that would offer a plethora of resources to the Crown (with accompanying racial undertones of cleansing London of poor blacks). I think of it as a "colonial project" or as scholar John Nunley puts it, a "Great Experiment" (1987). As originally called by the Crown, this "Province of Freedom" began in 1787 with approximately 300-400 planted Black settlers (Banton 1957; Fyfe 1987). Through government support mobilized by abolitionist Granville Sharp and his Society for the Black Poor in London, the idea was to repatriate these ex-slaves to places 'similar to their original homes.' Sharp also founded the St. George Bay Company, which would later become the Sierra Leone Company—the corporate arm of the Colony.

As the mortality rate was high, the Black Poor were soon joined by over 1,000 black Nova Scotian settlers, known as Loyalists because they served the British in the American Revolutionary War, and thus Freetown was officially born. Then in 1800 a group of approximately 550 rebellious Jamaican ex-slaves, known as Maroons, arrived, perhaps as a way of removing the problem rather than dealing with it

locally.[28] Though Christopher Fyfe considers these as three successive waves of settler communities, they collectively came to be known as the "Original Settlers" (Fyfe 1979; 1987; Georg 2002; King 2016). However, Sierra Leone didn't actually come under the Crown until 1808, and this invention didn't consist solely of settlers. They joined indigenous communities of Temne, Mende, Sherbro, and Vai groups, amongst others, on land purchased from local Temne chiefs, though it wasn't so straight-forward, and there were disputes and misunderstandings acquiring the land for the Colony and later the Protectorate.[29] Their numbers swelled over the next half century or so as Freetown experienced a steady stream of liberated Africans, freed especially after the British outlawed slavery in 1833. Primarily from what is today Nigeria, and of Yoruba, Igbo, Hausa, and Ibibio descent, these liberated slaves were known as "recaptives," and constituted the second, but largest, surge of migrants (or fourth, depending on how you look at it).

As I keep referring to Nigeria, whose contemporary borders didn't yet exist, and the various ethnicities that originated there, it is worth a mention explaining them. As an artificial British construct, "Nigeria" originally referred to the British protectorate along the Niger River. The borders were fixed later in 1914 by combining the three regions that the British deemed to characterize the area, both

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[28] Deported by British forces, the Maroons arrived in Sierra Leone via Nova Scotia in 1800. A neighborhood in Freetown still retains the name: Maroon Town.

[29] Alldridge states that the Protectorate was created in 1896 through a series of "friendly" treaties with the Hinterland chiefs, but this differs greatly from the account given by Fyfe and Last and Richards (Alldridge 1910, 38). For example, Fyfe notes that the Protectorate was "*proclaimed* over the adjoining Colony territory" with a strategy of keeping things racially, ethnically, politically, and culturally divided, and both discuss that the treaties may have been understood locally as a short-term use of land rather than an outright sale (Fyfe 1987, 416, my emphasis; Last and Richards 1987).

geographically and ethnically: the Muslim northern region where the Hausa resided, the western region of primarily Yoruba peoples, and the eastern region which was dominated by the Igbo. The Ibibio peoples were in the southeastern region of Nigeria, but were lumped in with the eastern region/Igbo. Yoruba as an ethnicity was also an invention that came about largely because of, and in opposition to, British colonialism.

In addition to white British settlers and colonial administrators, the waves of colonial subjects resettled in Freetown were primarily of African descent. While many of the African recaptives were from present-day Nigeria, many others came from present-day Congo, Angola, and Senegal; basically any parts of central and western Africa with active slave ports. These groups founded various neighborhoods in Freetown, to be discussed below.[30] As Odile Georg succinctly summarizes:

> Since its foundation as a settler colony in 1787, Freetown had incorporated several 'waves' of migrants: the original Settlers (the Black Poor, the Loyalists or Nova Scotians and the Maroons from Jamaica), the Recaptives (slaves liberated from the ships), the local Temne and the near-by Mende. The latter, joined by others coming from the hinterland—annexed in 1896 as a British Protectorate—were called the 'Aborigines', whereas the original settlers progressively formed a cultural group which shared common habits and values (Georg 2002, 120).

Thus Freetown's plethora of African indigenous peoples, coupled with influxes of planted settlers ultimately created a plural, Creolized identity that came to share a common language and culture.

In the process of creating this Creole, or Krio, identity, it has been argued by scholars that the modern identity of "Yoruba," who formed the majority of the

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30 For a more complete history of Freetown as a settler colony, which has been studied at length, see Alldrige 1910, Banton 1957, Butt-Thompson 1926, Fyfe 1979 and 1987, Last and Richards 1987, Spitzer 1974, and Wyse 1989. Recently, Richard Peter Anderson's dissertation (2015) has added significantly to the history of recaptives.

recaptives in Sierra Leone, was born. John Picton, for example, states that Yoruba as an ethnicity was forged starting in 1850 and was spearheaded by the repatriated slaves of Nigerian descent and their descendants. It developed slowly over the course of roughly one hundred years through debates about language, intellectual and political interests, history, dress, and education. Most specifically the Yoruba ethnicity was mobilized in contestation to colonial rule, which tightened in Sierra Leone as much as it did in Nigeria, and replaced transatlantic slavery (2001, 68, 73; 1994). Robin Law similarly links its processual emergence to selective and creative cherry-picking from a range of pre-existing elements, such as language, traditions, collective historical experience, to support movements of nationalism and common identity. In the Sierra Leonean context, this developed into the local Yoruba-speakers who were called "Aku." Many of these Freetown Akus returned to their homelands from the 1830s onward, and this new common ethnicity was further solidified in Nigeria as "Yoruba" (1996, 65-67). However, the adoption of the term "Yoruba" itself originated in missionary and scholarly circles in Sierra Leone (Law 1996, 68).

This is important to the context and history of Freetown as it helps us to better understand the emergence of ethnic identities, and how it was closely aligned with colonial projects, how connected identity formation can be to other locales, and how identities can be invented and marshaled to provide strength and support in new and challenging contexts. The Krio, who were in number the ethnic minority, yet constituted the dominant elite of the Freetown Colony, only became a language and ethnic group through the invention of a British colony. They were further the catalyst

for annexing the Hinterlands, and thus the creation of modern-day Sierra Leone. The Colony's primary revenue came from trade in export goods, such as kola nuts, palm kernels, and other agricultural goods, and accompanying customs duties. Trade in the outlying areas was frequently hindered by indigenous tribal warfare, and several prominent Krios insisted on an extension of British jurisdiction to protect and expedite trade, ultimately leading to the creation of the Protectorate in 1896, as well as a bifurcated imaginary that would persist throughout its history (Banton 1957, 7).

From its inception then, Freetown was a continental diaspora formed primarily by the forced movements of captive bodies during the 19th century transatlantic slave trade, and whose numbers made up the majority of the settlers. For example, Richard Peter Anderson's 2015 dissertation importantly considers Freetown as a diaspora formed from the third largest forced migration after Brazil and Cuba. Additionally, Alldridge notes the population of Freetown as comprised of four groups: The Sierra Leoneans (Krio/Creoles) who form the bulk of the population and are primarily comprised of recaptives, the neighboring indigenous tribes who settled in Freetown, the white community (Europeans, Americans, and West Indian officials), and the Imperial West Indian troops (1910, 43). As some of the earliest written accounts of Freetown, his historical treatise on the cultures, economies, and 'progress' of the colony has been influential to historians, and to art historians because of its early accounts of the Bundu society and the steatite figures known as *nomoli*. While it is a rather paternalistic account that justified and encouraged further colonial expansion, what is important here is the essentially diasporic quality of

Freetown in its early colonial stages, and the multicultural hybridity that not only characterized it at this time but became part and parcel of its locality.

Like migration from the Hinterlands and beyond for trade, subsequent migrations due to mining efforts, urbanization, and the World Wars dramatically exploded Freetown's population, which increased from 14,830 in 1871, to 30,000 in 1891, to 73,126 in 1927 and to 157,613 by 1963 (Georg 2002, 121; Dumbuya 1973, 59). Many of Freetown's neighborhoods were formed largely from successive immigrant populations, first during the aforementioned settler waves, and then during the 19th and early 20th centuries. Several still bare these names: Congo Town, Fullah Town, Maroon Town, etc. These neighborhoods and geographic groups have thus created a lasting impression not only on the spatial layout, but eventually in the Ordehlay organizations themselves, which are also arranged by neighborhood, despite the multicultural hybridity that today characterizes them and their locales. Rather than being discrete mimicries of their homelands, communities were, and are, formed from diverse backgrounds and activated for particular purposes specific to the new locality.[31] These purposes and associations grew into political identities, and these identities were mobilized to meet varying, often changing needs, articulated through the public performance of masquerades.

In summary, Freetown was an experimental British colonial project constructed from the importation of repatriated slaves, known as "recaptives." Intercepted as they left illegal slave ports across west and central Africa, a great

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[31] See Michael Banton, who states that Freetown's population is far from homogenous, where no one group comprises even a total of the population at writing (1953c, 995).

majority of them originated from what is today Nigeria. In the new colony they mixed with the existing planted settlers, consisting of Jamaican maroons, black British subjects, and a smaller number of whites; all astride the indigenous Temne and Mende cultures already in place. After the outlawing of slavery by the British, these newly liberated slaves brought with them diverse traditions, including masquerades, that they strove to maintain, yet negotiate in this new locale. As Freetown became an increasingly important trade port from the mid-19th century onwards, in dialogue with the world at large, a steady migration of indigenous peoples and other Africans flowed into the city, and traveled in and out as traders and civic workers. Out of this ethnically diverse population, a unique Krio culture was born that was highly educated (often in Europe), largely Christian and though fewer in number, politically in control.

This newly-formed, "hybrid" Krio culture creatively negotiated the incoming and existing visual traditions. As discussed in Chapter One, two of the primary visual traditions that were transposed to the city were the Egungun and the Hunting Societies that originated in what is now Nigeria. These were especially found amongst the Muslim descendants of liberated Africans of Yoruba origin, which were known as Aku in Sierra Leone, and the Krio communities. Both Hunting and Egungun have been shown by John Nunley and Jeanne Cannizzo to be the parentage of the Ordehlay societies (1987; 2006). These elite Yoruba and Krio societies would not allow the indigenous (especially Temne), younger, or non-Muslim peoples to

participate or become members, causing further tension in the race to be politically powerful.

As Freetown developed, urbanized, and exploded in population, the public visibility of masquerade performances in the cityscape became increasingly important as a method for survival in the competitive urban chaos. The founding Yoruba-modeled groups, such as Hunting and Egungun, grew in number and splintered, and more and more youth-led groups developed in opposition to them, contributing to and building the landscape of the city. Thus the multiplicitous history of a colonial city, formed as a diaspora on the continent, with its potpourri of peoples, ethnicities, and masquerades competing for a limited number of resources, beget the Ordehlay masquerade societies.

Terminology and Ethnicity in Freetown and Sierra Leone

While the Glossary defines the primary terms as they are related to the masquerades, some of the aforementioned ethnicities and associated terminologies that relate to Freetown as locality need to be briefly unpacked. In the Glossary I list the various ethnic groups in Sierra Leone (under *Ethnic Groups*), but here note the messiness and overlap that occurs, rather than a neatly bundled and disparate group of people. Ethnicity in Sierra Leone is constantly evolving, and is something that can be mobilized, put forward, or back-burnered as one sees fit, and as might benefit the situation. Locals still note another's ethnicity, calling it "tribe," especially as it relates to politics or political affiliations, and certainly as it relates to societies. Certain branches of secret societies are known by the tribal affiliation, so the particular name

for it only applies to the Limba version of such-and-such society for example, even if they function in more or less the same way. Others noted certain aesthetic preferences of Ordehlay masks as being very "Temne" usually in relation to the gaudier, fancier versions.[32] However, as Boima Tucker has noted, one can insult another, regardless of physical appearance or actual lineage, by conflating ethnicity with political power. For example, calling someone out as "acting like a Mende man" in APC-run (All Peoples Congress) Sierra Leone meant that the person had no individual agency, and merely followed tribal allegiances in regards to politics (Tucker 2013, 23).

Similarly, in a beautifully written study that flows like a novel, anthropologist Michael Jackson details the balancing act of career politician S.B. Marah, who had to constantly navigate his government job and his ethnic, Kuranko loyalties and values, which often did not align (2004). However, it should be noted here that while the informal network of ethnic identity has some carry-on baggage in Sierra Leone, it is not nearly as heavy as ethnic tensions often associated elsewhere in Africa, and it was not the cause of Sierra Leone's protracted civil war. The primary ethnic tension that today still to an extent characterizes Sierra Leone arose during the colonial period in relation to the pitting of Krio communities as the dominant political and economic power, even though they were in number the minority, against the Protectorate peoples of Temne, Mende, and Limba descent.

[32] Interview, John Goba, Goderich, Freetown, January 7, 2017.

Chapter Three

Unraveling Political and Historical Threads: Youth and Masquerade Mobility in Freetown

VP and Former Party Dissident Slug It Out to Win Support of Secret Societies.
–Headline, *The Independent*, Freetown, Sierra Leone, June 5, 2006

Fabricating the Political

On Boxing Day (December 26th) 2017 in Freetown, Sierra Leone, the streets swarmed with revelers. Their masses accompanied processions of sixteen different Ordehlay devils from neighborhoods across the city. Young men and women gyrated, shouted and sang along to music blaring from giant loudspeakers perched precariously atop pickup trucks. Hawkers with buckets of cool drinks and clear plastic packets of water pushed and snaked their way through the street's ecstatic throng, while audiences overhead crowded verandas, tossing money to masked performers below. The mood was largely one of celebration and untroubled joy. Compared to Christmas and Boxing Day processions from the previous season (2016), nothing was different or amiss—at first. Both years experienced a significant enough outbreak of violence between groups to warrant the use of pepper spray and the hauling away of several young men who were thought responsible for the fighting—a hint at the reality of potential violence that lurks just below the surface. Despite their origin, all of the parade routes converged in the neighborhood of Mountain Cut, in eastern central Freetown, making it a particularly desirable spot to

catch all of the day's masquerades. However, as the devils continued to cross through the midway point of Mountain Cut, one difference was striking: most *ashobies* were red or bore the ruling All Peoples Congress (APC) party logo (Figure 13).

The majority of Ordehlay members deny any direct association with political parties. Indeed, they are largely structured around neighborhood unity, fraternity, and community welfare—what Kenneth Little has called a "voluntary association" and what Michael Banton refers to as a "friendly society" (Little 1951, 1962; Banton 1953a-d, 1957). I was also told numerous times in interviews that Ordehlay is centered around unity and community, not politics. For example, Ishmeal Kamara of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (MTCA) stated that many "Ordehlays carry mottos of peace, unity, and freedom" and Ordehlays "project an image of community, teach respect for authority" and also provide "security and collectivity."[33] Members of the Madakor Cultural Development Organization, which has an Ordehlay unit, seconded this sentiment, as quoted by member Adedayo Cole: "Everybody is fighting for development, to get by, so community is essential."[34] And yet, the red, APC *ashobies* told a very different, if contradictory story—a story that this chapter seeks to untangle. Similarly highlighting this contradiction, or perhaps a change in the masquerade's mobilization, scholar Ibrahim Abdullah argues that there were originally no formal links between politicians and odelays, but that they did develop later on: "Their debut in politics probably started with the 1962 City Council elections when members of an odelay, Rainbow in central Freetown, voted en mass

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[33] Interview, Freetown, January 13, 2017.
[34] Interview, Freetown, December 22, 2016.

for the APC candidate, S.I. Koroma" (2002, 27). However, taking this fabricated evidence of the red *ashobies* as a case study that frames this chapter, I will argue that some version of politics, political patronage, or struggle for control has been at play from a much earlier time.

In the previous chapters I detailed the history of Freetown as a diasporic locality formed by several migrations into the city at key moments in time. Because it provided the discursive system within which Ordehlay emerged, I will again briefly summarize Freetown's founding, particularly as it relates to the youth masquerades and associations that formed due to its historic specificity. Broadly speaking, Freetown's history is one characterized by eruptive migrations into the city that swelled its population with various ethnicities, religions, and age groups at several key moments in time. As population density increased, so too did fierce competition for jobs, space, and diverse forms of capital, including social and cultural. Neighborhood communities were formed along ethnic lines, but social organizations formed across these borders, including members from diverse backgrounds as a way to cope with the challenges of being a new migrant to the city. These associations grew into political identities, and these identities were mobilized and articulated through the public performance of masquerades.

Originally formed by youth in Freetown's earliest days, as I will argue in this chapter, Ordehlay is one such masquerade used to negotiate the constantly changing landscape of the city. Further, despite current iterations, Ordehlay and youth activities have been so deeply political that they have at several times been banned by the

British, as by the Sierra Leonean government, and subsequently gone underground. For example, violent student protests against Siaka Stevens and his one-party state (APC, formed in 1976) broke out in 1977 and 1984, so he banned school newspapers and shut down schools (Bolten 2012, 13). As another example related specifically to Ordehlay, Abdullah cites that the 1986 carnival "was the most politically explosive of Freetown, criticizing the president for the increase in the price of rice, the staple food..." The following year the Ode-Lay carnival was banned by the police chief (Abdullah 2002, 29). John Nunley also briefly notes similar banning, in one instance citing a 1958 news article calling for a ban on all "Useless and Aimless Clubs," because of their ability to corrupt and destroy youth (1987, 55).

More recently scholars have discussed youth practices and their empowering abilities, but cite such youth interest in governance as a relatively recent phenomenon (Abdullah 2002; King 2016; King and Albrecht 2014; Spencer 2012). If youth are only now being "counted" in governance, and creating a voice through public arts, why are they identified as "dangerous?" Is youth agency only so recent? Contradicting this previous banning, Ordehlay masks were recently collected by the Sierra Leone National Museum, both of which are on display (Figures 14 and 15),[35] and NGOs freely support the once thug-like bands of young men (Abdullah 2002, 25; Anderson 2015). For example, I was told by the *agba* of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society in Freetown that "World Vision (NGO) used to come and conduct adult education at

[35] In an interview with Curator Josephine Kargbo, she stated that the Sierra Leone National Museum now collects Ordehlays because they "cut across ethnic lines." Further, the Museum tries to collect the "masks of different ethnicities" because the Museum wants "to accurately represent the different ethnicities in Sierra Leone" (January 5, 2016).

Firestone" and "Bloody Mary has vocational schools which were supported by an NGO," which also allowed them to build Bacon Fields, a rentable hall for parties, meetings, and receptions.[36] To him the idea is to bring people together and to transform new ideas over time so that development could, and would, follow.

Once considered petty thieves, Ordehlay youth were later mobilized as casual security labor in the city by the Sierra Leone Police (King and Albrecht 2014, 178, 183). Politicians who once publicly denounced—yet clandestinely supported—their societies, now freely "slug it out" to win their support ("VP and Former Party Dissident Slug It Out to Win Support of Secret Societies," *The Independent*, June 5, 2006). Demonstrating its transition from the rugged margins, these examples highlight potential rather than detriment, support and cultural pride rather than denial. Finally, as seen in my 2017 field season, Ordehlay *ashobies* and masked devils carried direct references to political parties as seen in the wake of the March 2018 presidential elections, and despite claims to be unaffiliated with political discourse. I will return to this paradox at the end of the chapter.

Through the interpretation of masks that emerged from Freetown and its surrounding area during three periods of history characterized by explosive change and growth, this chapter's aim is to illustrate how party politics, patronage, and economics were, and are, inextricably intertwined with masquerade and youth

[36] Interview, Abie Musa Kamara, Freetown, December 30, 2016.

organizations.[37] While many sources claim the degeneracy and thuggery of Alikali, Ambas Geda, or Ordehlay youth, and the banning of masks and political songs (Nunley 1987, 48, 58; Abdullah 2002, 26; King 2016, 64; Kreutzinger 1966; Wyse 1978, 71), new sources cite the incontrovertible importance of youth movements, education, and political engagement. These masquerade societies were created to not only deal with a youthful social and political reality at any given moment, but to apprehend and control it—and this may not have been so controversial, or so straight-forward. However demure members may be in regards to political associations today, politics are embedded in the very fabric of these societies—indeed in the fabric of the masks themselves.

Early Freetown and Elder Societies

Ordehlay's historical, aesthetic, and organizational roots lie in Egungun, Hunting, Alikali, and as we will see below, Ambas Geda societies, most of which existed during Freetown's earliest years and up through the early 20th century. While each carried their own political machinations, and contributed overall to what became Ordehlay, very little is available in terms of published sources regarding them at this early stage. While most scholars cite that the emergence of Ordehlay occurred during the 1950s (King and Albrecht 2014; Abdullah 2002, 27; Nunley 1987, 1988), it was likely earlier and much more processual, since it stemmed in part from all of these associations. I must therefore first examine the associated activities of youth during

[37] Throughout this chapter I indicate politics primarily in relation to party affiliation. However, this is only a fraction of the political engagements at play in Freetown, as it bubbles to the surface temporarily through the medium of masquerade.

19th and early 20th century Freetown in order to historicize the emergence of Ordehlay. Given the lack of existing masquerade costumes from this earlier time period, I rely on written sources and interviews with current Ordehlay members to add further depth. The chapter then proceeds to examine masks from: the early 20th century, the 1930s and 40s, the Independence era, and finally the civil war when few, if any masks came out and Freetown's contemporary moment, which I examine together. Each time period coincided with explosive, if not cataclysmic change that contoured, and was contoured by, youth experience, visible in the materiality of the masks. Here I consider visual culture, as political conjuncture, as a reservoir of kinetic practices that the actors mobilize to meet the relentlessly changing options and needs of the urban milieu. Through an analysis of collections and field-based Ordehlay masks and their iconographies over the decades, I hope to untangle the existential reality of everyday life, as well as the multiple cultural and political discourses at play in the urban fabric.

It has been argued repeatedly that Ordehlay masquerades have stylistic and socio-political roots in the Yoruba Egungun masquerade, particularly in the costume elements which include a profuse use of expensive, plush fabrics and the beaded or fiber netting that covers the face (Nunley 1982, 1987, 2010; Cannizzo 2006). So popular was Egungun that references to its practice exceeded all other religious association references, save Shango, in missionary narratives (Anderson 2015, 349). For example, in 1833, a Christian missionary, the Reverend Mr. Beale, so offended by a procession of an Egungun devil in Freetown determined to expose the "cheat" by

forcibly ripping the mask and costume from his body (Figure 16; Christian Missionary Society Journals, 1840s-50s; Anderson 2015, 338). Christian missionaries found such heathen practices to be intolerable. Despite such open derision, processions only seemed to grow bolder and more prevalent than before, parading directly to the church gate in open opposition to Church suppression. These missionary endeavors, and their accounts, can be thought of as an instrument of British political and colonial reach—as a method of civilizing and bringing a colony to heel through religious control—in short, as a sort of politics (King and Albrecht 2014). Indeed, the church worked closely with the Royal African Company, and converting the locals was a major concern.

Egungun was followed closely by the Hunting Society in the mid-19th to early 20th century, first as a primarily Krio secret society, and then morphing into midway between Ojeh and Masonic Lodges (Cannizzo 2006, 172). Both were, and still are, powerful societies that excluded youths below the age of sixteen, as well as those not of Yoruba and later, Krio ethnic descent or of greater economic means (Nunley 2010, 67; Fyfe 1967, 167-68; Cannizzo 2006, 172). Up until the Second World War, indigenous youth struggled to join these Yoruba Hunting societies but continued to be denied access, eventually leading to the formation of alternative groups, such as Alikali, which will be discussed further below, and Ordehlay. Both modeled their masquerade aesthetics, such as the use of animal and bush materials and the use of a mock gun, after Hunting societies and even borrowed the Yoruba language and

organizational structures to form their own associations (Nunley 1988; Cannizzo 2006, 172).

A powerful system of inclusion and exclusion was thus evident in the early days of Freetown's urbanization process, and was largely perpetuated through social organizations that became a form of social capital. As new migrants from the interior, or elsewhere of West Africa, or the offspring of recaptives, many had little economic prospects, and often no close familial kin to rely on. They would need to turn to organizations like Egungun and Hunting, or the prohibitively expensive Masonic Lodges (also called Freemasons, Masons or Lodges), for survival (King and Albrecht 2014, 180, 183; Fyfe 1987). Masonic Lodges represent an even more strict, elitist institution modeled after British Freemasons, and as Cannizzo states, is at one extreme, with the Oje secret society at the other and Hunting in-between (Cannizzo 2006, 172; King and Albrecht 2014, 183). However, according to King, Hunters have portrayed themselves as superior to Masonic Lodges because of this very elitism and Krio association (King 2016, 59). Regardless, what is most important here is that the youth and underprivileged were marginalized from these very societies. It seems only natural that the problem would have been dealt with swiftly and perhaps even aggressively, resulting in: Alikali, Ambas Geda, Jollay, Ordehlay.

Early Freetown and Youth Social Associations

The earliest accounts of *young* men's associations (and fancy costumes), on the other hand, surfaced in the 1880s in response to this exclusion (Nunley 1988; Nunley 2010, 49, 67; Fyfe 1967, 167-168; King and Albrecht 2014). Known as

Alikali and popular amongst the indigenous Temne peoples and other migrants from the Protectorate, it mirrored their budding interest in not only resisting elder control and political authority, but in building themselves as honest, participatory citizens (Nunley 1988, 51). Their origin, however, has been debated by several scholars, including Helga Kreuzinger, who claims that the Alikali were first organized by Kru peoples (Kreutzinger 1966, 55; Nunley 2010, 51) in 1935, and Jean Cannizzo and John Nunley, who state that Alikali arose in the 1940s as a response to the elite Yoruba Hunting societies that excluded Temne peoples (Cannizzo 2006; Nunley 1988).[38] However, in a later publication, perhaps as a revision to his earlier argument, Nunley discusses the popularization of the term "Alikali" in the 1880s, which then inspired the youth in creating Alikali headpieces. As he states, Alikali

> was popularized among the Temne in the 1880s when the Temne chief Morubah Kindo borrowed it from another chief. A turban was placed on his head and, as if by magic, he became the Alikali. Temne youth at the time may have been inspired by this event and impressed by the power of the turban, which would help explain why so much time and energy were invested in creating Alikali headpieces, and currently, Jolly (Nunley 2010, 67, citing Fyfe 1967, 167-168; Nunley 1988, 67).

In the same publication he again mentions the Alikali fancy masquerades as coming out on New Year's in Freetown at the turn of the century. This occurred just after the first reported account of fancy costumes, published in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* on January 29, 1889 (Nunley 2010, 49). Incidentally, Ordehlay masquerades today typically come out only once a year during three specific holidays: Christmas (which

[38] These Alikali devils might very well be the same Eri devils mentioned by Kreutzinger (1966, 48) and Wyse (1978, 71).

includes Boxing Day), New Year's, and Independence Day—and this may very well be a continuation of the Alikali coming-out dates.[39]

Nunley also discusses its invention by a teacher of little political background but a great deal of public support, allowing him to gain an important government position thanks to the support of Alikali youth (1987, 48). However, Nunley and Kreutzinger both relate the indigenous Kru children and youth "false face" masking, to the later Jolly/Jollay children's masquerades known as "fairy." These "false face" masks importantly peaked prior to WWII, which coincides with a hiring shift that caused the economic decline of the Kru peoples (Nunley 2010; Kreutzinger 1966). However, others of Kreutzinger's claims are refuted by scholars Akintola Wyse (Wyse 1978, 114) and E. W. Fashole-Luke (1969, 45), who highlight her confusion of the more serious association with the youthful ones manifesting at the time.[40] In regards to Alikali, she mistakes it for Ejo and Oje—far more serious and feared masquerade societies (1978, 114). He does however point out several instances where she is spot on:

> The other type—the Eri Devil societies of Youth groups in Freetown are 'pompously' and 'extravagantly' dressed. Another good observation, one of the few accurate and penetrating ones, is that these so-called Eri Devils mushroomed in the post World War II era (in the 50s and 60s) out of a compulsive need by youths to have their own 'devil' since, because of a number of reasons, they were barred from membership of the older and more respectably established Hunting Societies. (Wyse 1978, 71)

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[39] Nunley's 2010 chapter elaborates on Jolly's visual, cultural, and historical roots in Alikali. My own field research corroborates his findings, and confirms that Alikali "transformed into Jollay" and "Jollay is a general name. Alikali is also all the Jollay. Every Jollay IS an Alikali." (Interview, *Agba* Abie Musa Kamara, Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, Freetown, December 30, 2016).

[40] For example, Wyse states that "(a)part from the gratuitous insult of confusing the Hunters' Eri Devil with the pale imitation of the rowdy mobs in Freetown, she unmasks a pitiable ignorance in mis-identifying certain devil types with specific societies (p. 48 ff)" (1978, 52). He later goes on to differentiate the devil societies of the youth groups from the more serious Eri devils of the Hunters' societies, though both seem to be considered Eri devils.

As he continues, beginning with Talabi, a wilder type of Ordehlay mask that still exists today, they then copied the "genuine Eris" (Wyse 1978, 71).[41] What is most important from these reports is that youth devils are differentiated from elder Hunting and Egungun devils, youth were noted as extravagantly dressed from as early as the 1880s showing the early stages of the "fancy aesthetic," youth showed interest in mobilizing masquerades to address exclusion, and finally that these youthful masks then mushroomed during or just after World War II (Wyse 1978, 71). This indicates that they were already in existence prior to this time, as echoed by several current and previous Ordehlay members, many of who gave a date of around 1915 or 1916 for their creation. And yet, many scholars have continued to argue that Ordehlay emerged in the mid-20th century.

For example, King and Albrecht (2014) note that the Yoruba-based societies from which the youth were excluded, as Wyse notes above, initially emerged in the mid-nineteenth century but that Ordehlay only emerged after WWII—the same time that Alikali was perhaps mistakenly thought to have originated. Citing Nunley (1987), Ibrahim Abdullah also states that the two original odelays (Eastern Paddle and Lawd Da Masi) emerged in the 1950s (2002, 27). As seen in the work of Michael Banton, which I will explore in greater detail below, the updated work of John Nunley, comments by Akintola Wyse, and my own fieldwork, it appears that this may not be so. Sierra Leonean arts dealer Jeremiah Cole, who grew up dancing Jollay and

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[41] Interview, Alimamy Bangura, December 21, 2016. Incidentally, Kreutzinger does note the Eri devil as the model for Talabi, which is today considered an Ordehlay.

Ordehlay, notes an earlier occurrence of Ordehlay.[42] Similar statements were made in discussions with research assistant Alpha Kanu and Ordehlay *kotu* Sheku Fofonah, who both believe Ordehlay began around 1915 or 1916, if not earlier.[43] Abie Musa Kamara, head of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society in Freetown stated that "Eastern Paddle (Ordehlay Society) is one hundred years old."[44] Finally, fieldwork interviews conducted in Lunsar, a town about 120 km away from Freetown, further indicated Ordehlay emergence prior to the 1950s. I was told by the *agba* of the Masabone Ordehlay Association in Lunsar that their Ordehlay society was founded in the 1930s when the first iron ore company, Delco, was founded and the town began to rapidly grow in population.[45] If this is truly the case, one could argue for a founding of Ordehlay associations in the city in the earlier part of the 20th century, as all members I have interviewed to date confirm that Freetown Ordehlays came before any subsequent branches upcountry. These early dates for Ordehlay emergence are significant because it shows the processual nature of masquerade invention, and how tied it is to its historical locality. Regardless, in terms of Alikali and its fraught history, we can safely argue for an early emergence of a youthful fancy aesthetic from the 1880s to the turn of the century that began with Alikali, and an accompanying interest in mobilizing masquerades to address immediate concerns of exclusion.

As demonstrated above, Ordehlay's political, aesthetic, and social parentage stem from elder and youth movements of the 19th and 20th centuries, and may have

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[42] Personal correspondence, June 8, 2015; Interview, Los Angeles, February 6, 2016.
[43] Interview, Freetown, January 13, 2017.
[44] Interview, Freetown, December 30, 2016.
[45] Interview, *Agba* Joseph S. Kanu, Lunsar, January 14, 2017.

emerged earlier than has been argued by scholars. Egungun was used to push back against colonial and missionary authority, while Alikali in turn was used by youth to obtain the social and economic benefits seen in Yoruba-modeled elder societies like Egungun and later, Hunting—each performing a politics and aesthetics of resistance in the city from its earliest days. By removing the power from the State and from gerontocracy, the youth created their own social order that, as we will see in the next section, provided a shared space outside of ethnic, religious, or familial control.

Early 20th Century Freetown, Ambas Geda, and Friendly Societies

Michael Banton's *West African City* discusses the need to adapt "tribal" (read: ethnic) institutions to meet new needs by forming social and mutual aid associations, especially amongst the Temne in the 1920s. This social adaptation of a "secondary system" owed its identity "to the shared culture of persons who have needed to adapt to meet their needs as city-dwellers" and who reacted to challenges arising from before 1914 and beyond (Banton 1957, 162). Many of these groups felt at odds with the dominant Krio/Creole culture and those formed purely on tribal bases quickly gave way to the more efficacious cross-religious and cross-cultural groups. Additionally, the Temne peoples were particularly shown scorn, and hastily joined youth associations to surmount this problem (Banton 1957, 163). As evolving and continually negotiating its politics and identity, it makes sense that a specific "Ordehlay" identity would take time to form, reacting and counter-reacting to day-to-day experiences and challenges. This could very well explain why it may have first arisen in the 1920s or before, but didn't form into its more recognizable iteration until

the 1950s and 60s. And while the Temne dominated these associations, as the years progressed and Ordehlay developed into what it is today, it too gave way to multilateral, open memberships. In any case, it is far more useful to think of these not as discrete entities with a particular start or end date, but as evolving, porous organizations that could adapt and be adapted—mobilized—as the artists and youth saw fit.

As "the forerunner to Odelays," (King 2016, 64) Alikali was followed by Ambas Geda, another of Ordehlay's forerunners, during the First World War. Ambas Geda, like other youth movements and mutual aid associations of the time, which were also known as "*compins*" in the Krio dialect, offered moral and material support to its primarily Temne members and was one of the most successful of these friendly societies (Banton 1953d, 1041; Banton 1953c, 995). Abdullah on the other hand mentions the formation of voluntary cultural groups amongst the Temne ethnic group during the Second World War, but collectively calls them Ambas Geda (2002, 22). Most sources cite them as occurring during the First World War and especially during the 1920s and 30s, but they are more commonly called "*compins*" as a collectivity of voluntary associations (Banton 1957, 162). Alikali is similarly a catch-all term for many different types of societies.

As in Alikali, the Ambas Geda association was formed by migrants and marginalized ethnicities out of exclusion from the dominant Krio and Yoruba associations. Unlike Freetown, there was no effective administrative arrangement for Protectorate peoples to maintain their own legal and customary systems, and no way

for them to compete in such a system, so many young men either forsook their ethnic affiliations for Yoruba-modeled societies or formed their own (Banton 1953c, 995). Like Alikali, this new *compin* was formed by a schoolteacher for and with the young people, and another group, known as Alimania, was founded by an Arabic teacher (Banton 1953c, 995; Little 1962, 208; Nunley 1987, 48). Other groups similarly took Arabic words for their names and established branches in neighborhoods across Freetown, but *compins* also formed upcountry—a movement from Freetown to outlying regions that occurred with Ordehlays as well (Little 1962, 208). The most telling Arabic name I have found is "Ariyah," which may very well be the linguistic precursor to "Arie." As mentioned previously, Arie is often the naming designation for Ordehlay societies because it stands collectively for all devils, but it also refers to the costume elements: Arie Mana, Arie Mayaka, Arie Wutehteh, etc. It may also be the term "Eri," or a combination of the two.

Like Ordehlay, Ambas Geda brought people together for festivities and as a benefit society upon death, regardless of background, and held a philosophy of togetherness and unity evident in the name: Ambas, which means "we have" in Temne, and Geda, which means "together" in Krio (Banton 1953c, 995; Banton 1953d, 1041; Little 1962, 207). The compilation of Krio and Temne languages and members further shows the continuation of youth associations built on premises beyond cultural and ethnic borders, as does the structure of the organization. Similar to that of Ordehlay today, it allowed for a maximum number of positions of office so that members could win status and prestige, introducing that "neatly differentiated

order" of leadership despite economic pressure as previously mentioned by Banton (1953c, 995). Another economic similarity of this foundational association with Ordehlay societies in Sierra Leone, as well as those in the diaspora, is the small sums that are collected to cover association expenses, either monthly or weekly. Such expenses can include but are not limited to: yard or storage rental and/or creation of the club house or meeting point, hiring of drummers or upkeep of instruments, food and drink for celebrations, honoring the dead and preparing the funeral, and payments to bereaved members (Banton 1953c, 995).[46]

Ordehlay emerged shortly after Ambas Geda, if not in tandem, and likely coincided with Jollay, or they may have become further differentiated down the line. Suffice it to say that Ordehlay, like Alikali and Ambas Geda, was formed by the disadvantaged youth excluded from the right and ability to generate the social, political, and economic capital necessary to survive in Freetown. Spurned from the center, the youth actually mobilized the jagged edges of society into a sort of power, forming their own associations based off of those they were excluded from. Like the adult organization, these disaffected young people wanted to set up their own form of governance, but that functioned on philosophies of inclusivity and unity instead of exclusivity. As mentioned previously, scholars have recently discussed such youth practices and their empowering abilities, citing youth interest in governance as a recent phenomenon, with Ordehlay simmering to the surface in the aftermath of the Second World War (Abdullah 2002; King 2016; King and Albrecht 2014; Spencer

[46] Interview, Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society, Freetown, December 22, 2016; Interview, Bob Anthony, Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, Maryland, USA, March 2, 2018.

2012; also Kreutzinger 1966). However, as argued above, the socio-political foundation for Ordehlay was laid much earlier, by Alikali, Ambas Geda, Egungun, and Hunting, and the seeds of political and friendly social engagement were planted.[47]

One example from the material record may corroborate the possibility of early Ordehlay emergence, and youthful masking activities to meet socio-political goals in urban centers. A striking Temne mask surmounted by a biplane dates to the formation of these mutual aid groups because of its use of furniture wire in the superstructure, the type of fabrics used, and the iconography employed (Figure 17).[48] It is to date the oldest of this type of mask I have come across, but several others in a similar style exist in the Fowler Museum of Natural History's collection at University of California, Los Angeles.[49] Collected in Port Loko, which lies approximately 72 km east of Freetown and is the economic center of its district with known Ordehlay and related Jollay activity, it is lavishly decorated in expensive, velveteen cloth and tassels, and clearly fits into a "fancy" aesthetic. The lush fabric itself alludes to an earlier Egungun parentage. While it is at first difficult to discern, the entire superstructure creates the biplane, from the propeller at the front, to the double set of wings that project out from either side of the mask, to the tail at the back that would have jutted out in performance. It is most stunning in three-dimensions and would

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[47] As another example, Ishmeal Kamara of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (MTCA) discussed his own scholarship and argued that Freetown has a long history of resistance, and it is therefore built into the very being of Sierra Leoneans (Interview, Freetown, January 13, 2017).

[48] According to its collector and owner Jeremiah Cole, it is from the 1910s, 20s, or 30s. Personal correspondence, June 8, 2015.

[49] See accession numbers X86.2968, X86. 2966, and X862972, all noted as "Jolly Face Masks," for example.

have made a lasting impression as it glittered and shone in the sun. The imagery of the plane, aside from its mobilization as proof of—or hope for—a cosmopolitan, wealthy African modernity, recalls the wartime eras where Freetown served as one of the most important British hubs, and the very crucial roles Sierra Leoneans, indeed West Africans, played in World Wars.

We can further historicize the mask by looking at the wildly popular "electric cinema" that emerged in early 20th century Freetown. These film screenings "gripped the city" from 1915 onward, and coincided with a cultural renaissance that included fancy balls and the formation of voluntary cultural groups such as Ambas Geda—all of which not only captivated the youth, but was largely driven by them (Abdullah 2002, 22; Banton 1953c, d). In his various writings, scholar John Nunley explores the popularity of film amongst the masquerading youth and the many ways it has over the decades crept into their social and artistic imaginings, finding common ground with fancy dress aesthetics already in place—from the incorporation of kung fu imagery to Cowboy and Indian westerns, to sci-fi robots and Indian movies (Nunley 1982, 1987, 1988). It seems reasonable to assume that the films experienced in early cinema and/or the advertisements for them would have also fed into earlier youthful imaginaries, and filtered into the masks.

If Alikali indeed began to emerge with the fancy aesthetic in the 1880s and is the forerunner to Jollay and Ordehlay, and Ordehlay emerged in Lunsar in the 1930s, we can tentatively push all dates back to an earlier time. At the very least, we can safely argue that youth were actively involved with politics, with social and friendly

clubs, with dancing crazes and fanciful masquerades, most likely as a way to lift themselves out of poverty and to deny their association with thuggish behavior. Though, it should be noted that this very reputation would have won them the fierce/fearful respect they would have wanted as the complement to the fancy aesthetic, alluding to the Hunting parentage of the mask. This Hunting aesthetic dominates the current visuality of Ordehlay.

The 1930s-40s: Mobilizing Ordehlay and Fancy During World War II

In the previous sections, I argued for a slightly more beneficial, or positive, understanding of youthful actions during Freetown's early years, and an earlier foundational premises of Ordehlay. I also summarized Freetown's masquerade societies relevant to Ordehlay, demonstrating that by the end of the 19th century, Freetown saw an impressive array of cultural traditions, the emergence of youth masquerading apart from elder societies, and a prolific amount of fancy dress balls (Nunley 2010; Banton 1953c, d). All of these youth activities continued into the subsequent decades and especially flowered in the 1930s and 40s, offering entertainment as much as a solution to the problem of city survival.

As in the earlier period, fancy dress balls were staged by the youth of a myriad of social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds, and offered a means to generate social as much as economic capital. As Banton states in "The Dancing Compin": "In the 1930s the 'Aku' (Yoruba) and Mandinka dancing groups were attracting young men from other tribes and demonstrating that entertainment could provide a sounder basis of association for them than cash benefits at time of death" (Banton 1953d, 1041).

Similarly, a later 1942 *Weekly News* article proclaims a "dancing craze" by young people banding together into clubs with the primary aim of staging said balls (Nunley 2010, 52). The dances themselves showed a great deal of European, and therefore Krio influence, once again betraying an interest and willingness to adopt foreign cultural influences outside of ethnic lines (Banton 1953d, 1041). Coupled together, the aforementioned youth-driven fancy balls and the "complex fancy headgear" of the 1880s would have invariably influenced the fancy aesthetic that dominated Ordehlay, Jollay, and Alikali masquerades (Nunley 2010, 49).

In addition to entertainment and social activity, the years leading up to the Second World War saw the introduction of the West African Youth League (WAYL). The Freetown branch was formed by I.T.A. Wallace Johnson in 1938 and its objective was to develop a "feeling of self-determination among the inhabitants of the country, especially the Youth, with a view to drawing up a programme for their economic, social and political emancipation" (Denzer 1976, 66, citing *The Keys*, July-September, 1987, 4; Spitzer and Denzer 1973). WAYL's activist approach sought to include all sections of the community, regardless of religion, gender, or socioeconomic status, but its vocal anti-colonial agenda caused its suppression by the British during the Second World War and the detaining of many of its members in 1940 (Howard 2015, 189; Wyse 1991, 62; Gberie 2005, 23). However, as LaRay Denzer states, it was the "first organization in the history of modern West African politics to employ the strategy of mass mobilization" and its aims and objectives (1976, 66). It is apparent here—as in the fancy balls, film craze, and the early interest

in the War evident in the biplane mask—that youth have no shortage of desire and no lack of ability to form themselves into cross-cultural groups that are light and fun, sophisticated and modern, while also decrying what they find to be oppressive. And even at these early stages they faced suppression from British sources of power, as well as local structures that included Yoruba-based Societies. The formation of WAYL also coincided with the major depression of the 1930s, which saw a considerable drop in wages, unemployment, and abysmal work conditions, triggering large-scale migrations into urban centers (Banton 1953b, 975; Howard 2015, 198-199; Dumbuya 1973, 57, 63).

As the capital of British West Africa, Freetown was central to Allied strategy during the Second World War. With its well-protected harbor, it served as a major convoy station and an important strategic base. Freetown's population doubled in size, seeing tens of thousands of migrants from the Protectorate alone (Howard 2015, 199).[50] This phase mirrored the early decades of Freetown's founding, with its variegated diasporic population astride indigenous populations, and the socioeconomic conditions of Kru and Temne peoples which contextualized the emergence of Alikali, and then Ordehlay.

With these massive movements of people, goods, and military units came challenges—city dwellers protested unfair prices and went on strike to gain higher wages, and the war negatively affected Freetown's economy (Spitzer 1974; Denzer

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[50] This enormous swell of people were both civilians and military, Europeans and Africans alike, with 55,000 in the 1931 census, to 64,000 in 1947 (Banton 1953c, 995), to more than 100,000 males between 18 and 55 during the war, with the overwhelming bulk being in Freetown. European numbers went from 400 to 6 or 7,000, on top of the US forces present.

1976; Sekgoma 1984; Spitzer and Denzer 1973). Competition and demand were fierce, as were the conditions of their labor, and while health and development programs were shelved resources were extracted, causing tensions to run high. "In the face of arduous work conditions, rising food prices, and low wages, labourers staged strikes and other actions, while residents challenged imperial and Allied designs in other ways…Racial, ethnic, and class tensions marked the war era, resulting in tussles on the street, fights, and even deaths" (Howard 2015, 183; see also Sekgoma 1984). With the trying times of the labor force and economy, a great deal of wartime propaganda was spun to win Freetonians over, with closed radio broadcasts over loudspeakers across the city and the broad censorship of newspapers and manuscripts—all spinning the war as a costly and dangerous, yet noble effort. Only the radical WAYL dared to publish at the time, challenging these rules (Howard 2015, 189). And yet despite the stringent and unpredictable conditions, people continued to flood into the city, and hopeful migrants added to the city's already remarkable heterogeneity. The era thus saw the formation of an unprecedented level and variety of migrant associations, led by disaffected youth.

Not only were disaffected youth banding into mutual aid associations, they were also dreaming of the success they might gain by stowing aboard ships bound for London. Despite them being seen as "adolescent delinquents," or the "dregs" of their home countries, they had taken up careers of crime out of desperation (Banton 1953c). Frustrated by the lack of opportunity they were faced with during and after WWII, they sought employment and education abroad, with a hopeful return to

marriage and employment back home. I would argue that this is the context within which Ambas Geda and Alikali similarly emerged as the forerunner to Ordehlay associations. Further, it has been surmised that the war weakened European colonial hegemony, rousing African nationalism (Howard 2015, 187). With this massive urbanization, large-scale circulation of people, commodities and ideas, a kind of postcolonial globalization became apparent. It need not be pointed out that this was well before Independence and the official "postcolonial" period, which began in 1961. This is surely a testament to Freetown cosmopolitanism, and its integration on a global stage from very early on, which I argue would have influenced the huge numbers of Protectorate and Freetown dwellers in terms of masquerade associations and their particular lived experience at that time.

Scholars Ibrahim Abdullah, Nathaniel King, Peter Albrecht, Sylvanus Spencer, and John Nunley amongst others, have all shown that youth have the agency and ability to reshape political culture as well as expand popular awareness, particularly through social and economic masquerading clubs such as Ordehlay (Abdullah 2002; King 2016; King and Albrecht 2014; Spencer 2012; Nunley 2010). As most of the media outlets in Freetown were systematically censored during WWII, they could have provided particularly meaningful outlets to express dissent, as well as gain access to the money and jobs that fueled the wartime economy. Indeed, youth masquerades may have been already in existence, but their oft-revolutionary culture of resistance and general thuggery, as they were sometimes thought of in the popular imagination, would probably not have been published. Ordehlay mask forms may

then be our only way to speculate on or recover the existence and involvement of youth through masquerades.

A look at wartime masks in private and public collections, such as this matched pair of Ordehlay masks can be particularly telling (Figure 18).[51] The related Ambas Geda associations did not masquerade, as such, but wore uniform costumes reminiscent of cross-dressing seen in Gelede masquerades, which also dance in pairs, like this set (Nunley 1987, 105; Banton 1957). However, Ambas Geda is performed by both men and women in a group dance setting, whereas Gelede is performed solely by men imitating and honoring the power of women, collectively known as "the mothers" (Little 1962, 207; Banton 1953d, 1041; Drewal 1974; Drewal and Thompson 1990).[52] In these matching masks we may see the possibility of transition from Ambas Geda into the newer form of Ordehlay, whose membership is gender-inclusive, or an existence side by side. However, since clearly carved by the same artist, the pair may have been made for twins that preferred to dance together.[53]

Playing off of British and wartime politics, one iconography features a biplane superstructure, while the other portrays a lion and unicorn flanking the British crown—the royal coat of arms. The masks also feature a series of propellers, or floral components, rendered in fancy textiles and fringe that were present in the earlier biplane mask, nodding to its Egungun origin. Executed in a gaudier fabric, the

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[51] It is not clear whether the paired masks are from the 1940s, 1950s, or perhaps used as part of the 1961 Independence Day celebrations, but regardless, would not be later than the 1950s or 1961. Future research hopes to clarify this question.

[52] As Kenneth Little states in the case of *compins* known as Ambas Geda, the dance "starts with a line of four men and four women circling the floor to a slow tempo" (Little 1962, 207).

[53] Personal communication, Jeremiah Cole, February 7, 2016.

repetition seen in Figures 17 and 18 shows that this was a common, if not popular, form for youth mobilization—and one I've repeatedly seen in public and private works from this era. While the biplane mask is a very similar construction to Figure 17, it is also difficult to read without seeing the mask in the round. The largest propeller on the front is decorative, while the small propeller above it is the one belonging to the plane. Similarly, the lower projections on the sides are below the actual wings of the plane. The British coat of arms is similarly tricky to recognize upon first glance: the crown is the central portion of the superstructure, with the three-tiered projection at the crest as its top. The four-legged creature to the left is the lion, and the other to the right is the unicorn; both hanging onto the crown and an otherwise not visible shield. As the Allied forces withdrew from Freetown and the war ended, the appearance of biplanes, crowns, lions, and unicorns dramatically drops. Marking a period of drastic change characterized by severe economic depression, a surge in the wartime economy, and dire employment conditions, these masks visually express an immigrant experience in search of access and control to a piece of the city's socio-economic pie—and one that would have been performed publicly, pronouncing their conditions or socio-political stances.

In the decade or so after the war and leading up to Independence, *compins* and social organizations began to spread, differentiate, and split. For example, Ambas Geda split into Boys London, and further into Small Boys London (Nunley 2010). One can imagine a similar, more defined splintering of Ordehlay from Jollay and/or Alikali, as from the larger, more prominent Yoruba societies earlier—calcifying into

the recognizable version of Ordehlay as written about by Nunley, Abdullah, King, and others. However, youth organizations retained and continued to inculcate positive values such as "unity" and "civility," or "being civilized" in the face of grave circumstances. These values remained prevalent during the Independence and post-Independence eras, becoming more visible in the masquerades, which I will explore next.

The Independence Years: Youth Arts as a Barometer (1961-1991)

On April 27, 1961, the city of Freetown partied for three holidays amidst the blazing green, blue, and white that adorned the streets, buildings, and clothing of residents. After 150 years of British colonial rule, Sierra Leone had gained its Independence. The celebratory fervor, however, was overshadowed by a state of emergency. This emergency was declared a full ten days prior to Independence, as the All People's Congress (APC) attempted to stymie, if not outright sabotage celebrations, claiming that free elections should be held first. In anticipation of a planned general strike, both Siaka Stevens, who became president in 1971 and later consolidated the one-party state, and his close associate Wallace Johnston were arrested (BBC ON THIS DAY. 27 April. "1961: Sierra Leone wins independence").[54] At the same time, Independence Freetown was experiencing political corruption, a brutal move towards a one-party state, and a fall from 'civilized' grace. As Sylvanus Spencer so eloquently and succinctly puts:

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[54] http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/april/27/newsid_2502000/2502411.stm; accessed February 17, 2016.

> A look at the history of Sierra Leone would show that this once admired nation has fallen from a high pedestal. It has the distinction of being the British West African colony to produce the first crop of intellectuals and professionals, including lawyers, doctors, and civil servants, who served in different parts of the West African coast, where they left an impressive mark…a seat of learning, where people from all over Anglophone West Africa went to seek high-quality education up to the mid-twentieth century. At independence, Sierra Leone had in place a vibrant press, a multiparty system, a credible judiciary, and a responsible civil service, one of the best in West Africa. (Spencer 2012, 75)

As he goes on to state, the city, as the country, did *not* see a lot of national pride in its imagery during or after Independence, and other scholars confirm that a disorganized APC was not terribly interested in mobilizing art or visual imagery (Opala 1994, 198; King and Albrecht, 2014, 181). Accordingly, a thorough search for patriotic or nationalistic imagery in masks—from the colors of the Sierra Leonean flag, to the representation of the country's heroes, to the abject disregard of British hegemony—turned up empty. Patriotic or state-sponsored arts were characteristic of Independence era Africa, but it was unprecedented in Sierra Leone until relatively recently (Spencer 2012, 198; Opala 1994, 198). In the absence of such visual imagery to characterize the urban experience of an uneasy independence (Grabski 2007, vii), can an intentional lack of patriotic art, specifically in the realm of youth, be a barometer to measure political sentiment? Perhaps it is because Freetown had long had the transnational characteristics normally associated with Independence already in place, such as a healthy crop of intellectuals, a multiparty system, a vibrant press, and one of the best educational systems in West Africa (Spencer 2012, 75). Or, perhaps one needs to look elsewhere for the mobilization of political sentiment outside of the patriotic realm to fill the gap left by what Timothy Mitchell has called the "state effect" (1991; King and Albrecht 2014, 181). This "state effect" allowed for so-called

"secret" societies to generate power, authority, and political efficacy from the margins and from an apparent position of powerlessness.

For example, while Independence Freetown's population rapidly grew, so too did its Ordehlay societies, with a corresponding rise in the number of "rarray boys." These lower class itinerant workers were largely from the Moa Wharf area, existed on the margins of society, and were largely feared and denigrated by the populace (Abdullah 2002). In an interview with Sulaiman Kamara, a prominent member of the Firestone Ordehlay Society, he described rarray boys as "the precursor to or beginning of Ordehlays" and said that they had been around for one hundred years.[55] While Ibrahim Abdullah and others have criticized "rarray" boys for having no "constructive critiques" of society, I would argue that they have been, through their ongoing association with Ordehlay, politically minded and willing to mobilize masquerade arts for their own ends, which typically included mutual aid and welfare, social networking, jobs, as well as political favor. Indeed, rarray boy culture made them an electioneering asset for local politicians. Later termed the "youth," they became more visible politically when the APC was voted into power in 1967 (Abdullah 2002).

The change of Independence created a rhetoric of "unity" whose foundations were already laid in Ambas Geda, and an enthusiasm for international cultures that is visible in Ordehlay masks at this time.[56] Opala similarly discusses the embracing of unity, brotherhood, and peace as concepts dear to young Freetown artists in the 1980s

[55] Interview, Freetown, December 30, 2016.
[56] Interview, Dr. Sylvanus Spencer, Fourah Bay College, Freetown, January 4, 2017.

and 90s, as does Spencer who demonstrates how youth identify with Jamaican reggae songs, using them as a powerful medium of political protest and a way to urge better governance, especially during the 1970s (Opala 1994, 204; Spencer 2012, 74-75). As seen in Spencer and in the work of Nunley, Ordehlay masquerades include popular music and are themselves popular culture, with the ability to encourage and positively influence change. This is also evident in the influence of the Caribbean and a fascination with the related Maroon experience. Having overthrown their slave masters, and later arriving in Freetown, they were admired as originaries of resistance and freedom. Other unifying imagery includes the youthful interest in sports and the camaraderie it brings, such as in two 1960s or 70s masks featuring football jerseys in a private Los Angeles collection and a mask at the Yale University Art Gallery also made from jersey material and featuring what appears to be a football player being gobbled by a vulture or a bat (Figures 19 and 20). Here camaraderie may also give way to competitive tendencies and rivalries, however friendly or innocuous they may be.

Yet another extremely popular figure worth mention and who crops up in Ordehlay masks of the past and the present is Bai Bureh. Young people are particularly taken with this pre-colonial chief, as depicted in a life-size portrayal of him fighting with British soldiers in Firestone's 1985 lantern parade float (Opala 1994, 199) and in a 2017 Ordehlay devil by the Tetina Ordehlay association (see Figures 36 and 37). Bureh waged the Hut Tax War of 1898, which was the most important revolt against British colonial rule, and he still looms large in the Sierra

Leone imaginary—especially that of the youth (Opala 1994, 199; Oram 1998). As a freedom fighter he is someone to look up to and rally around, further articulating rhetoric of unity in a similar vein as the interest in Caribbean music and popular culture.

During the Independence era and after, a proliferation of Hunting-style masks emerged and incorporated deer, antelope, and other animal heads. The lion appears again, but diverges from the previous colonial and wartime decades, as evident in the range of colors and medium executed. The persistence of the lion in the iconography of Sierra Leone has always demonstrated strength and political power.[57] But in the dawning of Independence, a different kind of hunter was in power and the lion no longer represented the British coat of arms. Rather, it represented the power of the youth, of their overarching feeling of unity and brotherhood through the banding together in the multivalent clubs, bars, and associations (Banton 1953d, 1041; King 2016, 67; Nunley 1988). This sense of unity is related to the Rastafarian lifestyle in Freetown, likely adopted in the 1960s and 70s and whose followers are locally called "freakers"—a take on Freethinkers with some notable differences to the Jamaican iteration, where freakers believe in working within the system, value intelligence, do not wear dreads, and believe in moral and ethical values of hard work, equality, and responsibility (1982, 44).

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[57] The lion also appears on the Imperial Ethiopian flag, used in Haile Selassie I's Ethiopia, likely inspirational to the newly liberated youth. In addition, the "Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah" has been applied to Ethiopian Emperors. Finally, Doran Ross wrote an article on the lion as assimilated motif which informed my interpretation (1982).

The unity, Rasta aesthetic is aptly demonstrated in a mask in a private collection that features the bust of a Hindu woman with a *bindi* on her forehead, and the colors of the Jamaican flag (Figure 21). Above her roars the head of a lion, flanked by birds, a common symbol of luck, and porcupine quills to demonstrate fierceness and aggression. The lion could once again represent two very different things. A common saying in Sierra Leone may here illuminate: "people cannot come together unless the lion learns to become a vegetarian."[58] Hunters hunt for meat, and as a hunter, the lion takes what it wants to take (the antelope) without recourse. In short, there are human lions that would rather eat, than foster peace. Accordingly, the lion in Rastafarian culture could be here mobilized as a sign of unity, brotherhood, and Freethinkers/freakers. Formerly, the lion could be interpreted during British rule as not only a means to obtain power when mobilized by the youth, but as a set of controlling processes to push back against. During and after Independence, the youth were trading one lion for another—an even worse one, as many Sierra Leoneans were disappointed with the widespread corruption and exclusivity that characterized the 1960s and 70s governance, evident especially in the consolidation of the one-party state, and eventually leading up to the civil war (Spencer 2012; Gberie 2005; Opala 1994, 204; personal impressions from various interviews, 2016-2017).[59] Many felt

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[58] Personal communication, Jeremiah Cole, February 7, 2016.

[59] A later example of youthful mobilization of lions occurred during the mural painting of the 1992-93 Revolution, when the artists sought to associate Rastafarianism with the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), who had ousted the APC and sought to overturn the one-party state. One mural juxtaposed the "Conquering Lion of Judah" with the "Lion Mountain" of Sierra Leone—the prominent geographical feature of Freetown after which the Portuguese coined the name of the territory. The mural incorporated the Sierra Leone colors, and the Rasta figure wears a t-shirt with "Aberdeen Youth Organization" on it; a clear tie to their interest in Rasta culture and morality (Opala 1994, 210).

that the jungle was destroyed and that the lion now lived in the city. This evolution shows a shift in the mobilization of one of probably very many imaginaries that were marshaled by the youth to align with, or resist and therefore de-mobilize, differing politics throughout the decades.

At the same time, several sources cited youth as “more necessary than ever,” and as activists integral to the progress of the nation (*The Sierra Leonean*, April 9, 1964, 4). For example, in his keynote to the Sierra Leone Youth Council Seminar, Minister of Information and Broadcasting John Nelson-Williams stated that “the future prosperity of Africa lies in the hands of the young people of the African continent” and “the activities of Youth Movements needed…to make a constructive contribution to…a new Africa and the world at large” (*The Sierra Leonean*, April 9, 1964, 4). In a later article: “Youths have an important role to perform in the political, economic, education and social advancement of the State. They are the future custodian of the security of the State and the mighty arm of administration” (*We Yone*, July 29, 1973). In other articles, youths spoke for themselves, condemning political parties (*The People*, August 26, 1972) and participating in self-help projects (*We Yone*, August 26, 1972, 2).

During the 1960s and 1970s then, we see not only the mobilization by the youth for the youth, but a reciprocal mobilization from the so-called center of Freetown’s political authority. While this may have functioned as propaganda, it still shows the emphasis being placed on the youth, not only from external sources, but in their own actions. A mask at the University of St. Thomas Museum in Minneapolis,

MN may offer further insight (Figure 22). It prominently features the letters "BP" on the forehead of a lower mask form that is surmounted by several puppets with articulated arms and decorated with colorful yarn fringes and baubles, feather boas, and vivid fabrics trimmed with glittery rickrack.[60] The mask was almost certainly produced and then performed through the sponsorship of the British Petroleum (BP) company to not only captivate the audience, but to garner public acceptance of BP's desire to search and possibly drill for oil.[61] This was amidst the oil shocks of the 1970s and catastrophic global fuel prices, which spiked in 1973 and 1974 (Fyfe, 1979, 157; see also Yergin 1991, 588-609). The mask here seems to have a two-fold meaning; one that provides financial support for the existence of such clubs, and one that undermines the source of this very financial support. Not only do we witness a recognition of the youth organization's power to sway public opinion, we also see here a criticism of the rising gas prices at the time, which were being subsidized by the government and which caused a great deal of grumbling and dissension surrounding the major gas companies present in the country during the 1970s (Last and Richards, 1987).[62] This critique may be evident in the usage of the color red in the otherwise accurate representation of BP's logo at the time (which significantly uses green, the color associated with the SLPP), and in the fabrics adorning the

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60 According to Henry Drewal, the use of kinetic superstructures atop Gelede masks, which can be manipulated during performances, was popularized by early 20th century Nigerian (Yoruba, Ketu region) artist Fagbite Asamu and may also have inspired this type of form in Sierra Leone, as Gelede masks likely inspired the doubling in Figures 18 and 19 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art, https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/316744; accessed April 11, 2018).

61 University of St. Thomas Museum records; Interview, John Nunley, St. Louis, February 2016; Personal correspondence, Jeremiah Cole, February 2016.

62 Interview, John Nunley, St. Louis, February 2016; Personal correspondence, Jeremiah Cole, February 2016.

superstructure.[63] Red is a symbol of aggression and danger, as well as the color of the ruling APC, and is also present on the kinetic dancers that top the mask, likely representing the lower classes, or rarray boys, from the Moa Wharf area—the communities most vulnerable to corporate activity.

Additionally, the mask form itself seems to imply a large plane, or even a stylized biplane—perhaps alluding to BP's use of planes to fertilize crops, and because biplanes used during the First and Second World War were still being used to spray fertilizer in Sierra Leone in the 1970s. It will be interesting to note the political implications here in future research, and to see if any masks made within the discursive systems of the 1960s, 70s, and 80s feature biplanes. Certainly planes have been mobilized as an assertion of modernity, but here it seems to function in a different sense. The mask's form could also be an allusion to al-Buraq, the winged horse that transported Mohammed to heaven in the Night Journey, or a bird. Birds are usually representative of good luck, so that luck may be bestowed on the working class to gain riches, possibly from oil, or from better governance of the nation's resources. If a bird, or an allusion to the luck of winged creatures or machines, this luck might be wished on the companies to find, or conversely not find oil.

In a parallel example, Shell, another major gas company that also made fertilizer, sponsored the Back to Power associations. This patronage would trickle up to more centralized political structures and was just "the way you did business" at the

[63] The "classic shield" logo seen in the mask was used from 1930-1947, and then colored green from 1947 through 2000.

time.[64] Similarly, I was told that mining companies, particularly in Lunsar, have long sponsored Ordehlay devils.[65] I here quote *Agba* Kanu from the same interview: "Listen to me, we need help from the community, you understand? But last time we have money, the mining company always give us money, they give us $1000. You can share it, to have refreshment, and to build the devil." He goes on to say that the devils began with the mining companies, that different companies sponsor different Ordehlays, and the Ordehlay associations in turn make t-shirts to advertise for them. Rather than pandemic patriotic arts, youth and Ordehlay members were using an artistic pluralism and the capitalist system to create a spectacle, garnering fame and popular support, while also reflecting on their less than desirable urban realities.[66] By "urban realities," I am here referring to the difficulties of navigating the competitive terrain of the city; in particular, Freetown, with its major population shifts as examined in the historical events throughout this chapter. These massive population influxes cause changes that make it difficult for marginalized youth, especially those that have recently migrated into the city with no access to existing elitist clubs or familial ties, to have a say in governance, make money, and make a name for themselves.

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[64] Interview, John Nunley, St. Louis, February 2016.

[65] Interview, *Agba* Joseph S. Kanu, Masabone Ordehlay Association, Lunsar, January 14, 2017.

[66] In examining (American) Indian culture in the face of Spanish colonization, de Certeau states that the "Indians nevertheless often *made of* the rituals, representations, and laws imposed on them something quite different from what their conquerers had in mind" and "their use of the dominant social order deflected its power, which they lacked the means to challenge" (1984, xiii). It could be said then that by borrowing from the various global cultures around them and "making do" with capitalist interest, they are creating *la perruque*, where they are using "company time" for their own personal ends. As the disadvantaged and dominated in this economic sphere, youth create a parallel, yet diversionary undermining of the economic system and use it to their own devices. As de Certeau shows, even anti-discipline has logic (1984).

Civil War, The Importance of Youth, and Freetown's Current Moment

Since Ordehlay performers only come out during Christmas, New Year's, and Independence Day celebrations, and only upon granting of a permit by the government, few performances were recorded during the 1990s. In the chaos of the civil war years (1991-2002), it was likely that the government did not see fit, or even have the capacity, to grant permits to the devils; and certainly the civil war deterred visits from visual studies researchers. The few performances that have been mentioned to date were published by Jenny Oram and concern lantern parades (1998). Since the masquerade associations, the lantern parades, and the social clubs are part of an extensive network of youths, sharing members and often working across age and society borders, it is possible, perhaps even likely, that the Freetown lantern parades of 1991, 1993, and 1998 also saw the parade of Ordehlay devils.[67] A subsequent extension of, or a return to, the Rasta, Unity, freaker rhetoric popular before the war, is also evident, as published by Abdullah (2002). His work demonstrates the mobilization of pre-colonial hero imagery, such as Bai Bureh, the aforementioned Temne chief who waged the most visible and effective revolt against colonial rule. Bai Bureh surfaced again, surmounting an Ordehlay devil on Boxing Day, 2017, and will be examined in the next chapter (see Figures 36 and 37). Additionally, Freetown in the 1990s saw a passionate adoption of American hip-hop culture, particularly songs concerned with socio-political and economic issues, as

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[67] *Kotu* Siaka Sesay, whose masks will be looked at in Chapter Three, told me that he also makes lanterns for the Lantern Festival (January 11, 2017). In an interview on December 21, 2016, Alimamy Bangura similarly noted that the same artists that build the Ordehlay masquerade costumes also build the lanterns.

well as the need for national unity—not unlike Independence (Spencer 2012, 74; Tucker 2013, 9). It is now being articulated in a more mainstream way, again through hip-hop, but also through the continued fascination with Rastafarian culture and the unity and freethinking it stood for. It would therefore seem likely that masquerade performances at this time would respond to, or through, these various events and mediums.

In other literature, Joseph Opala focuses on youth involvement in politics through street art, lantern parades, and Ordehlay societies, demonstrating how very involved the youth have been in politics during the "revolutions" of the early civil wars years, articulating it most successfully through the arts (1994). Similarly, Sylvanus Spencer argues that popular music in the recent decade has been the most prolific art form for accelerating change, as well as the most visible way of being active in governance through free speech (2012). I would argue, however, that the youth have been, over the decades since Freetown's founding and especially since the World Wars, mobilizing whatever means they have or find most useful at the time, be it pop music, Ordehlay organizations, murals, or lantern parades. The more mediums and platforms, the better. These social clubs and organizations are veritable chameleons, changing their names and their missions, and ostensibly their artistic formats, with the changing circumstances, in tandem with their own changing needs. There is no reluctance to mobilize whatever iconography, religion, medium, politics, or cultural stuff they desire, or see to be most efficient or effective.

After the civil war ended in 2002, masquerades began coming out again in full force. As Ordehlays reformed themselves, they again focused on the youth, and like the NGOs also focusing on youth at the time, wanted to promote peace, unity, and togetherness.[68] As previously mentioned, most masked devils carry no overt political association or party affiliation. However, several masks from the last two Christmas/New Year's seasons and a final mask from scholar Samuel Anderson offer a contradiction worth examining. The first is by *Kotu* Sheku Fofonah of Freetown's Gladiators Power Association. Made for Christmas celebrations in 2016, it features the head of a bear and the exact likeness of Desmond Paul. A second, companion devil with the head of a zebra and the likeness of Paul was also made by Fofonah and danced by the younger members of the Society (Figure 23). Paul was a renowned businessman and philanthropist, and the *agba* of the Gladiators Power Ordehlay Association.[69] Paul was particularly supportive of the youth in Cline Town, and in both images he is shown prominently displaying the APC logo on his hat. In 2013 before he passed away, he provided financial support as well as cleaning equipment to the College Youth Organization (CYO), who undertook a street and neighborhood cleaning operation in order to foster and attract business ventures in the area. CYO's main focus is fostering unity amongst the youth and encouraging cleanliness of the city streets and environment (see Figure 41 for an example of an Ordehlay devil

[68] Interview, Dr. Sylvanus Spencer, Fourah Bay College, January 4, 2017; Shepler 2010.

[69] He passed away in 2014, but was only in 2016 being commemorated and memorialized because of the Ebola crisis, which saw the curtailing of all public celebrations, religious gatherings and even market trading.

related to cleanliness). Additionally, Cline Town hosts an important government institution within the Queen Elizabeth Quay.

Another mask from the same season featured a ballot box and the slogan "Inside the Box." Belonging to the Kakuma Association, this masquerade was referred to as the "APC devil" and even had a red ballot box on top of its head (Figure 24).[70] A very similar masked devil with a ballot box came out again on December 26, 2017, also paraded by Kakuma. When asked about this devil, I was once again told by Chairman Sullay Samura of the Parade Junction Peace Committee, which collaborates with the Ordehlay Union that "political Ordehlays are not allowed" (January 2, 2017).[71] And yet, here it is—a visible contrarian.

A final mask is from scholar Samuel Anderson, and as Kailahun Town's "SLPP Paddle Devil," it bore the very convincing likeness of SLPP flag-bearer Julius Maada Bio and the extravagant use of the SLPP color green (Figure 25).[72] Maada Bio was most recently the SLPP candidate that won the 2018 presidential campaign in a run-off, despite the first election rounds being won by the APC. The carver of the devil (not pictured) was a long time Revolutionary United Front (RUF) fighter,

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[70] Various street interviews, January 1 and 2, 2017.

[71] January 2, 2017. He also said that the reason that two prominent Ordehlay organizations, Bloody Mary and Gladiators Power, were fighting that year was that Gladiators were being political when they were not supposed to be. I am dubious, as both have been noted as aligning with the APC political party, and this conflict is longstanding—20 years according to John Goba (Interview, December 28, 2016). I heard the next field season that it related more to affiliations with warring gangs who follow different US-based gangsta rappers: red if you follow Clinetown (where Gladiators Power are based) and black for Mountain Cut and other neighborhoods. For more on the relationship between gangsta rappers and politics in Freetown, see Boima Tucker's thesis (2013).

[72] I'd like to here thank my colleague and friend Samuel Anderson for providing this photo, and many others, as representative examples of Ordehlay that he witnessed coming out in Sierra Leone during the years of his own research. His dissertation (2015) and advice also provided a great foundational basis for considering the mobilization of arts after the civil war.

recently released after approximately three years in prison for perjury during the Charles Taylor trials. Maada Bio was similarly noted as having briefly led a military junta government in 1996, causing some to disapprove of his bid for president (*News24*, February 25, 2018).[73] Regardless, the mask is thick with political over and undertones, past and present.

It is evident in these recent examples how very rich and active the youth still are, particularly through their visual imaginings of party politics. They demonstrate the potency of Ordehlay as it continues to inform and shape the urban experience of youth, as of the city. However, it is also evident that despite the common practice of patronage, *political* patronage, or overt support of political parties through masked devils, is contested terrain. As John Goba, long-time Ordehlay and Jollay artist and former Firestone Ordehlay Association *agba* attests: "the societies definitely know politicians, they have money," but though they are helpful to the societies, "they have too much interference, too much control because they have money. These politicians exploit poverty for their own gain. Politicians are finance and food."[74] I heard related sentiments in an informal conversation with local librarians when I visited the US Embassy to register just after I arrived in Freetown in 2016. I was told that, because Ordehlay and Jollay are fun, involve pop culture and the creative use of Western ideas and materials, they are a popular way to reach youth—politicians see an opportunity to reach the masses through entertainment. Indeed, in addition to letter-writing sponsorship campaigns to politicians, NGOs, banks, and important

73 Personal correspondences, Alpha Kanu and Jeremiah Cole, March 2018.
74 Interview, Goderich, Freetown, December 28, 2017.

stakeholders, major politicians will often pay to hold the most important position in the masquerade procession, a position even more so than the devil itself: the *bila* man.[75] This person holds the wooden gun, leads the procession, and controls the devil's movements. For example, I was told that the Deputy Minister of Mines and Marine Resources was the *bila* man for Arie Bombali (Makeni) in 2016, and (now former) President Ernest Bai Koroma paid to be the *bila* man for the Firestone Ordehlay Society's coming out, also in 2016.[76] The funds however, in the spirit of comm*unity* that still so characterizes the goal of these friendly societies, are to help the neighborhood, and to build better housing and better schools.[77]

The historic ebb and flow of Ordehlay political engagement allows us to return to the chapter's original example of 2017-2018's prolific use of red—a sure signal of alignment with APC and one that does have an effect on potential voters.[78] For example, an October 2017 news article cited the "famous red attire" of APC supporters, as well as the change of heart experienced by one woman after a visit by APC candidate Samura Kamara and the numerous handbills and billboards she saw at the time, though she had originally determined not to vote (Kamara 2017, *Awoko Newspaper*). Whether red or another color, these *ashobies* are the symbol of a friendly or mutual aid society and so in a sense should be neutral (Little 1951, 223;

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[75] Interview, Muhammed Mamdie Keita, Wusun Cultural Organization, Ishmael Kanteh, Arie Mayanka, and *Kotu* Shekuba Kanteh, Makeni, January 14, 2017; Interview, Bob Anthony, Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, Maryland, USA, March 2, 2018.

[76] Interview, Muhammed Mamdie Keita, Wusun Cultural Organization, Ishmael Kanteh, Arie Mayanka, and *Kotu* Shekuba Kanteh, Makeni, January 14, 2017.

[77] Interview, John Goba, Goderich, Freetown, December 28, 2017. Incidentally, Goba's wife, Shattanatu, quickly chimed in that it was the women who advocated for the community, and who ensured that the money was used in such a fashion.

[78] Interview, Alimamy Bangura, December 21, 2016.

Little 1962, 199, 206). However, in a conspicuous bid for votes in the March 2018 presidential election, the *ashobies* were paid for by APC politicians and created, if not fabricated, a visible surge of populist sentiment.[79] Despite the contested terrain of political patronage, this is apparently a common activity, as seen in the purported banning of initiation ceremonies during the election period because "candidates were paying for the traditional ceremonies in return for votes" (*Deutsche Welle*, March 5, 2018).

A climate very similar to the 2017/2018 season occurred in 2007 three months before the presidential and general elections. For Independence Day celebrations that year, several of the masked devils were motivated by political party allegiance, and youth openly derided the current regime (Spencer 2012, 80). Rather than celebrating a past, they looked hopefully to a productive future of change and personal advancement. However, party tensions ran deep, and despite heavy police presence and mapped parade routes, clashes between APC and SLPP masqueraders occurred in Mountain Cut, briefly mutating a peaceful co-existence into a violent outburst (*Awareness Times*, April 30, 2007; Spencer 2012, 81). In 2016, politics again caused a newsworthy kerfuffle, when a permitting mix-up for SLPP's Arie Wutehteh devil restricted their coming out for Independence Day celebrations. Despite repeated warnings Arie Wutehteh openly defied this restriction, even marching straight to the Central Police Station in an act eerily reminiscent of the 1833 Egungun incident (*The Sierra Leone Telegraph*, April 28, 2016). And in 2017/18 amidst the sea of red and

[79] Various street interviews, reiterated by Alpha Kanu, Sheku Fofonah, and Alimamy Bangura, Freetown, December 26, 2017.

the merriment, two brief incidents in Mountain Cut required police intervention, including the subjection of rabble-rousers to tear gas and detainment. This occurred despite strict Ordehlay Union policy against fighting, efforts to avoid political fracas by designated parade routes, and public pronouncements by Ordehlay members urging participants to maintain peace and order.[80] For example, in 2016 Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society used a megaphone to urge participants not to fight or be disruptive, and threatened judicial measures if they did, though I did not happen to see this again in 2017.

Despite bad behavior being frowned upon, it still occurs, especially when devils from warring political parties clash, which has a tendency to occur at Mountain Cut. This season the surface fabric of cordiality and harmony normally worn by Ordehlay members exploded further into the political realm, causing a temporary disruption of peaceful processions, as participants looked to a better future and the possibility of a regime change. The liner or interfacing (the inner fabric that gives a shirt shape and body)—the politics of sponsorship and participation—was inverted, bringing the substrate to the surface. Like the BP mask and other examples probed in the previous sections, allegiance and subversion came together in a mutual support, yet denial, of political and commercial enterprise in order to make ends meet. If the possibility of violence lies primarily within the realm of political parties, this rhetoric

[80] A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) stands as a portion of the *Agreement Between the Sierra Leone Police and the Ordehlay Union*, and states: "Fighting (affray) during the procession is strictly prohibited and leaders must ensure strict compliance," "The Ordehlay Societies must adhere to established routes agreed upon," "No bottles or offensive weapons should be allowed in the procession," "No drug intake or abusive languages or political songs during the procession," and "The Ordehlay Societies shall discourage all forms of clique and gang activities and the use of color hoods (mufflers) is prohibited" (signed December 19, 2016). For the full agreement, see Appendix 1.

of unity and friendliness focuses on forward progress and counters, or balances, that very violence.

Mobilizing Politics and Culture

In his PhD dissertation, Richard Anderson remarks that it is beyond his study to fully explain why the Shango and Ifa practices have fallen by the wayside, while Ordehlay, Gelede, and Oje have thrived over the last century (2015, 361). As these societies stem to a striking degree from Egungun and Hunting societies, I would argue that it is because associations like Ordehlay have proven over the intervening decades to be efficacious. As this chapter has argued, throughout the 20th century youth have mobilized and shaped political, corporate, and government assistance to meet the relentlessly changing options and needs of the urban milieu. Moving beyond tropes of violent misanthropy they have historically, and publicly, pronounced themselves as societies focused on community betterment, seeking the participation and advancement of youth through whatever means necessary or available.

As King and Albrecht (2014) demonstrate, the Firestone society was able to use their wide-ranging vertical and horizontal networks to identify and pursue criminals—their ability to band together and mobilize the marginalized masses from the sub-strata actually worked. Youth have gained recognition from central authority by gaining police permits and permission to process by the Ordehlay Union, not only proving that the center is constantly shifting, but that so too is the political power of the margin constantly shifting, and most importantly that mobilizing modalities change. As demonstrated above, not only can the masquerades and their associations

be mobilized into non-existence through their banning or their marginalization, but they can also be called into existence from without, and then morph into relative acceptance in the dominant social narrative. It can also be seen in the various mobilizations that the youth can use this very fringe of existence as a form of power that takes advantage of holes, or tears, in the social and political fabric of a complex urban strata. These rifts can shift, open or close, thereby creating or terminating opportunities. Ordehlay societies may even create these holes by maintaining a fabricated distance from politics, or an alignment with them when sponsorship looms. In short, Ordehlay societies are as mutable as the changing social scene in Freetown and as open to innovation.

Culture and politics are dynamically interconnected (Ottenberg 2006; Cohen 1993).[81] As a public production of culture and politics, Ordehlay masquerades move into and out of popular consciousness, just as they literally move and travel when performed. Christians, Muslims, animists, men, women, youth—all are part of Ordehlay now. However, while the masquerades have moved "with the face of the devil" past such divisions, the political ones still remain—particularly along the lines of party affiliation and patronage. Devils no longer fight with clergymen. If they fight, it's when they meet a devil identified with a rival political party. In contemporary Freetown it is party politics, not religion, not age, not ethnicity that sparks violence. Members and youth compete for political allegiances, as they fight to

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[81] Simon Ottenberg (2006) in his work on urban and children's masquerades has demonstrated that aesthetics and politics are inextricably mixed, as Abner Cohen (1993) has shown that culture and politics are dynamically interconnected.

survive in the city, while maintaining a façade of unity—because both, at one time or another, offer possibilities.

Chapter Three Figures

Figure 13: An Ordehlay devil on procession in Mountain Cut, surrounded by three of the red *ashobies* seen that day. Visible in the foreground is an *ashobie* featuring the APC logo and presidential candidate, Dr. Samura Kamara. Freetown, Boxing Day, 2017.

Figure 14: Bolobine *Koyah* Ordehlay devil by *Kotu* Sheku Fofonah on display at the Sierra Leone National Museum, Freetown. Fofonah created this masquerade costume for Bolobine Ordehlay Society's 2016 Independence Day celebrations in Port Loko where President Ernest Bai Koroma saw it come out. President Koroma recommended it be collected by the Museum, and it became part of the collection soon after. January 12, 2017.

Figure 15: Ordehlay devil by *Kotu* Sheku Fofonah on display at the Sierra Leone National Museum. This devil was commissioned by The British Museum and gifted to the Sierra Leone National Museum for the country's golden anniversary, 2011. Freetown, January 12, 2017.

Figure 16: ***"Mr. Beale Seizing the Egugu." Church Missionary Society, London.***

Figure 17: ***Headdress Surmounted by a Biplane*** **by an unidentified artist of the Ordehlay association, Port Loko, early 20th century. Private collection of Jeremiah Cole, Los Angeles. Photo courtesy of Jeremiah Cole.**

Figure 18: ***Pair of Face Masks*** **by an unidentified Freetown artist, Ordehlay association, mid-20th century. Private collection of Jeremiah Cole, Los Angeles. This pair of masks may be related to Gelede masking, which are also made and performed in pairs. The masquerade on the left features a stylised British coat of arms, with the crown flanked by a lion and a unicorn. The masquerade on the right features a biplane.**
Photos courtesy of Jeremiah Cole.
Below is the British Coat of Arms, for reference. Google image search, accessed most recently May 30, 2018.

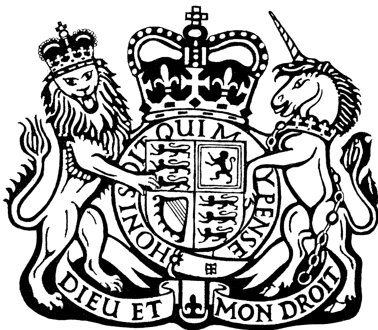

Figure 19 (next page): Matched pair of fancy Ordehlay masks with Christmas tinsel and likely used for Christmas celebrations. Private collection of Jeremiah Cole, Los Angeles.

Figure 20. ***Ordehlay Mask and Costume Surmounted by a Male Head and Another Male Figure Being Eaten by a Horned Animal*****, Krio, Sierra Leone, mid- to late 20th century, wood, textiles, paint, and mirrors, 2006.51.566.**
Photo credit: Yale University Art Gallery

Figure 21: ***Headdress Representing the Head of an Indian Woman Surmounted by a Lion, Snakes, Birds and Angel's Wings*** **by an unidentified artist, Ordehlay association, 1960s-1970s. Private collection of Jeremiah Cole, Los Angeles. This headdress is quite likely inspired by not only Hinduism as evidenced by the *bindi*, but Rastafarian culture, as evidenced in the lion and the coloring of the bust's headband.**
Photo courtesy of Jeremiah Cole.

Figure 22: ***Headdress Surmounted by Sande-Inspired Helmet Mask and Puppet Figures*** **by an unidentified artist, Ordehlay association, 1970s, University of St. Thomas Museum, 2014.02.17.**

Figure 23: ***Bear*** **and** ***Zebra*** **Headdresses Surmounted by the image of Desmond Paul, Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah, Freetown, December 26, 2016.**

Figure 24: Kakuma *Inside the Box* Ordehlay devil and matching tshirts, New Year's Day, 2017, Freetown.

Figure 25: Kailahun Town's *SLPP Paddle Devil*, which bears the very convincing likeness of SLPP flag-bearer Julius Maada Bio, now the current President of Sierra Leone, with a press photo of Maada Bio on the right for reference.
Photos courtesy of Samuel M. Anderson

Chapter Four

Urban Roots and Rural Routes: Migrating Masquerades Beyond Freetown's Borders

"*Unless you know the road you have come down, you cannot know where you are going." –*Temne proverb

A Story About a Man and a Mask

In 2016 a masquerade devil entitled *Head of Medusa* was created by Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah[82] for an Ordehlay masquerade society in Lunsar, Sierra Leone, a town two and a half hours away from his birthplace of Freetown, the vibrant metropolitan center and capital of Sierra Leone (Figure 26). Fofonah, however, is not a member of the Lunsar Ordehlay association. Rather, he is a member and the *kotu* for the Gladiators Power Ordehlay Association of Cline Town, a neighborhood in Freetown where he lives and works. Yet, this is not the first version of this mask, but a copy. The first was built by Fofonah for his own Ordehlay Association, Gladiators Power, and came out on the streets of *Freetown* in celebration of Independence Day (April 27th), 1997. This early version of the *Medusa* masquerade was then burnt by the rebels in 1999, during Sierra Leone's protracted civil war, which lasted from 1991 to 2002.[83] Members of the Masabone Ordehlay Association of Lunsar were either in attendance this day and witnessed firsthand the masquerade, and the work of Sheku,

[82] Interview conducted with Fofonah on December 30, 2016 and during a visit to the mask in Lunsar on January 13, 2017. Fofonah began building masks at the age of sixteen when his father, who was also a *kotu*, passed away. He is now forty-three years old.
[83] Personal correspondence via WhatsApp with Sheku Fofonah, June 18, 2017, courtesy of Alpha Kanu.

or became familiar with Fofonah's work later, through dissemination of images via WhatsApp and cell phone text.[84] After the civil war when masquerades began coming out again in full force, Masabone contacted Fofonah and commissioned an Ordehlay devil for themselves for their 2011 Independence Day celebrations in Lunsar (Figure 27). This devil was then sold to Makeni, a town another hour away. Several years later, Masabone requested the exact *Head of Medusa* seen in 1997 and destroyed by the rebels for their 2016 Independence Day celebrations in Lunsar, where I viewed it in January 2017. Like the other devil, it was then to be sold further upcountry to Makeni, to dance once again for Independence Day, 2017.[85]

How can scholars interpret the history of this maskform? How did a masquerade invented in the city and subject to its particular locality move to rural towns? How can the masquerade paths be traced and used to form a kaleidoscopic picture of urban to rural networks? Through the examination of Fofonah's works, and a few others, I will begin to untangle the complex relationships that have developed and that exist between city-based masquerade associations and their rural clientele. Chapter Five will then extend this argument to international clientele and networks in the diaspora. In Freetown, masks were originally meant to be performed only once, in order to be new, impressive, and economically productive each year. For example, in

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[84] During both field seasons of 2016 and 2017, images of Ordehlay masquerades were shared on a regular basis through WhatsApp, both within Sierra Leone and abroad. I recently received physical proof of this particular *Medusa* masquerade; not in Makeni, but in the Gambia. While the artist confirmed on February 5, 2018 that the *Head of Medusa* had been sold to an Ordehlay association in Makeni, he contacted the author on June 7, 2018 via WhatsApp with photos of the masquerade in the Gambia, confirming that it went there, either in addition to or instead of Makeni.

[85] Interview, Sheku Fofonah, December 14, 2017; Personal correspondence, Sheku Fofonah, February 12, 2018.

an interview with the *agba* of the Arie Bus Station Ordehlay Society in Freetown, he stated that because the upline societies know when the Freetown societies are going out, they can come and see "this type of head, this type of animal [indicates masquerade costume]. So, it would not be good for somebody in Freetown to take it out again. Yes, because everybody has seen it. So they have to go up in the Provinces and they use it there. Makeni, Kenema, Bo…"[86]

Competition neighborhood to neighborhood, and between Ordehlay organizations is very real, and newness and creativity are key to a successful masquerade, and to winning recognition and the most "gifts" of money. Devils are never used twice in the city context, and a new theme with accompanying devil is chosen each year. Usually this theme involves a particular animal, often using an imported taxidermy head, such as a bear, a deer, or even a pangolin, or a carved anthropomorphic representation. While these sculptural elements have reduced in popularity in the Freetown context, they have increased in towns upline, as will be investigated later. Yet, as I argue, Ordehlay masks are now performed time and again, but in new contexts. This intriguing, but significant change is the subject of this chapter. I start by briefly detailing the shift in art historical scholarship from village-based arts to popular arts in Africa's urban centers, then examine, and question, what is actually meant by the terms "urban" and "rural," followed by a brief expansion on the history of Freetown as a colony separate from the rest of Sierra Leone, and its relevant relationship to Ordehlay as a masquerade association specific to the capital

[86] Interview, Arie Bus Station, Freetown, December 20, 2017.

city. Returning to the case study of Ordehlay devils by *Kotu* Sheku Fofonah, I argue that the Ordehlay association has moved upcountry as part of the urbanization process—as rural towns or villages grew, they looked to Freetown organizations to manage the increase in population, and the accompanying socioeconomic change. The very nature of rural and urban as binary terms must then be examined and tweaked, allowing a less congealed understanding of these terms in an African context.

The Rise of City-Based Scholarship in Africa

According to scholar Sidney Littlefield Kasfir, during the late 1980s, a major shift in the field of African arts from the study of village- and court-based arts towards popular and city-based expressions occurred (2013). Over the successive decades, a strong focus on these urban expressions by international researchers and museum practitioners alike created a similar essentializing that focused primarily on contemporary and living artists and obfuscated the study of rural visualities and artforms, or the interaction of the two. This was perhaps because of a perception that studying village-based arts was outdated or echoed ethnographic approaches of earlier decades. Further, the scholarship of the time was characterized by a struggle to increase the visibility of these mostly practicing and mostly city-based African and African diaspora artists. This significantly contributed to and expanded our understanding of what constitutes "the arts of Africa," and the diverse urban contexts within which these artists live(d) and work(ed).

And yet, despite this strong focus, scholars have largely overlooked the historical arts being created in African cities, or the complex interactions that take place between urban and rural contexts. As such, there have been very few documented urban masquerading traditions in Africa and little discussion of their performances, or of their exportation beyond the borders of the city-space, with some noted exceptions.[87] It follows then that urban locales—such as Freetown—have indeed been the sites of major public masked performances. As Chika Okeke-Agulu has noted and Phyllis Galembo has shown in her photographs in the same publication, masquerading in Africa has persisted despite intense global change, and further has sustained an impressive level of vibrancy, particularly in the city (Galembo 2010, 3). These vivid, kinetic masquerades are an essential aspect to the lived experience of the city's political, economic, and cultural landscape.

As mentioned in the previous chapters, Freetown is a globally-connected locality that has allowed for the invention of Ordehlay and—the subject of this chapter—its exportation beyond the borders of the city (Appadurai 1996; de Jong 2007). Further, Ordehlay is a cultural and social organization of mutual aid that benefits very specific, neighborhood-based communities, and serves as a way to

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[87] In comparison to the thousands of studies on rural masquerade, scholarship is thin in urban masquerade. However, a number of studies should be mentioned, such as Ottenberg and Binkley's 2006 project on children's masquerades which includes urban studies, including that of Cannizzo on the Alikali Devils of Sierra Leone; Nunley's earlier work on Odelay masquerades (1981, 1982, 1987, 1988); de Jong (2007), who discusses the mobilization of Muslim and "traditional" identities to fit an urban modernity as well as issues of secrecy in the Casamance; Fenton's dissertation on Ekpe/Mgbe masquerades (2012) and his recent articles (2016); Weil (2006) on the commodification of urban festivals and masquerades; Bentor (2008) in contemporary southeastern Nigeria; Hufbauer (1994) and Hufbauer and Reed (2003) on contemporary Igbo maiden masquerades (Adamma) and Homann (2011) on Lo Gue masquerades in southwestern Burkina Faso to name most of the better known scholarship.

entertain during holiday seasons—most specifically, Christmas, Boxing Day, New Year's, and Independence Day (Banton 1953a-d; Banton 1957; Little 1962; Little 1970). Most importantly, the Ordehlay masquerade association explored in this dissertation is a historically—and significantly—urban invention with an equally significant history of export from this urban center to rural towns upline, or upcountry rather than from the rural to the urban as is often thought to be the case.[88] It is also being exported to international consumers and performers as far away as the Gambia, Senegal, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.[89]

There is not much discussion of the urban-rural relationship in John Nunley's landmark 1987 publication on Ode-Lay masquerades, or on their movement upline. However, one specific mention is what piqued my attention and sparked this aspect of my dissertation project: "It is interesting to note that of the three types of urban societies, the Ode-lay and Egungun groups have extended their reach to rural areas, whereas the Hunting societies have been restricted primarily to the Freetown area" (75). While he states that this is a result of its primarily Christian membership, I'm finding that it is much more about urbanization and industrialization, as well as strengthening connections to the capital city. I've also seen that while this may have been the case for Hunting societies at the time of his writing, it too has branches upline and internationally, and they continue to share memberships and artists—

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[88] As mentioned in the Glossary, the term "upline" is commonly used in Sierra Leone to designate anyplace outside of Freetown. It was originally used to separate the colonial borders of Freetown from the Protectorate, and was formed during the building of the railroad lines.

[89] Personal communication with various Ordehlay Association members, December 2016-January 2017.

Ordehlay exists on a spectrum of societies that spans from the most secret (Poro and Ojeh) to the most popular and entertainment-based (Jollay). Even if they exist individually in certain towns or neighborhoods, it is only a matter of time before the spectrum is fully-realized, depending on the particular needs of the city or town's inhabitants. In terms of Ordehlay, its reliance on the cosmopolitan specificity of Freetown and its subsequent adoption by rural towns raises questions about its translation and mobilization in new contexts. Who are the actors and networks that have fostered this adaptation? Masquerades are not "rural" inventions alone, nor are they bounded by the space of the cities that now also create them. Instead, they are a glimpse into the reality of a 21st century city and the mutable relationships that exist between the urban and the rural, often for the production of economic or cultural capital. In the case of Ordehlay masquerades, they are not migrating with immigrant populations in search of work or through forced migrations—they are moving along invented kinship networks that correspond with a dramatic increase in population as part of the urbanization process. In other words, meaningful connections are formed through membership in masquerade societies, rather than, or in addition to, familial connections, and through inventions of a modernity defined by whether one is "city" or "country"—a sociocultural separation evident in Sierra Leone from its earliest founding, as I will demonstrate below (Gugler 2002).

Air Quotes: Unpacking "Urban" and "Rural"

At conferences, in classrooms, in museums and gallery talks and even in writing, Africanist scholars have a tendency to speak (or not speak) about dichotomous and divisive terms such as "traditional" and "modern" or "contemporary," by using the index and middle fingers bounced up and down twice to indicate what we see in writing as quotation marks. This gesture, which can be also be indicated by inserting 'so-called' in front of terms like traditional, or again, encasing it in the safety of quotations, is a shortcut for recognizing the critical debates surrounding these charged and iconic terms, and whether or not their use is still accurate, or even advisable. For example, the aforementioned work of Arjun Appadurai and Ferdinand de Jong shows that "tradition" and "modernity" are active concepts rather than static demarcations. Both can be marshaled for various ends through the creation of locality in the city, which is subject to and constitutive of global narratives (1996; 2007). Often this particular modernity is juxtaposed to tradition, and both are variously called upon in order to gain ground.

For the purposes of this chapter, and the dissertation in general, I will broadly and briefly note that the manufactured understanding of "tradition" in the West is a bulky term burdened with the long shadow of colonialism, and one in which a romanticized version of "African" implies a natural, rural, calcified past that easily folds into the term "tradition."[90] However, scholars such as Olabiyi Yai assert that

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[90] See Sidney Kasfir's critical 1992 essay "African Art and Authenticity" on the shadow that colonialism casts on notions of authenticity.

tradition in Africa involves innovation and constant reinvention rather than passivity, and Robert Farris Thompson has similarly demonstrated its intrinsic motion (1994; 1974). At the extreme end, scholar Jordan Fenton has called for a complete disavowal of the term, when considering "tradition" in urban African masquerades of Calabar, Nigeria (2012). Similarly, the negotiation and performance of traditionally-rural and rural traditional masquerades in state-sponsored city festivals of contemporary Nigeria, as seen in the work of Bess Reed and Benjamin Hufbauer, manufacture a particular nationhood and unifying identity of newly independent countries (1994; 2003). The juxtaposition of "tradition" and "modernity" thus relates to and can here be extended to unpacking "urban" and "rural"—similarly charged terms—in the context of contemporary African masquerade practices.

In another study, anthropologist Ulf Hannerz examined the notion of "cosmopolitan" and the flow of meanings, as of people and goods (1990). Hannerz is largely focused on exploring cosmopolitanism as a "state of mind," rather than as "patterns of influence" (1990, 238).[91] However, his definition of 'cosmopolitan,' a term he states we use loosely, as "those who thought and who lived their lives within the structure of the nation rather than purely within the structure of the locality" may prove useful for the purposes of this study (1990, 237-238). Here, "urban," like Hannerz' cosmopolitan, is used just as loosely and can also be thought of as being contoured by ephemeral modes of networking. It is further akin to Appadurai's and de

[91] It should be noted that Hannerz's study is from a global perspective, and yet refers to all cosmopolitans as "he" and the majority of his concrete examples are from Europe or North America. The only example from Africa that he offers concerns Lagosian traders and smugglers moving between Nigeria and London, which he decided was not cosmopolitan, but only "urban" (238).

Jong's aforementioned notion of "locality" as a performative structure of feeling that has been created by historical events and that is used to create and interpret meaningful spaces for social action, usually on the local level. However, while cosmopolitanism is aimed at diversity and carries an intellectual and transnational dimension; at the surface, urban indicates little more than being located in a city or town. Its opposite, rural, carries connotations of 'undeveloped,' 'agricultural,' 'unpopulated,' or 'country,' where urban often belies 'city,' 'developed,' and 'populated.' Yet, urban often also indicates poverty and lack. Here, the work of M. B. Dumbuya, who has written on industrialization and urbanization in Sierra Leone, might expand upon this definition. For Dumbuya, urbanization "refers to the processes of becoming urban, the *movement* of people from their rural settlements to towns, the changes from agricultural to other occupational pursuits of cities, and to the development of modes and standards of behaviour peculiar to urban areas" (1973, 54, my emphasis). Importantly Dumbuya sees urban and urbanization as a mobile phenomenon characterized by movements and change: of people, behavior, and industry—that is: performative, like locality.[92] Integral to this transformation is migration, which Dumbuya defines as "the movement of people from a familiar environment to an unfamiliar environment" which disrupts families and revises social organizations, where social security shifts away from the extended family and

[92] See also the work of Joseph and Riddell who discuss the changes movements into or out of rural areas incur on a person, where moving out of the 'traditional social system' was often accompanied by a reduced social status, and how changing mobility patterns are closely aligned with the spread of modernization—i.e.: industrialization or urbanization (1973, 3-4).

towards individuality—strikingly similar to the arguments made by Banton and Little in the previous chapter (63).[93]

I would argue here that rural is linked to manufactured understandings of "traditional" as "contemporary" relates to "urban," "urbanization," or the "cosmopolitan." Equally troubling, the subject of this chapter aims to problematize and disarm these terms by taking a closer look at how "urban" is formed in a rural context, through the adoption of Ordehlay masquerades with the aim of demonstrating or transforming (rural) towns in the countryside into sites of cosmopolitanism, or a particular understanding of it. In other words, even though (traditional) cultures and (traditional) masquerades are historically framed as being rooted to a particular time or place, they are in fact more porous. And yet, like "traditional" and "contemporary," "urban" and "rural" are still two sides of the same continuum, where one depends on the other, and both depend on a manufactured vision of cosmopolitan, by looking to the other to define it. This is further contoured by a constant dialogue between urban and rural zones that collapses their borders: tradition is the modern and is constantly changing, urban is the dynamic rural, and vice versa. All of this similarly echoes arguments made in the previous chapters about "fancy/fine" and "fierce/fearful" which operate in precisely the same manner—drawing strength from mobility and continuity rather than polemics. I will expand more on the fancy-fierce spectrum below.

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[93] Dumbuya looks specifically at several of my target towns, and goes so far as to mention Lunsar, Port Loko, and Pepel, where "life is more individualistic in urban and mining areas" (63).

Ordehlay: An Expanded History in a Bifurcated Nation

As mentioned in previous chapters, Freetown began as a British colonial project composed of repatriated slaves, black British subjects, and Jamaican maroons. From the colonial period on, the nation of "Sierra Leone" referred only to Freetown. The hinterlands were added as a Protectorate that only became part of Sierra Leone much later, creating a bifurcated nation (King 2016, 62; Fyfe 1987; Alldridge 1910; Last and Richards 1987; Nunley 1987). This generated a sociocultural disconnect that is still evident today—a separation of the "cosmopolitan" Freetowners vs the "country bumpkins" upline. Anything outside of Freetown is still lumped together as one larger place in opposition to Freetown, and a trip outside of Freetown is spoken about as going "upline" or "upcountry" rather than designating the particular town to which one is traveling. However, I was told in an interview with Alpha Kanu and Sheku Fofonah that other towns are developing to such an extent that people are starting to recognize them as more than 'rural upcountry.' According to them, this is recognizable by the increase in larger houses, particularly the ones with stairs. The stairs were key to marking it as urban and developing, and to differentiating whether it was a city or town rather than a village.[94] Upward mobility and growth is here realized in architecture.

Freetown's cataclysmic history was shaped by explosive migrations into the city from the Protectorate and beyond. As the population swelled, various ethnicities, religions, and age groups competed for survival as it grew, and one could say,

[94] Interview, December 17, 2017, en route to Bo.

urbanized. The city's historical and cultural specificity thus delineated a space that allowed for, if not outright encouraged or demanded, the emergence of the youth masquerade phenomenon known as Ordehlay. These publicly performed masquerades were mobilized, first by youth and then by a steadily widening multi-generational, multi-religious, and multi-ethnic membership. Social and political identities coalesced and were often performed through masquerades, and were, as they are now, used for varying, often changing, political, economic, social, or cultural ends. As anthropologist Kenneth Little states about these striking voluntary associations, of which Ordehlay is one, they have been "formed to meet certain needs arising specifically out of the urban environment of its members" (1957, 582). These needs include sickness and funeral benefits, solace in such occurrences, entertainment, and community development projects, like schools—many of which fall within the enterprise of Ordehlay, at least currently. Little, and Banton, call these variably, "friendly," "mutual aid," and "voluntary" associations—all three of which, at least currently, characterize Ordehlay. Little additionally notes that it is "a fairly common practice for women to be admitted into associations" and "most of their personnel are young people" (1957, 591-592). He further argues that women and younger people possess a new status in the urban economy, including women's involvement in a mixed social relationship with men, where separation by gender was typical. These kinds of relationships and activities are not typically found in the more traditional rural masquerade societies—here reading the terms "traditional" and "rural" as interchangeable, and incompatible with the "urban."

Similarly, as Banton has demonstrated, social and mutual aid institutions were formed during the early 20th century, especially by migrants, minorities, and youth, to meet new urban needs (Banton 1957, 162). Societies formed purely on ethnic, religious, or age bases, such as Hunting and Egungun, quickly gave way to the more efficacious cross-religious and cross-cultural groups such as Alikali and Ordehlay—adapting to the particular circumstances of the city. Then, as now, they relied more strongly on their progressive ideas and sophisticated knowledge of technology and globalism than they may experience in more "traditional" settings, such as the village or the more restrictive societies—a cosmopolitanism, in a sense. Regardless, Little and Banton both focus on the movements of migrants *from* the rural *to* the urban and how they transformed "traditional" and ethnic identities to adapt to the urban milieu, without regard to movements in the other direction, or the relationship between the two. Of course, they were not the only scholars to deal with this one-way movement. For example, sociologist Josef Gugler, like Banton, discusses the connections of city-dwellers to their rural "homes," arguing for an urban collectivity that is integrally connected to a rural one (2002).[95] However, they both write that the connections diminish the longer people stay in Freetown, again focusing on one-way migration and familial connections, rather than newly developed relationships based off of mutual aid and masquerade societies that cut across the established separation of Freetown from the rest of the country as the "Protectorate."

[95] Gugler defines "home" as a person's intended burial place. For most Africans, he states—a generalization which may be rather problematic—this is rural, and so he argues for an urban collectivity that is connected to a rural one. However, he focuses on kinship ties that are specifically along familial lines.

In their earliest iterations—which I have argued in Chapter Three is during, or even before, the First and Second World Wars—Ordehlay masquerades were banned by the colonial administration as dangerous and as run by bands of "rarray boys" known for thuggish behavior. As the years drew on, the Ordehlay organizations gained more visibility, and eventually more respect, assisting members with life expenses, building community schools, and training and educating members and youth. They were even mobilized as casual security labor in the city by the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) when shorthanded and because of their extensive knowledge of the "streets," as noted by King and Albrecht (2014). The SLP tapped into the extensive networks of Odelay youth to identify and deal with criminals. This also allowed the youth to identify and exploit a gap in the government's ability to handle crime, using it to their advantage to gain the notoriety that such paid work entails.

To build upon these financial aspects of Ordehlay and its potential for income, it is here worth noting the recent work of scholars Jordan Fenton (2016), Fiona Siegenthaler (2016), and Peter Weil (2006). Both Weil and Fenton elaborate on the economic dimension of masquerades; Weil in both urban and rural settings and as a steadily privatized commodity where one must not assume a linear direction for masking processes or their commoditization, and Fenton in urban Calabar, Nigeria, where he discusses the business of cultural clubs and renting masquerade ensembles. Ordehlay masquerade costumes are also rented in addition to being sold, especially upline from Freetown, but so far sales are more desirable than renting, and devils are also taken apart to reuse pieces in all branches and locales. Examples of renting rather

than sales include Tetina Ordehlay association renting their *Woman Tote Man* devil to Bo for Independence Day, 2017 celebrations (see Figure 38); Lungi requesting Port Loko's 2017 devil: "These people at Lungi they are asking to, they want us to rent the mask, normally we destroy some of it. We have decided this time round to dismantle it and to create another one;"[96] and Madakor and Arie Bus Station Ordehlay Societies of Freetown discussing the rental or loan of their masks: "We are all society people. Because of the relationship, just give us *kola* [to rent the mask], and we give it, upline."[97]

These sales or rentals are not necessarily income so much as they are funding for the next year's devil, and clearly, like Weil's case, the movement of money and masquerades is not unilateral. After an organization has been around long enough, income from dues and sales fund community organizations and self-help, often for youth, as demonstrated in Freetown with the school built by the Firestone Society, and Port Loko. As A. O. Bangura stated: "We are registered with the council, we even have a bank account…We want to maintain that spirit of continuity. We have a youth wing, and we have already bought some land. We want to develop it so that we can do some amount of [educational] degree and some other things for the youths. The cost of a permit is very high in this country, so that they can self-employ."[98] Being financially secure and able to complete projects is thus the ultimate hope, but in most younger societies upline, Ordehlay is first and foremost about the play, the

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[96] Interview, A. O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, December 20, 2017.
[97] Interview, December 22, 2017.
[98] Interview, Port Loko, December 20, 2017.

coming-out, and connections with Freetown, with success sufficient enough to warrant mutual aid and the construction of cultural, educational, and/or social infrastructure forthcoming.

Siegenthaler's article, in the same dedicated issue of *Critical Interventions* as Fenton's, explores the use of money as an artistic medium to critically engage with the relationship of contemporary Africa to global economies. Here, as in Ordehlay associations, money is volatile, necessary, artform, and subject to the luck and whims of urban money mistress, Mami Wata.[99] A constant concern of Ordehlay organizations is to continue coming out with their devil, or better: mutual aid, financial stability for members/communities, etc. With this in mind, money is often incorporated as part of the masquerade—in the superstructure as well as the larger organizational structure of the masquerade procession. For example, in two masquerade devils from the 2016 season, leones and dollars decorated the antlers of taxidermy deer heads—enticing it like a carrot and directly or indirectly invoking the luck and good fortune of Mami Wata, as the hope for income both present and future (Figures 28 and 29). Members holding flat baskets called *akorie* (see Figures 3 and 6, for example) always accompany the devil to catch the bills cascading down from balconies, to collect those thrown from bystanders, and to pool the resources that are offered to the devil to enliven his steps. In this case, the devil will either lift his left foot for an appreciative bystander to place small bills underneath, causing him to dance in thanks (Figure 30), or the bystander touches the snout or forehead of the

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[99] For a more thorough definition of Mami Wata, see the Terminology section in the Glossary.

devil with the money—an offer specifically to the Ordehlay society people.[100] Additionally, money offered to the devil, and to the society, is always offered with the left hand. Kasfir's publications are also here worth mentioning, as she argues that urban artforms are simultaneously art and commodity and that one must reexamine the assumptions about the singularity of a "work of art" and its potential for commodification (2007; 1999). This relates to Fenton's aforementioned article (2016), where urban masquerades are becoming commoditized in new (rural) contexts because of their economic appeal. He also notes that as Calabar developed into an urban center, it generated widespread interest in local cultural revitalization, so culture is cultivated and commodified as a vital aspect of urbanization. Part of being 'urban', of being a 'city' is having, and demonstrating that you have, culture.

In summary, the Ordehlay masquerade society was originally formed from an urban space of exclusion subject to the specificity of Freetown's history, whose members operated as petty thieves and later served as security, and then began using cultural masquerade to assist neighborhood communities financially—they became successful and their masquerades efficacious. Recently, Ordehlay masks added yet another aspect of success by operating as a national emblem in the museum space, as evidenced by two examples in the Sierra Leone National Museum, both of which are by Sheku Fofonah (see Figures 14 and 15). The first Ordehlay costume (Figure 14) was commissioned by the British Museum and gifted to the Sierra Leone National Museum for the 50th Anniversary celebration of the country's independence, April

[100] Interview, Sheku Fofonah and his third assistant, Lamine, Freetown, December 26, 2017.

2011. The second (Figure 15) was created for the Bolobine Ordehlay Society for its 2016 Independence Day celebrations in Port Loko, a town upline where (former) President Ernest Bai Koroma saw it come out. So impressed by its construction, he recommended that the Sierra Leone National Museum collect the mask, commemorating it as a cultural emblem and further solidifying Ordehlay, even as performed outside of Freetown, as an accepted trope of nationalism—the farthest it could get from its foundation by marginalized youth criminalized for their activities.

These examples demonstrate the transition of masks and members from the rugged margins to having the ability to generate income and assist communities within Freetown, to the masquerades as representative of and embodying a nationalistic culture. It should be noted here that museums, outlying towns, and Sierra Leonean communities are one thing—but the global art market is another thing altogether. So-called "traditional" arts recently made or in urban areas are not considered on the global art market the way that contemporary arts in Western mediums are, despite being urban, and despite being created now as much as in the past. Regardless, debates about whether Ordehlay masquerade arts are "contemporary" or "traditional" may not necessarily be of interest to members and *kotus*, who again consider themselves "builders" rather than "artists." What is more important here is that these masquerades were not only created by and for adapting to the city, they actually transformed the city, providing connections and access to services where they did not previously exist.

Ordehlay: Urban Roots and Rural Routes

This very success may explain their movement, or adoption, at various times to towns throughout Sierra Leone, and their attraction not only as a way to cope with the transformation of rural communities, but as a way to connect to cosmopolitan Freetown associations and beyond. I here re-note the example given in the previous chapter, where Lunsar was noted as being formed in the 1930s when Delco was founded and the town began to rapidly grow in population—or "urbanize."[101] One could argue for a quite early founding of Ordehlay associations in the city, and an early rural adoption of them, as he also adamantly stated, like Ordehlay members in Makeni and Port Loko did, that Freetown came first.[102] And so, for such a specifically urban invention, why is it, and has it, moved upline and how do the masquerades differ? I would argue that this is because of their success in Freetown, whether financial, performative, or for other reasons, like the manufactured, non-familial, kinship bonds of the masquerade society. If the areas outside of Freetown have been historically excluded and marginalized from the city, then it may be this very space of marginality, coupled with an influx of populations struggling to survive, that provides the answer. If Lunsar's Ordehlay associations began when the town's mining boom occurred and mining at Marampa began, Makeni and Port Loko can also be thought

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[101] Interview, Joseph S Kanu, *agba* of Masabone Ordehlay Association, Lunsar, January 2017; Interview, A. O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, Port Loko, December 20, 2017.

[102] Interviews, Ordehlay members in Lunsar and Makeni, January 2017, and Port Loko, December 2018. So far, most members point to emergence of Freetown Ordehlay societies as occurring after World War II, with a spike in the 1960s and 70s. This may be due to the transience of memory, or point to a secondary, more modern iteration of the masquerades. My research thus far does indicates an approximate date of emergence during the 1910s, 1920s, or 1930s, or a very early, related version of it which served as the model for the newer Ordehlay associations.

of as economic centers, despite being in the rural upcountry, and they experienced similar industrial growth (Dumbuya 1973, 56).

For example, Dumbuya shows how several towns in Sierra Leone grew because of commercial enterprise and exploitation, which supported the growth of urban sectors outside of the coastal region, specifically Freetown. Kenema flourished because of cocoa, coffee, timber, and diamonds; Bo grew after the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board (SLPMB) and diamond and railway companies established their headquarters and offices there; Pepel went from being a small fishing hamlet to an important port for shipping iron ore; and Lunsar went from being a town of less than a hundred inhabitants in the 1920s to a modern town of over 12,000 in the 1970s, with a higher standard of living, as in other urbanizing towns (Dumbuya 1973, 56; Gamble 1974, 3). All four of these towns have established Ordehlay societies: Bo has seven (at least 60 years); Lunsar has three (over 80 years); Pepel has two (25 years); Kenema is unknown (TBD).[103] Makeni, a city of more than 126,000 according to the 2015 census and the seat of the Northern Province, currently has four Ordehlay societies, the oldest of which is Paddle, which began in the late 1960s or 1970s.[104] Port Loko is the capital of the Port Loko district, of which Lunsar is the largest town, with a population of roughly 24,000, and currently has five Ordehlay societies. For comparison, in Freetown there are at least eight just in the neighborhood of Mountain Cut.

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[103] Interview, Arie Bus Station, Freetown, December 20, 2017; Interview, Beach Boys Ordehlay Society, Bo, December 17, 2017.

[104] Interview, Arie Mayaka Ordehlay Association, January 14, 2017.

In an interview with executive members of Bolobine Ordehlay Society, A.O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, I was told that one of Port Loko's Ordehlay societies began in the early 1970s to celebrate the birthday of former president Siaka Stevens.[105] The founding members approached the Tetina Ordehlay association in Freetown for guidance and assistance in starting the Ordehlay—a common way of beginning an upline Ordehlay society. They also stated that they use the society as a way to educate youth in the community so that they could gain employment, as previously mentioned, to keep connected to the larger Sierra Leone and diaspora community who come back for the yearly celebrations, and to build and maintain cultural heritage. Rather than thinking of these towns as "rural," "country," or "developing," one can consider the malleability of a rurally located town—a mirror to Freetown but nestled in the countryside and seeking a cosmopolitan identity, despite the longstanding bifurcation whose vestiges are still felt in Freetown sentiment towards the rest of the country. Freetown was once, and still purports to be, *the* urban spot, and everything else was simply not. Most Sierra Leoneans still call anywhere outside of Freetown the "Provinces," "upline," and "upcountry," indicating the imaginary level on which places such as the "rural"/"provincial" and the "city"/"urban" are created by those inhabiting them. Scholar Nathaniel King has argued that Odelay memberships were "a way for marginal [upcountry] actors to identify as members of a Sierra Leonean *nation*" (2016, 63, my emphasis). I would offer that Ordehlay masks instead, or further, represent a tangible means for people

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[105] December 20, 2017.

from upcountry to become or connect to Freetonians and gain benefits of, and similar successes to, those living in Freetown. In other instances it is a way for Freetonians to keep connected on a global level, such as in the diaspora, and that these relationships and networks can move in both directions, whether stylistically, culturally, or financially—and determine locally-defined imaginaries.

Modernity is a Masquerade and the Fancy/Fierce Spectrum

To unpack this further, I will now return to the selection of devils that serve as the primary case study for this chapter. Another of Fofonah's devils was made for Christmas celebrations in 2016, when I was in attendance, and featured the head of a bear and the exact likeness of Desmond Paul (see Figure 23). As mentioned in the previous chapter, Paul was a renowned businessman and philanthropist, the *agba* of Gladiators Power Ordehlay Association, and particularly supportive of Cline Town youth. He passed away in 2014, but was only in 2016 being commemorated and memorialized because of the Ebola crisis, which saw the curtailing of all public celebrations, religious gatherings, and even market trading. In the following year's processions (2017), the first, smaller Gladiator devil made by Fofonah was paraded to his grave and he was memorialized with kneeling and prayers (Figure 31). A second devil with the head of a zebra and the likeness of Paul was also made by Fofonah in 2016 and danced by the younger members of the society (Figure 32). Both were sold—the bear to a scholar and collector in the United Kingdom, and the zebra to the youth wing of Bolobine Ordehlay Society, Port Loko, where I saw it come out on Christmas Day, 2017 (Figure 33). The likeness of Paul—a respected *Freetown*

character—was removed, but the devil was otherwise left intact, including the back, which was elaborately decorated with gourds, cowries, and shells. While members of Ordehlay associations in other towns vehemently expressed that the devils were altered to reflect their own aesthetic choices, this one directly maintained its connection to Freetown, while creating some distance by removing Paul's visage.

If I have argued for a fairly early date of adoption of city-based masks in rural locales, probably before they were popularized and respected locally in Freetown, then I must explore other reasons for its embracement.[106] In contrast to Fofonah's 2016 season devils, two more examples from upline offer insight into the differences between Freetown masks, which tend to be more fierce or fearful, and the more fancy Ordehlay devils upline, though both can be observed in either place (Figures 34 and 35). The fierce aesthetic, as indicated in Fofonah's Freetown bear devil and in typical examples from the 2016 season (see Figures 6, 7, and 9 for example), incorporates materials from the "bush," such as porcupine quills, gourds, wooden combs, snail shells, leather and earthen colors, horns, and taxidermy animal heads—anything that displays aggression, or relates to the activities of hunting. The fancy aesthetic is meant to demonstrate monetary wealth, to be flashy and brightly colored. It usually incorporates plastic, beads, feathers, brocades, velvets, shiny materials like sequins and mirrors, and cowries—in short, items that need to be manufactured, are relatively

[106] It is worth noting here that the invented ties of brotherhood and kinship outside of ethnic, religious, and family ties would be specific to the city, and not as applicable to the rural towns.

expensive, and need to be newly purchased from a vendor.[107] Fofonah's zebra devil that migrated to Port Loko can be said to be erring more towards the side of fancy, with far fewer porcupine quills and the absence of the bear head and its aggressively gaping maw. Additionally, the brightly-painted carved heads—often Mami Wata, medusa, or a female—that surmount the Pepel devil and planned for Port Loko's 2018 devil, the beaded veil, and the carnivalesque tinsel and sequins are far more common outside of Freetown. For example, in the aforementioned December 20, 2017 Port Loko interview with Kamara and Bangura, I was told that they often preferred the fancy, and the devil that they have decided upon for Independence Day 2018 will be the carved head of a woman with snakes. Because of its cost, they are dismantling the previous year's devil to reassemble with the new head. The Ordehlay association of another town, Lungi, had requested to rent the devil, but Bolobine decided against it so that they could reuse the materials.

The fancy and fierce/fearful aesthetic is not a dichotomy, however—like the terms "rural," "urban," "traditional," and "contemporary," it operates more or less as a continuum. Fofonah is a particularly successful and popular *kotu* both within Freetown and beyond because he is able to marry the fancy with the fierce—both elements are evident in the devils he makes. Generally speaking, from what I experienced and heard in interviews during the 2016 and 2017 holiday season, both are important, both are desirable, but the "bush" aesthetic is more affordable in Freetown, whereas the fancy costs more: "There are more bush devils because the

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[107] Incidentally, mirrors and cowries are often found on both, tying them together visually and conceptually.

colorful, fancy ones are much more expensive, so we can't always do them."[108] Two notable exceptions surfaced in upline societies and argue the exact opposite case outside of Freetown. The first is from an interview with the Simabu [Sea Marble] Ordehlay Society in Pepel, who purport to prefer fine devils because the materials are more affordable, whereas according to them, the bush materials were more expensive.[109] The second is from *Agba* Alpha Kebbie of the Matolo Ordehlay Society in Bo who stated that their organization erred towards fancy because "it is more reasonable to purchase" and it is more accessible to non-members—less daunting than a fierce mask. [110] He continued:

> The masks are going more to the bush. Especially in Freetown, people are not caring about this fancy. There is a disadvantage and an advantage. Building up the fancy, people look at the beauty of the thing, like if you are not a member, you can even come closer. Stand front of it and look at it. But those bush masks, having those porcupines, it's not easy for you to come closer. Because, otherwise you get yourself a problem. When that ones eats you, have this poison on you.

In this instance, fancy is not only more affordable, it is more accessible to the public.

The most costly aspects of either masks or localities are the skins, and "local" things are always a part of the masks—it's just the type chosen that causes a masquerade costume to lean one way or the other. Currently, it seems that Jollay, which is always considered wholly fancy, is taking the load and allowing for Ordehlay to focus more on bush, fierce aesthetics.[111] This is perhaps driving prices up

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[108] Interview, Alimamy Bangura and Ajaniokay, Freetown, January 9, 2017.
[109] Interview, December 20, 2017.
[110] Interview, December 17, 2017.
[111] Interview, A. O. Bangura and Abubakarr Kamara, December 20, 2017; Interview, Alimamy Conteh, Beach Boys Ordehlay Society, Bo, December 17, 2017; Interview, Arie Kakua Jollay and Ordehlay Societies, Bo, December 17, 2017; Interview, Matolo Ordehlay Society, Bo, December 20, 2017.

in Freetown, and affecting many upline societies, who travel to Freetown's Big Market to procure bush materials for their devils, especially around Christmas. Additionally, while the carved heads have generally fallen out of favor in Freetown, they are still popular upline—and still often considered a more fine way of presenting an Ordehlay, whereas taxidermy heads are more bush and fierce. For example, artist Siaka Sesay, the *kotu* of Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society exclaimed "Bush devil is not Ordehlay! Fancy is the quality Ordehlay!" Supporting my theory that Freetown devils are tilting towards fierce, bush devils, he maintained that the newer ones are "knock-offs" and "trying too hard to be Hunting Society."[112] His work, along with the devils made for the last two seasons by Tetina, are the notable exceptions (Figures 35-39). In Freetown, taxidermy animal heads reign supreme.

Two more of Sesay's works in the Weltmuseum Wien from the early 1980s may trouble the distinctions of fancy and fierce even more, and offer an alternative viewpoint from this Freetown-based *kotu* (Figures 40 and 41).[113] Both of Siaka Sesay's "fashion devils" were created out of rice sacks in blues, whites, and yellows, shredded and repurposed into puffs and bursts of color that frame carved female heads and an animal head (likely a goat), respectively. One of the female face-masks includes a *bindi* and is painted a pinkish-red, while the other is painted a cocoa color similar to indigenous skin tones and bares scarification marks. Both sets of carved human faces are framed by bright, braided strings of yarn, and both devils are also

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[112] Interview, Susan's Bay, Freetown, January 11, 2017.

[113] The Weltmuseum notes the masks were made "Post-1991" but Siaka Sesay, who constructed the masks, stated that he made them "when he was young," and during the time that Siaka Stevens was President, between 1971-1985 (January 11, 2017, Susan's Bay, Freetown).

decorated with the giant snail shells seen on Ordehlay masks today, especially fierce or bush ones. However, these shells are painted bright white (Figure 40) and yellow (Figure 41) with contrasting spots, placing them solidly in the fancy category with very little aggressive or fearful features other than the painted-red animal head on Figure 41. During 2016-2017 fieldwork I showed both of these masks to Sesay. He beamed with pride when he learned that his creations were at the Welt Museum, because “they brought you to us, and Japan Tokyo after all, didn’t they?!” Sesay stated that the first devil, *Bundu Musu*, was created to celebrate the “beauty of the African women” because “it’s our deep culture.” He considered it to be the founding devil of Japan Tokyo.[114] The second, *Koyaneh*, he considered to be the “original devil of Firestone” and it means “to/go wash your hands,” “go wash,” or “keep yourself clean!”—highlighting the importance of cleanliness and personal hygiene. Self-proclaimed as the *kotu* “General” for the society, which he stated meant that he was “highly respected,” he apprenticed with one of the most renowned and oldest Freetown artists, John Goba, whose works also exist in several international collections.[115] Beginning as a builder of Jollay and Ordehlay masquerades, Goba has adapted the aesthetics and iconography into works that operate strictly as art, but look very much like a marriage of fancy and fierce, with even the porcupine quills painted bright colors. He is likely a main reason that Sesay has continued operating within a fancy/fine matrix in his own work, but Goba’s more recent works illustrate that the distinction is blurred, rather than polemical.

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114 Interview, January 11, 2017.
115 Interview, January 11, 2017.

For example, when asked about fancy masks, Goba implied that only 'bush' people liked the wild, colorful masquerades, and that they were not nearly as sophisticated as the Freetown aesthetic.[116] Similarly, in examining the differences between the two kinds of masks found in the urban and rural contexts, respectively, the urban audiences and associations currently do appear to prefer the fearful aesthetic. The materials are more difficult to come by and expensive if purchased in the city, and demonstrate a fierceness that has been historically associated to the related Hunting Society masquerades. A fascination with invoking Hunting Society is even evident in the name "Ordehlay" itself. Artist Ajaniokay of Freetown stated: "you have the Hunting Society who hunt in the bush. The term Ordehlay means 'He stays in town, at home'" or as I interpret, "one who hunts in town rather than the bush," indicating a separation of the Freetown devils from the fierce, bush aesthetic.[117] [118] In turn, the masquerades favored by groups upline generally do feature a more fancy aesthetic. Purchased in stores, these materials are as hard to come by in the outlying areas as bush materials are in the city, because there is even less disposable income in the countryside than in Freetown.[119] The rural fashions a modernity—or cosmopolitanism—based on imagined city models of sumptuous opulence and monetary success, and the urban fashions a modernity that is fiercely survivalist and competitive like a hunter from the "bush." In both instances, the rare materials of the

[116] Interview, January 7, 2017, Goderich, Freetown.
[117] Interview, Freetown, January 9, 2017.
[118] Additionally, in reviewing Kreutziger's *The Eri Devils in Freetown, Sierra Leone* (1966), Wyse defines "Ode le" as "those who do not go to the Bush" (1978, 116).
[119] Bob Anthony, General of the Tiwaniokay Hunting Society in Maryland confirmed this theory in a phone interview, April 30, 2018.

other locale become more meaningful, more desirable. Both are defining a modernity modeled around a masquerade that is at once self and other. It's what you don't have, the scarcity, that becomes powerful, and that generates an aura of wealth, status, and success—or the desire for such things to come. In short, no matter the preference, opinion, or decision for the year's devil, what is most desirable is what is expensive, but what is practical may turn out to be the opposite.

Returning to Fofonah's *Zebra* and *Head of Medusa* devils, which migrated from Freetown to Port Loko and Lunsar and Makeni respectively, the *Zebra* devil had very little changed in its new performative context—perhaps as an intentional connection to Freetown while retaining some aura of individuality specific to Port Loko. However, new costumes are usually made for the mask and superstructure each year, and various accoutrements are added or subtracted each time it is performed—no matter the locale. Each time the mask comes out, then, it is re-situated and re-dressed to fit its new context and entertain its new audience. As a mask like *Head of Medusa* moves further and further away from its original "center," it moves further away from the urban, fearful aesthetic. If a "fancy" aesthetic is adopted as a mobilization of an imagined "modernity" on an urban scale, I anticipate that it will become even more "fancy" in Makeni, and future research will verify how the Makeni devil was presented. But as I also asserted, there are exceptions to the rule, and competing interests or hardships may take the devil in an unanticipated direction.

Beyond the Urban: Diaspora, Research, and Technology

I have traced several masks that traveled from Freetown to Lunsar, Port Loko, Pepel, and Makeni respectively. Each was subject to a new performative context and reimagining by local members, as well as formed through connections with, or interest in, Freetown-based *kotus* and societies. However, not only have these masks traveled from Freetown to new performative contexts upline, they have also traveled from Freetown to performance arenas in the diaspora. Rather than being purchased for display in a museum or private space, the masks circulate as part of a kinetic reenactment in a new social and geographic frame—relatable yet different from its movement upline. For example, an Ordehlay masquerade costume from the 2017 Christmas season came out for the Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society, was sold to the Tiwaniokay Hunting Society in Maryland, and will dance at the Society's yearly cultural event, September 2018 (Figure 42). Oju Feray's *Pangolin* devil that came out the previous year (Christmas 2016) was made by *Kotu* Abdoulaye "Taylor" Kamaru and traveled to an Ordehlay society in the Netherlands (Figure 43). In return, skins and animal heads are sent from the United States, Guinea, and the Gambia to builders in Freetown, because the more exotic and far-flung the animal, the more meaningful it is.[120] Further, the strength of the society lies in the diversity of its membership, including members that reside abroad and who are able to offer a different level of support to members still in Freetown—especially during times of financial stress for

[120] Interview, Madakor Cultural Development Organization, Freetown, December 22, 2016.

Freetown members, such as funerals.[121] This significant development will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter.

Regardless, masquerades, *kotus*, and members in Freetown, upline, and the diaspora are primarily connected through the messaging platform WhatsApp, and to a lesser extent other mobile technologies like Facebook messenger. These tools are catching up with the popularity of text messaging—as recently as 2015 it delivered more messages than traditional SMS text messages—and quickly, if not completely, supplanted email (Saner 2016). Emailed communication is practically non-existent amongst Ordehlay members because of the inaccessibility of computer ownership and the impractical cost of computer rental and data usage (text and phone). Cell phones and scratch-off "top up" cards are often the only form of technological communication available, particularly in the micro-economy of urban Sierra Leone, as in much of Africa, where income and compensation comes in short bursts rather than steady flows. WhatsApp, on the other hand, is easy to learn, simple to use, and is more efficient because it uses the internet to send group and one-on-one messages. Best of all, it's free. Most importantly, it doesn't charge extra fees for sending images, and if wifi is not available, one can turn on data for a short amount of time to upload or download images and communications, then quickly shut it off again, incurring a minimum charge in the absence of a monthly data plan. In short,

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[121] Interview, Madakor Cultural Development Organization, Freetown, December 22, 2016; Tiwaniokay Hunting Society WhatsApp messages regarding funeral arrangements, February 12-14, 2018.

WhatsApp is changing the way we, as a global community, communicate with one another.

Because of this global moment, conversations between urban locale and rural towns can, and does, easily continue. The devil being created for Pepel Education Social Club was shown to me via cell phone images on December 20, 2017 as local members monitored its progress, debated price, and arranged for its pickup in Freetown before it came out five days later (Figure 44). They thus retain the ability to add or subtract from the devil as it is being produced, or make last minute suggestions and changes. Similarly, WhatsApp is used by Tiwaniokay Hunting Society members to share performances in Sierra Leone almost immediately after they happen. The same goes for American societies that they are connected to and watching. Each performance wants to create, and then share widely, something that no one has ever seen before. I here quote at length an interview with Bob Anthony, General of Tiwaniokay, because it significantly comments upon the importance of newness and individuality in the creative process, and how digital technology is shaping and informing this ability to make, and prove, something new:

> All the animals that are in the bush, every one that you design that somebody has never used before, they are unique, seeing them for the first time, that's how you characterize the presentation. Just like last year, all the Hunting groups in America did different, different presentation. I came out with two things that had never been showcased in America, I came out with a snake, yeah, I came out with a snake and the cock. So when they see them, everybody was like 'Wow! Tiwani has done it again! Tiwani get with something different I would never have seen!' so that's how we create things. So just like, I sent you a photo of the fox, already, we already get it together [in Freetown]. Nobody has ever done that presentation in America. It's going to be the very first time for them to see a fox so we are gonna be the first to present it out here. And I'm thinking of sending a picture of a gecko. You know that gecko, the one in the commercial? I'm trying to send the picture so that Taylor and Dayo [Freetown *kotus*] can put it together. First time. Yes, for the first time for them in America to see a gecko in a Hunting performance. So I'm trying to send some money for them to get it done (Interview, April 30, 2018).

As evident here, the borders between Africa and the world are blurred, as is the flow of artistic and stylistic influence. Digital technologies are thus fundamentally altering how societies and communities connect with one another, share performances—which are inextricably bound up with aesthetics—and then alter them to impress upon their local, regional, and global communities.

Selective Cosmopolitanisms and Diasporic Connections

Ordehlay masquerades were originally used in the extreme political, economic, and cultural landscape of the city as a source of community-based sociocultural and financial support, and more recently as a source of neighborhood and national pride. However, they have migrated beyond the boundaries of their founding and into new arenas upline. By tracing the movements of Ordehlay masquerade devils by Freetown-based artist Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah—who can himself be said to be a 'cosmopolitan'—amongst others, and the aesthetic, philosophical, and cultural shifts that occurred, this chapter has argued that masquerades move not just in the literal performative context, but as part of larger urbanization processes outside of and in consultation with the capital, thereby challenging conventional, historical, and dichotomous notions of "urban" and "rural." It further postulated that manufactured notions of the cosmopolitan are created as an arm of the urbanization process that depends on historical processes locally as much as in the capital city—in a sense the original diaspora of Freetown has beget more and more diasporas in Sierra Leone and beyond—with each manufacturing a particular

idea of ‘cosmopolitan’ and/or ‘rural’ to create their own sense of locally-defined cosmopolitanism.

Indeed, as de Jong and Appadurai have demonstrated, globalization—the elder cousin of cosmopolitanism—and locality are a janus face, where the local is an instance of the global and long distance nationalisms, which can be said to be at least in part a creation of cosmopolitans, are sustained by transmigrations and diasporic connections made less and less distant through modern technology (2007; 1996). This technological handmaiden of globalization allows Ordehlay associations, their members, and their public performances to demonstrate a selective cosmopolitanism of sorts. One does not even need to leave the space of the town or the diaspora, but can look to Freetown for inspiration, via social media and networks—both physical and digital—of *kotus* and society members. Conversely, Freetown societies can look to communities upline to create their own manufactured performance of a Freetown cosmopolitan identity. Each of the societies, whether Freetown, upline, or abroad, are maintaining an interest in cultural diversity in order to carve out their own niche, while maintaining and facilitating connections outside of the localities. As Hannerz says “there can be no cosmopolitans without locals” (1990, 250). Similarly, there can be no urban without the rural, no diaspora without an origin, and no contemporary without the historical. Yet none of these concepts are static or mutually exclusive, and each codetermines the other. By its transnational, multigenerational, multiethnic, gender-neutral membership, its mobility beyond cultural and national boundaries, and

its interest in the cultures, religions, and aesthetics of the world, Ordehlay is by its very nature not only urban, but rural, cosmopolitan, and diasporic all at once.

Chapter Four Figures

Figure 26. Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah (back right) and the *agba* of the Masabone Ordehlay Association with the *Head of Medusa* Fofonah created for them. This mask was reportedly sold to Makeni in 2017, but popped up in the Gambia as of June, 2018. Lunsar, Sierra Leone, January 13, 2017.

Figure 27. ***Kodu*** **devil by Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah, made for Masabone Ordehlay Association of Lunsar, 2011, and subsequently sold to a Makeni Ordehlay society. I also viewed a printed version of this photograph in Makeni on January 14, 2017, where I also took a snap of it with my own cell phone. Photo courtesy of the artist and sent via Whatsapp.**

Figures 28 and 29. *Kekere* (younger boys) devil (above) with leone notes strung across the antlers, and leones and American dollars across the antlers of an Ordehlay devil. December 26, 2017, Freetown.

Figure 30. Reveler placing a small-denomination leone bill under the left foot of the masked devil. Freetown, December 26, 2017.

Figure 31. Smaller *Bear* devil by Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah, kneeling with members by the graveyard where Desmond Paul is buried (left, not visible). The devil processed from a nearby neighborhood into Cline Town, where the larger devil came out from the Gladiators Power Ordehlay Association house, December 26, 2017.

Figure 32. ***Zebra*** **devil by Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah featuring the likenesses of Desmond Paul and made for the Gladiators Power Ordehlay Association. Freetown, December 30, 2016.**

Figure 33. ***Zebra*** **devil by Sheku "Goldenfinger" Fofonah coming out for the Bolobine Ordehlay Society. Port Loko, December 25, 2017.**

Figure 34. Pepel Education Social Club's Ordehlay devil. Pepel, December 25, 2017.

Figure 35. What's left of Pepel Education Social Club's older Ordehlay devil viewed in the society's storage room. Pepel, December 20, 2017.

Figure 36. A drawing of the planned *Bai Bureh* devil superstructure being shows to me by the *kotu* of Tetina. Tetina Cultural (Ordehlay) Society House (Texas Community Development Organization), Freetown, December 20, 2017.

Figure 37. Members of Tetina Cultural (Ordehlay) Society with their *Bai Bureh* devil, and *Agba* Manso Sesay with his hands placed inside the mouth of the crocodile. This mimics a gesture seen while the devil is processing, where the *bila* gun is placed to the animal's head, mouth, or snout, in order to pacify and control it. Tetina Ordehlay Society House (Texas Community Development Organization), Freetown, December 26, 2017.

(next page) Figure 38. Tetina Cultural (Ordehlay) Society with their *Woman Tote Man* devil. Mountain Cut, Freetown, December 26, 2016

Figure 39. Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society and their hybrid *Head of Medusa-Mami Wata* devil just after coming out of their Society house. Note the hat with the words "JAPAN" on the head of one of the members; these were given out for this year's celebration as part of their *ashobie* uniform. I also received one as a gift. Susan's Bay, Freetown, December 26, 2016.

Figure 40: ***Odelay Fashion Devil (Bundu Musu)*** **by Siaka Sesay (b. 1956), Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society, Susan's Bay (Freetown), early 1980s (noted as Post-1991, Weltmuseum Wien, 172.969_ab. Photo courtesy of the Weltmuseum.**

Figure 41: ***Odelay Fashion Devil (Koyaneh)*** **by Siaka Sesay (b. 1956), Japan Tokyo Ordehlay Society, Susan's Bay (Freetown), early 1980s (noted as Post-1991), Weltmuseum Wien, 172.990_ab.**

Figure 42. ***Cutting Grass*** **devil by Abdoulaye "Taylor" Kamaru of Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society. Freetown, December 26, 2017.**

Figure 43. ***Pangolin*** **devil by Abdoulaye "Taylor" Kamaru, Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society, sold to an Ordehlay society in the Netherlands. Freetown, December 27, 2016.**

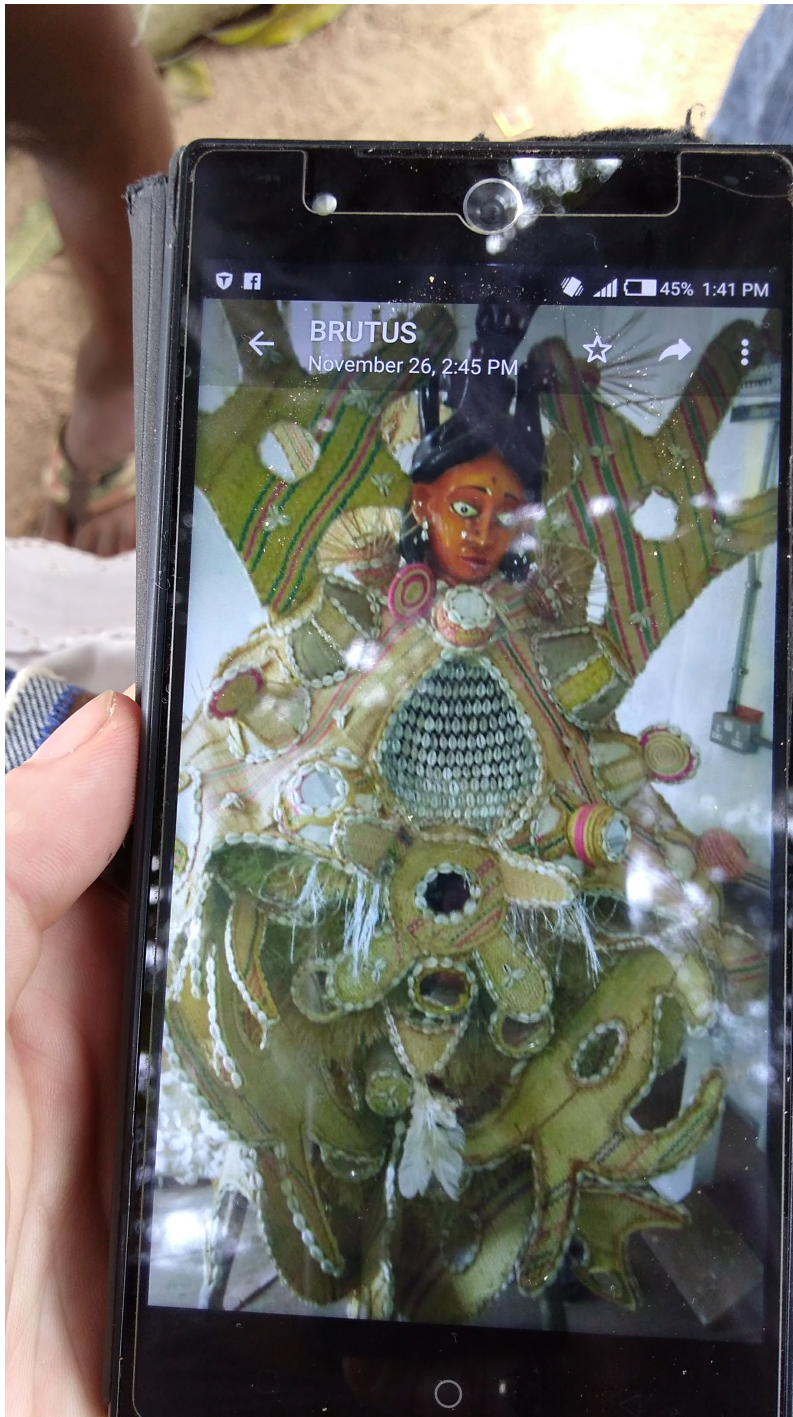

Figure 44. A November 26, 2017 snap of the devil purchased by Pepel Education Social Club sent by the *kotu* in Freetown and viewed by the author on a member's phone. Pepel, December 25, 2017.

Chapter Five

Ordehlay Beyond Sierra Leone: From One Diasporic Locality to Another

"Africa is a historical construct rather than a definitive." –Olu Oguibe (2004, 5)

The Transformative Potential of Social Media Platforms on the Arts

Early in May 2018, I had a conversation on WhatsApp with General Bob Anthony, the Head of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society in the District of Columbia (DC), Maryland, Virginia area, also called "DMV." The transcript is as follows:

May 1, 2018

> BA: osay iyaamie Amanda please don't make your reservation yet until the final arrangement for the 11th May play is confirmed. Up until now they've not yet meet with our demands. Sorry for the inconvenience for now, sero
>
> AM: Oh no! I have already made my reservations. What isn't happening on their end?
> Osay general what needs to happen? Sero.
> Do you mind telling me what you were asking for, for my research? What does the Society charge for a performance? And what is the purpose, even if it doesn't happen?
>
> BA: they normally pay $300 dollars and one big bottle red rum and two Kola nut for libations and they want us to perform for free in their wedding
>
> AM: That's really not asking a lot for a wedding performance! I hope it works out and please keep me posted.
>
> BA: I will
>
> AM: It also shows respect to the society and the performance

May 2, 2018

> AM: Any news? Should I cancel?

BA: yeah because they playing games with me

In another WhatsApp conversation, I was able to send my own pictures to Anthony to use as a platform for structuring further questions and answers. I had previously visited their undisclosed storage unit where they keep all of the society's devils. Members refer to it as the "White House" to confuse anyone that might overhear conversations about the space or the activities that go on there and so that they may speak of it openly in public.

March 6, 2018

> AM: Hi, how are you? I am going to send you some photos from this weekend. Is it still possible to look at them and tell me information on them? We could also look at them together on the phone and I could take notes.

March 7, 2018

> BA: Good morning saw your message this morning as I woke up, will be nice to get it done on WhatsApp and will be of great assistance.
>
> AM: Oh ok. I can do that. [sends over 8 photos of devils from the White House] (Figure 45)
>
> AM: Crocodile Head going to Freetown (do you know how it will be used in Freetown? By whom?) (Figure 46)
>
> BA: [sends over a recorded message, as follows]: Hey Amanda! Wow, you got some nice, nice, nice pictures. They are very, very pretty and beautiful. You did a good job! Yes, the alligator, everything that I am sending to Africa is going directly to the parent body. I'm not sending it for any Ordehlay unit. It's going directly to the parent body and if they wanna lend it to any Ordehlay, they make that decision. So, once again you did a good job.
>
> AM: Thank you! Can you give me the name, year, and olukotu of each devil please? The snake especially is important, and any information is helpful. I have to find the video you sent me of it…
>
> BA: The snake is 2 yrs old and olukotu Adedayo Cole [Freetown] put it

together. (Figure 47)

AM: Is it Ordehlay?

BA: Not yet.
We used it 2016 to honor everyone that passed away during the Ebola outbreak and that's the video on YouTube.

March 18, 2018

BA: [sends the YouTube video of length 2:15, which shows Anthony talking about why they are coming out that day and shows the singing before the performance of the *Snake* devil.]

April 22, 2018

BA: [sends picture of a *Fox* devil in Freetown, then two links to YouTube videos] (Figure 48)

April 24, 2018

BA: [sends embedded 38 second video of devil performance]

BA: this was at New York.

AM: Excellent, thanks!

April 25, 2018

BA: hey Amanda feel free to ask me and its my responsibility to help you most of these members are equally as new as you.

April 30, 2018

AM: Did you get the email? Also did you see that no devils were allowed to come out for Independence Day?
Exception in the president's hometown.

BA: yeah it will be better if you send them on WhatsApp, they suspended all odehlay till further notice.

AM: Wow. How do people feel about that? [Bob follows up with a phone call regarding this the following day]

As these excerpts attest, WhatsApp, YouTube, and other social media applications are essential forms of communication for society members and *kotus* both on and off the continent. Members in the diaspora and in Freetown are able to send images, voice messages, embedded videos, and links to videos and news—which often relate to political developments and performances in Sierra Leone—just as easily and expediently as Bob Anthony and I. An in-person interview with Bob Anthony corroborates: "Most of the time we communicate with it because WhatsApp is easy for us to communicate now so we take advantage of it. That's how we communicate with each other: WhatsApp."[122] This was in response to my question concerning the whereabouts of the *Pangolin* devil made by *Kotus* Taylor and Dayo of Oju Feray in Freetown (see Figure 43). During my first visit to Freetown I was told that the *Pangolin* was going to be sold to Bob Anthony in Maryland and given his contact information. However as I found out on the following trip, it was afterwards diverted to the Netherlands and I had wanted to know why. Anthony's response was rather telling not only in regards to new communications strategies via social media, but also on how interpersonal relationships and communications surrounding arts and performances actually work:

> OK, we didn't call for it because the Netherlands were having their own festival so they were desperate for something, so ok let it go over there. Yeah, yeah, we know them, and yes you can talk to them! Whenever they are having their festival, they invite us to go. We will go there. We go to Netherlands, we go to Germany, England when they have the events. Yes, I will be able to put you into contact with them. We all know each other.

Another telling nugget of the WhatsApp excerpts lies in Anthony's statement that a mask is 'not yet Ordehlay.' (March 7, 2018). This illuminates the ability of

[122] Interview, Bob Anthony, "White House," Maryland, March 2, 2018.

masquerade arts to not only be mobilized by their members and creators, but that their meanings and society uses mutate to adapt to the context in which they are mobilized. What was once Ordehlay may become Hunting, and what was once Hunting and used in bereavement may alternatively become Ordehlay.[123] The *Alligator* mask (Figure 46) referred to in that conversation was purchased in Florida, then painted black and white and displayed with a toy dinosaur in its mouth at the burial of a member. Images of it were sent to Oju Feray and Tiwaniokay in Freetown who are now also interested in using it. Regardless, whoever performs it will be painting it a different color because its use, and possibly the society, will change.[124] The option for such sharing and movement is thus expedited by the medium of WhatsApp, since this is the primary way that members and shared society units track what each society owns and has performed.

Drawing a plethora of multimedia formats together into one seamless and free application, WhatsApp is currently the most preferred tool for communication amongst Africans and African communities abroad, and absolutely the preferred method for discussions with Bob Anthony and between all Ordehlay and Hunting society members no matter where they reside (Pindayi 2017; Saner 2016; Kaiser-Grolimund and Staudacher 2016). When offered the option, Anthony even chose to receive all images and interview questions through the platform. Using WhatsApp to track masquerade components and performances, it charts what is available for

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[123] Incidentally, as far as I know, the dancing of an Ordehlay devil in a Hunting event is specifically a diaspora occurrence. Future research will uncover whether this happens within the Sierra Leone context, and whether Hunting and Ordehlay exchange or perform each other's masks in Freetown.
[124] Interview, Bob Anthony, "White House," Maryland, March 2, 2018.

purchase or rental and records parades and performances for experiential remembering time and again. The recent election was additionally a topic of conversation, as it was above, and carried on around the world through such platforms. Social media is inherent to and thus dramatically shaping and reshaping performances and masquerade aesthetics in the diaspora as it significantly shapes the way the world communicates. Relying on a like-minded community in a specific locale and their relationship to a home base it thus continues to blur geospatial distinctions and definitions of "diaspora" and "home" (Butler, 2001). Because home and diaspora communities reside all over the globe communicating at fast and constant paces, they create shifting senses of all of these places. Accordingly, as people are finding it easier to create and maintain relationships across time and space through the agency of WhatsApp, they manufacture social and economic capital that benefits not only them, but communities in Africa and elsewhere in the diaspora. In a sense, it's the next stage in an evolution of invented communities akin to the original invention of Ordehlay masquerade societies, their upline components, and now their American branches and is fundamentally changing the structure, creation, and movement of its associated artforms.

Home and Diaspora Through the Apps

I previously explored several masks that traveled from Freetown to new performative contexts upline. These masks have also traveled from Freetown to performance arenas in the diaspora. This significant development will be examined below as part of developing research that will extend beyond this dissertation study as

I expand to include Ordehlay performances in the Netherlands, Texas, the United Kingdom, Australia, and the Gambia. However, for the purposes of this study I will primarily trace the movement of several masquerade costumes from Freetown *kotus* to new kinetic reenactments in the primary case study of the District of Colubmia (DC), Maryland, and Virginia area. Moving along the same pathway that bodies travel, masquerade costumes are brought from Freetown as checked baggage aboard international flights and international freight, where they are exchanged for skins and animal heads in the United States, as well as Guinea and the Gambia, for consumption in a markedly different society context than originally intended and because expectations there are naturally different. Each subsequent year, or trip, the process starts anew. As in previous examples, an interest in the foreign holdings is sustained through WhatsApp and exists precisely because of the internet and social media apps like it. Through these applications, members are constantly aware of what is owned by which societies worldwide in a constant conversation between "home" and "diaspora." This includes not just snaps of masquerade components, but also shared coming-out ceremonies, processions, parades, and other activities.

Though I cannot explore it at length, I must here briefly explore the notions of "diaspora" and "home," which in this case means Africa, in terms of social media and its potential to further collapse and reshape borders. Though it has received a remarkable upsurge of popular use and a noted critical expansion in diaspora scholarship, scholars seem even less clear about where diaspora lies and how to define it as, or whether it even is, a distinctive category (Butler 2001). For example,

how does one speak about an African diaspora for someone that was born to parents of African descent in Jamaica that then moves to London? Are they African diaspora, or of the Caribbean diaspora, or both? Might these so-called African and Jamaican diasporas exist in multiple locations and have parents and family members from elsewhere in the world? What about their newly adopted home and the identities that come along with it? If one can figure out just how a particular diaspora community is formed and defined, how then do these diasporic communities relate to one other? This is especially pertinent in that "African" diasporic communities here appear to be lumped together as being one country rather than from a pluralistic continent composed of shifting borders and possibilities. Do identities accumulate, and does being tagged as a particular diasporic identity then ascribe a sort of subaltern identity, or does it unify and empower? How is social media used as an agent in this project, one way or another, consciously or unconsciously?

What is indicated here is that large overarching and unflinching categories calcify into respective singular narratives that exist in opposition to one another and in their safety overlook the messiness and solvency of identification. Both terms fix identities, even though few if any of us carry lone or indivisible characteristics or cultural backgrounds. Migrations and relocations further complicate distinctions of just which "diaspora" one comes from. Diaspora communities in the United States are swiftly and eagerly connected to diaspora communities all over the world. Just as Freetown was noted as a diaspora on the continent, disrupting its adherence as one

anywhere outside of the "home" continent of Africa, so too do Ordehlay and Sierra Leonean communities abroad and in Freetown today trouble and disturb the peace.

In this chapter I will thus expand upon the ability of WhatsApp as a groundbreaking social communications tool elsewhere used for political, development, and activist concerns, to examine its further unexpected facility to foster and shape global Sierra Leonean arts. Just as it was expedient to understanding the differences of city and upline Ordehlay masquerade societies and how they are re-tooled and adapted to fit their new locality, so too is it fundamental to the existence, continuation, and life of global masquerade arts. Over the next several years as I trace masquerades, artists, and members across borders as they move through and specifically because of digital communications technology, I hope to greatly expand on this developing and ideally groundbreaking research.

As such, I will focus on my first case study which is centered on the Tiwaniokay Hunting Society of the DC metro area—called "DMV" for "DC," "Maryland," and "Virginia." By examining WhatsApp conversations, one of Tiwani's monthly meetings, and one of the masquerade costumes they imported from Freetown I argue that an international branch of the society is still primarily formed by migrants as a coping mechanism in a new urban reality. As outlyers in an entirely new continent with potentially fewer connections or opportunities than might exist in Freetown, new communities are formed in the challenging socioeconomic landscape of a diasporic city in order to make do, and because it worked. Further, bonds between diaspora and home are strengthened on both ends as membership diversifies

and ever-expanding networks are better able to care for one another, and for themselves. However, there are noteworthy differences in how an Ordehlay masquerade is conceived of in Freetown, and then in America. How and why is this significant? How are seemingly calcified borders dissolved into a shared cultural phenomenon? In its ability to collapse time and space and disintegrate geographic and technological borders, WhatsApp and other social media applications have the potential within the realm of arts and artistic production to not only challenge these dichotomous constructs, but to lay the foundations for the subsequent analysis of the masquerades that connect these ostensibly divergent communities.

WhatsApp Uses and Scholarship

Recent scholarship has developed around questions of social media usage and its political, activist, economic, educational, and development potential in Africa. The new but dramatically popular application WhatsApp is not usually the complete focus of the literature and is often looped into larger questions about social media and networks. These discussions are commonly broken up into the benefits or detriments and highlight one or the other. Of particular note for my own purposes in regards to Ordehlay and masquerade concerns the banning or curtailing of WhatsApp by various African governments. For example, the Ugandan government blocked it and other forms of social media during the disputed 2016 presidential elections, as did the Ethiopian government in its 2017 and previous responses to anti-government protests, some that resulted in deaths and injuries across the country (*BBC News*, February 18,

2016; *Quartz Africa*, December 15, 2017; Pindayi 2017, 42).[125] This reactionary banning is strikingly similar to how Ordehlay was originally received, and how it is still fraught with contention in Freetown regarding the parading of politically-motivated masquerades. It also highlights irregularities in, and uneven access to, social media networks in Africa, which is not necessarily the case in the diaspora.

As I mentioned briefly in the WhatsApp conversation with Bob Anthony, the newly elected President of Sierra Leone Julius Maada Bio recently curtailed all Ordehlay devils from coming out on Independence Day, save those in his own hometown. I was alerted to this originally by my friend and research assistant Alpha Kanu who is still residing in Sierra Leone and who messaged me on WhatsApp with versions of news articles relating to this with a perceived level of distaste. A transcript and a photo of Maada Bio with his devil performance can be seen in Figure 49.[126] Once again the government responds conservatively to tension surrounding devils, but there is also a parallel between the intentional communities that are created through WhatsApp and those that have been created to support local, diaspora, and global masquerade society communities. It is also apparent that WhatsApp allows the opportunity to expediently share news, however credible the source, as well as pontificate on the meanings and future results of shared information and exponentially increasing global dialogue and debates surrounding current events.

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[125] Cutting the internet is not an uncommon practice for African and Middle Eastern governments expecting protests, and was particularly common during the Arab Spring.

[126] Personal communication, Alpha Kanu, April 27, 2018.

As another example of debates on WhatsApp usage, a 2016 study chose to counter the largely negative views of Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp's potential as it continues to be adopted by increasingly diverse populations in Abuja, Nigeria and beyond (Kemi 2016). Some governments are choosing to limit or ban their uses and there are several concerns about privacy and false information, but the study argues for the positive social encounters and increased opportunity for open dialogue and media exchange that they offer, particularly for educational purposes (Kemi 2016; Markwei and Appiah 2016, 2; Pindayi 2017, 38). It then advocates for government involvement to avoid fraudulent activity, higher awareness and use training in educational institutions, and also notes its ability to "promote unity and love among individuals most especially citizens of the country" (Kemi 2016, 15).

Brian Pindayi similarly focuses on person-centered messaging and its ability to create and strengthen relationships and offers the most comprehensive review of the uses of WhatsApp and its effects across various theoretical and practical landscapes (2017). I will look in more detail at his WhatsApp research below. Other studies look at the promotional potential of WhatsApp and its application of not only company-to-consumer contact but contact between consumers, as well as its facility to alert potential buyers resulting in greater sales, whether business—in a more official context—or personal—as in a garage sale (Mangold and Faulds 2009; Pindayi 2017, 40). Still others focus on its use by NGOs and development organizations seeking to disseminate information to fight Ebola outbreaks as in the partnership of BBC with WhatsApp, or educate on sexual health and thereby promote condom usage

as seen in other studies (*BBC News*, October 16, 2014; Markwei and Appiah 2016; Pindayi 2017, 40; Nelson, Ojebuyi, and Salawu 2016).

Another study conducted on Ghanaian youth focuses on the high enthusiasm amongst global youth in adopting social media, but also argues the need for greater awareness of its risks amongst youth in educationally disadvantaged communities through policy and didactic interventions at the public institutional level, namely primarily schools and libraries (Markwei and Appiah 2016). However, its mention of Facebook users in Ghana as being only 6.6% of the population in 2014 gave me pause for consideration while researching this chapter (Markwei and Appiah 2016, 1). Due to highly accessible data plans—meaning that users in the United States never turn off their data and constantly have WiFi—I suspect that Facebook and WhatsApp usage is more frequent in the United States and perhaps higher in user number. This means that WhatsApp and Facebook as a communication forum in the diaspora ties it in much closer to its locality and has particularly affected the masquerade mobility and aesthetics outside of Freetown. Bob Anthony elaborated on such an occasion in regards to the movement of the aforementioned *Alligator* head that was previously used in a funeral context in America but on its way to Freetown for use in a different context. In this case, as in others, when he wants to speak with members in Freetown about a masquerade performance or costume, he calls and asks them to turn on their data. He then sends the photos along and they promptly shut the data off again:

> AM: If this crocodile is going over, is it also going to be used in a funeral context?
>
> BA: No, they're going to change it. They're going to spray it differently.

AM: How do they know that you have it? Did you send them pictures?

BA: Yeah, they know everything I have here…we talk on WhatsApp. What I will do is, because you know for them, they won't normally be online all the time. So what we normally do is, I will call them and tell them 'ok, put your data on and I will call on WhatsApp.' So that's how we normally communicate.

AM: Yes, that's how they often communicate when I'm there too!

BA: Yes [laughs] it's very different from us!

It works in the reverse direction as well, though members in Freetown may call or text to alert Bob that they would like to speak with him, pushing the cost to more affluent members.[127] I would then surmise as I will below that Ordehlay and Hunting has adapted to the new diasporic locale through higher incidences of WhatsApp and social media usage. Data is constant, whereas it is not in Freetown. And yet, while it is more adaptable and constitutive of the diasporic experience and performance of masquerades, it is still essential to uniting the dispersed Hunting and Ordehlay societies. WhatsApp is still the adhesive that holds these seemingly disparate communities together.

While there is scholarship developing in sciences, technology, and development, very little if any scholarship has been written on the cathartic effects that social media has on social lives or its transformative potential on interpersonal relationships, except for in regards to consumer exchanges (Ngai, Tao, and Moon 2015; Pindayi 2017). Still less has examined its effect on the arts and the impact

[127] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, March 2, 2018; Phone interview, Bob Anthony, April 30, 2018.

WhatsApp and other messaging platforms have on communications in and around artistic production, or how it exaggerates and accelerates the mobility of arts and to a certain extent artists. Only one recent article by Brian Pindayi (2017) looks at the interpersonal relationships that have developed through and around WhatsApp use in Africa. First he differentiates between the polarized positions taken on social media: the optimistic view which focuses on the opportunities and networks that empower people resulting in economic, political, social, and cultural advancement; and second the critical view which contends that ideas and actions generated from social media are but minor occurrences. Here he highlights the technological and literacy limitations associated with less affluent and rural African communities unable to purchase or operate smartphones and the inability of social media to create meaningful and critical dialogue. Despite these polarities, he contends that WhatsApp allows users to maintain and nurture relationships despite distances of time and space by cheapening the cost and accessibility of sending messages, allowing them to "engage in sociability by interacting in a digital space" and thereby granting the ability to generate more social capital (2017, 37-38).

He goes on to discuss the opportunity WhatsApp offers of creating group forums, such as those used by Tiwaniokay for both general membership and officers. "By virtue of enabling people to create group forums which members are determined by the group administrator, WhatsApp has allowed people to create their own pseudo-communities wherein people can share information and receive information in an exclusive manner" (Pindayi 2017, 38). This is precisely how Tiwaniokay manages

and protects their society's guarded information and allows tiered access, while maintaining an open forum for advertising events, meetings, performances, deaths, births, weddings, and other life occurrences, as well as solicits dues and donations for the society. I would here add that like the manufactured kinship bonds of Ordehlay in Freetown and beyond, this is the next stage of an invented community in the digital era that not only creates new models, but feeds from the old—an argument similar to that made by Till Förster.

His related chapter in *Portraiture and Photography in Africa* also pushes scholarship in such a direction (2013). In it Förster convincingly shows that cell phones and internet videos have gone far beyond their original use and the images that spectators, clients, and artists have in mind are affected by the images they see and circulate through these very platforms. While cell phones and the internet have overtaken older forms of communication, they have not merely supplanted them, but have added to the existing models in a multidirectional, multimedia manner. As Förster puts it "intermediality hence affects how we see and make use of media in both ways, from new to old and vice versa" (2013, 421). Further, rather than becoming mere tools of their users, cell phone and internet videos and images may actually create a script to model, or in the case of Ordehlay deviate from, as they are consistently and continuously shared and commented upon. In its persistent reproduction, such a model becomes archetypal and its features condensed to essential and easily recognizable forms. In the case of the famous warlord Zakaria Koné or rebel soldier Thomas Sankara as written about by Förster, their pictures

become an "iconic portrait" where features of the persona, such as a simple cap or a red beret, come to encompass the person (2013, 432). Such a prototype is dependent on the materiality of the technology, but it also becomes embedded in the larger imaginary and informs the imagination of the actors using the images. Expanding upon this argument in the case of Ordehlay devils as they move from their original zone of use to new performance sectors, the script isn't just the iconic portrait or model to carefully reproduce, it is part and parcel of perpetuating a community that wants to honor yet significantly deviate from the model.

Just as cell phone, internet, and social media technologies have pushed the boundaries of usage and relationships as argued by Förster and Pindayi, so too are they affecting, effecting, and being affected by masquerade arts—particularly in the relationships between communities in Freetown and the diaspora and in turn how they are structuring and shaping themselves and their performances. Not only are members and *kotus* using the intermediality of cell phones, the internet, and now WhatsApp to record and share a global archive of their arts, they are creating their own scripts and therefore a model of performance aesthetics to follow or depart from—one that exists far beyond its original intent, just like cell phones and social media. Humans have adapted and shaped tools that then shape us. WhatsApp has also dramatically shaped the planning and structure of society meetings in America, as will be detailed next.

The Anatomy of an American Hunting Society

After a confusing twenty minutes of staring from the ground level into the second floor apartment of gathering Sierra Leoneans, General Bob Anthony finds me

and leads me around to the back of the building, chuckling. As I explained to him, I could see the women making food for the meeting, and the knowledge that it was where I was supposed to be helped the matter not at all. The passageway to the stairs I found was a crumbling, rusted mass shrouded in darkness—and loudly crashing through stairs with accompanying injuries was certainly not the kind of entrance I wanted to make at my first Tiwaniokay Hunting Society meeting, held on April 22, 2018 at the apartment of *Iyaamie*, the title of female members, June Haynes in Bladensburg, Maryland. After being escorted around the perimeter of a large apartment complex and up a truncated set of back stairs, I finally arrived. I hesitated, glancing about a mostly empty apartment with plastic chairs lining the living room, where a teenage girl seated on the floor scooped Jollof rice from an enormous pot into plastic containers and a hotel pan.[128] A young boy oscillated between available laps, including my own, watching a television leaned against the wall that was playing an animated film. I thought that in America a meeting scheduled for 7.30 pm, even by a society of Sierra Leone expats, would start on time. Oh how I was wrong. Like the WhatsApp forum that the members, including myself, are all part of, meetings are much more about socializing and catching up than they are about accomplishing society tasks or addressing business. This certainly happens but is sandwiched between hours of socializing, eating, unofficial discussions, and getting to know one another—essentially strengthening bonds.

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[128] As it turns out, June had only recently moved in, explaining its lack of furniture, or decoration. Meetings move from home to home each month, and this month it was held where the relative emptiness of June's new apartment actually made the meeting run more smoothly.

When the meeting finally commenced around 10 pm, at least some of us were already one or two drinks in, if not more. I had already officially or unofficially met everyone as people circulated about the room, chitchatting and catching up. During this time I learned to shake hands with the left—always lead with the left, as the Ordehlay devils do in performance and members do when offering money—and why. As I was told, the heart is on the left side and so "it's like I'm welcoming you to my heart."[129] Several women concurred: "It's the society way."[130] Indicating that you are a society person in the know, it's often followed up with a light pat over the heart with the left hand; a warm and welcoming gesture that makes one feel right at home. New *ashobies* were passed out to be worn at upcoming society events and *Iyaamie* Marvella Nicole passed around a piece of paper to capture attendance. As Financial Secretary, she slowly proceeded to check in with every attending member to inform them of the status of their dues, collecting money and lightly chastising any lateness.

The meeting itself was officiated by *Omo Ajadeh* (the title for the Deputy Chairman) Jalil Macauley who began by requesting a prayer. As observed in Ordehlay societies, General Bob Anthony, who is the general Head of the society especially for parades and processions, is essentially the equivalent of the Ordehlay *agba*, with the *Omo Ajadeh* presiding over meetings the same way a Chairman does in Ordehlay meetings. We all held hands and Assistant *Iyaamie* Juliette led the prayer. Afterwards, *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil welcomed everyone and noted to me that the

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[129] Tiwaniokay Hunting Society Meeting, General Bob Anthony and *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil Macauley, Bladensburg, Maryland, April 22, 2018.
[130] Tiwaniokay Hunting Society Meeting, *Iyaamie* Marvella Nicole, *Iyaamie* Clefforda Sesay and *Iyaamie* Juliette Grant, Bladensburg, Maryland, April 22, 2018.

meeting would be largely conducted in Krio. I was welcome to interject at any time if I had questions. The meeting then continued with *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil recognizing the loss of *Iyaamie* Augusta's ex-husband and father of her child. Handing her a small envelope of cash, he explained that this small token was meant to show the collective support, sympathy, and condolences and to make her feel better as an essential part of our group.

Next *Iyaamie* Marvella read off all attending member names and announced the dues they paid that day so all was clear, agreed upon, and accounted for. She asked members to "step up" their contributions, which was underscored by *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil in a lively yet authoritative manner. *Awo*, or money, and financial contributions he pronounced, were the most important aspect of the society. "It allows us to help each other as a family and to continue on as a society."[131] He returned to this important point several times throughout the meeting, particularly as it came up about the costs of the costuming for September's annual event, which would include a formal jacket with a "Chinese" collar (a high-necked buttoned collar, also called a "Mandarin" collar).

New members were introduced next, each speaking on his own behalf. Existing members interjected to voice support and ensure good moral character and worthiness of joining. As they had done throughout the meeting, each time a member voiced a concern, offer advice, or ask a question, they would say *osay* or *odeh osay* / *iyaamie osay* if addressing a male or female member directly, to which the body, now

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[131] Tiwaniokay Hunting Society Meeting, *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil Macauley, Bladensburg, Maryland, April 22, 2018.

quiet and paying attention responds *unka*. Then the person says *sero*! to which everyone responds *sero!*, person: *sero!*, then everyone *sero say unka*! back. This is exactly the way conversations are carried on in the WhatsApp forum, except that when the group is addressed as a whole, you begin the message with *Osay gbogbo* Tiwani, and then proceed to make your statement or announcement, ending it with *Sero*. Here WhatsApp mirrors the formality of meetings, yet also carries with it a much more loose and conversational format, as members also often send holiday memes and Happy Birthdays, etc.

At this point of new membership General Bob Anthony realized that the libations, or *tamishilie*, had not been poured and so the meeting was not yet officially opened. Pulling out red plastic cups, he filled one with water and one with Hennessy, though rum can also be used. He proclaimed that the water was used because it is clear and represents no obstacles, whereas the Hennessy represents enjoyment and happiness. Speaking over both libations, he brought the ancestors to order and requested their clear direction and support (water) and for the continued happiness of the members (Hennessy). After each, he got up from where he was kneeling, crossed the room to the entrance of the apartment, and poured them just outside.

Now that the meeting was more officially opened it continued on, returning to the topic of money, which *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil again proclaimed as "the most vital conversation and part of the meeting, especially in planning September." He went on, "We know we have huge event coming, this is the time we start planning. Yes September is far away, but we start planning now. We do in the form of a dance and

several devils this year, but we have to start planning now."[132] There was further conversation about dress for September's event and dates for other upcoming activities. This included the aforementioned failed wedding performance that later caused a bit of disgruntlement. Since this was before that happened, time was spent updating members on the date and planning the performance, which was noted as simply being like the previous one in New York. While I was unable to attend, I received a WhatsApp video of a devil dancing in the dark with people surrounding it. It was rather difficult to see, but I was able to get a sense of what they meant.

The topic of *Cutting Grass* came up as General Bob Anthony updated on its movements. *Olukotu* (the same as an Ordehlay *kotu*) Mohammed was already in Sierra Leone and would be arriving back to Maryland with the masquerade in tow. He then announced to the members that because of my agency, the Smithsonian would like to purchase it after it performed at September's event. The General and I both concurred that the main importance lay in the prolific research and recordings that will accompany the devil and the prestige it will bring to the group, though the members are also excited for the income this sale will generate for future devils and performances.

General Bob Anthony then decided with the members that this year they would again come out for the U.S.A. Paddle One Love Carnival in Baltimore on July

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[132] Tiwaniokay Hunting Society Meeting, *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil Macauley, Bladensburg, Maryland, April 22, 2018.

14, 2018, though they had not paraded since 2012 (Figure 50).[133] Though the event is primarily a Caribbean Carnival festival, it is encouraged that other African diaspora communities join, further underscoring its focus on love and unity—certainly mottos held across the board for Ordehlay and Hunting. Further conversation about what devils or *ashobies* would be used was tabled until next meeting, which was moved to the 12th of May due to its interference with Ramadan.

New members were encouraged to join the WhatsApp forum, and existing members were told in all seriousness and with much fanfare that they would receive updates, flyers, and future information through it, including on the One Love Carnival and the wedding event. *Omo Ajadeh* Jalil went so far as to say that we are all one, whether Muslim or Christian, we were together and all deserved updates and information to participate and be heard. I was invited to join the Executive forum, where a higher level of information could be gleaned and questions inappropriate for 'younger' members fielded. Overall the tone, as a mixture of fun and seriousness, proclamations of unity and open membership, emphasis on financial concerns and everyone pulling their weight and supporting one another was similar to what I had experienced in Freetown Ordehlay societies. For example, near the end of the meeting, all were given a chance to speak to the group, offering final thoughts or thanks, questions, or concerns.[134]

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133 This predates the actual founding of Tiwaniokay, so a group of Sierra Leonean friends must have gone out together before officially forming.

134 An especially memorable testament for me was given in a mixture of Krio and English by *Iyaamie* Juliette, who had joked with me about relaxing ("Uncross your legs! Have a drink!") and took me under her wing to learn the women's duties:

The meeting finally commenced at around 11.30 pm with a closing prayer after which members eagerly got up and proceeded to the kitchen to fill their plates with all the African delicacies that the women had prepared: Jollof rice, Sierra Leonean salad (which is iceburg lettuce with onions, baked beans, and Spam on top), fried chicken, plantains, and fried puffy bread akin to a donut. Exhausted from travel, I left soon after, but as I was later to learn through pictures and videos circulated on WhatsApp, most members stayed and partied until the early morning. What this meeting tells us about Hunting Society in America is that just as in the case of Ordehlay in Sierra Leone: money and community are essential. Members must support one another in their new tenuous terrain, emotionally and financially. What it further tells us is just how crucial WhatsApp is to tying the members together and disseminating information even in the diaspora. Renewing a sense of connectedness and community locally and with parent organizations, it is the binding agent that allows such connectivity—empowering, building, and maintaining relationships indispensable to the functioning of the societies.

Though there were distinct similarities between Ordehlay and Hunting, there are still differences. Naturally, I was pressed to ask this, since as a member of Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society, I was prompted to join Tiwaniokay in America, Oju

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> *Iyaamie* Amanda, tenki tenki for come. We glad we see you. You now part of dis family. We glad we see you and we wan see you again. We honor sister. We all one. I no care what color you be, what religion you be, we are one family. That's the way we wan the world for go. We wan be one. When they see you, people will see you. Say: ah! Tiwani gettin white woman. So we glad to see you! We been waiting long time to see you. Long time. Tenki Tenki for come. (Tiwaniokay Hunting Society Meeting, Bladensburg, Maryland, April 22, 2018)

Feray's parent unit in Freetown and Maryland. This raised questions about just how intertwined they were, and how they were differentiated, whether it was in performance, officers, membership, devils, etc. But before I elaborate on its differences, primarily on performance in the next section, how did the organization begin and how exactly is it tied to societies in Freetown?

Tiwaniokay Hunting Society of the DMV area was founded by Bob Anthony in 2015, some nineteen years after he arrived in the country from Sierra Leone. The gap, he said, was due to immigration issues, since some of the founding members didn't have the proper documentation and had to "become strategical in doing things like that, that way immigration won't come after you like that."[135] Like many of the diaspora organizations across the country, it is relatively new so I suspect it is more than that and regards finances and ease of communication and shipping.[136] The oldest known in the United States is the West African Masquerade Society (W.A.M.S.), which was founded in 2004. Normally when a new organization is begun, either the older or Freetown branches visit to provide assistance and knowledge, or the new branch sends a representative to learn. At such a distance, this may not have been possible without cheap communication and the brisk exchange of media. This strengthens the argument that it is precisely because of the internet and social media that they even exist, because the support and the training in masquerade creation, performance, organizational structure is provided by older and parent organizations.

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[135] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, USA, April 30, 2018.

[136] Bob Anthony confirmed that Hunting and related masquerading societies are relatively new in the United States: "BA: 2015. AM: Ok so it's relatively new? BA: Yes, in the US." Interview, Maryland, USA, April 30, 2018.

What is extremely interesting about the founding of the original Tiwaniokay Hunting Society is that, according to Bob Anthony, the culture itself "started from the Ordehlay society, then because we started incorporating people into it we made it into a secret society. In Africa, because it's Ordehlay anybody can come and parade with us, you know? But when it comes to this [Hunting] you have to belong to it before we can allow you to get too close. That's the difference."[137] This troubles the founding of Ordehlay itself as having a parent in the Yoruba Hunting organization and elucidates an ebb and flow of the societies—Ordehlay became too inclusive, and in order to reclaim it, newer Hunting societies were formed that escalated its hybridity, adding even more Ordehlay ingredients while retaining more secrecy. In America, he likened Hunting Society to a

> family reunion wherein everybody comes from different parts, we all sit down, eating and enjoy and go back. That's why we set it up. Like a family thing wherein once a year we can come get together and get fun and if there is a dispute they can get it settled and go back where they belong.[138]

Later, when asked how the communication works, why the society was begun in America and its purpose, Anthony stated:

> The purpose is for two reasons. 1. To help the Sierra Leonean community with members that are not privileged to go home to go witness the culture and the display. So by we getting it over here, it is another way we create an opportunity for them not to miss the culture. And secondly some of us who happen to get born in the United States of America are not familiar to this culture. So by we creating it here enables the parents to take their kids, whenever we have a performance, take them there to go witness to know a little bit about the culture.[139]

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[137] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, March 2, 2018.
[138] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, March 2, 2018.
[139] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, April 30, 2018.

Here it is once more apparent, as in Ordehlay societies, that the well-being and welfare of the immediate community is at stake and prioritized, and that unity is necessary to survival in a new migrant atmosphere. However, much more effort must be made to keep connected at such a distance, and linkages must therefore be created and accelerated through global technologies. Similarly this is how the aesthetics and devils migrate between performance arenas, burrowing into imaginaries abroad and home, as will be explored in the next section through the tunnels of a groundhog devil.

From Cutting Grass in Sierra Leone to Cutting Grass in America

What on earth is a "Cutting Grass?" While witnessing the building of the 2017 *Cutting Grass* mask in the Oju Feray society house with *Agba* Sanusie and the *kotu* assistants, I asked this exact question. "The name of the devil is Cutting Grass?" I asked. "Yeah! It is an animal, it eats grass. We eat them." I responded: "But what kind of animal is that? What is a 'Cutting Grass'?" To which *Agba* Sanusie replied "It's an animal that eats rice, and elephant grass. That is the only name! Cutting Grass! The teeth are sharp, like a blade. It cuts the grass."[140] He then moved on to the other elements of the masquerade, showing me the trousers, which were still under construction, and the back of the devil. The trousers were being covered in rice, peppers, and pepper seeds; foodstuffs like Cutting Grass. Why pepper seed and rice, I wanted to know. "To portray our culture, the food that we eat. It's significant information that you should know, what we go and eat." He moved on to the back of

[140] Interview, Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society, Freetown, December 22, 2016.

the mask, which featured a snake in the mouth of a crocodile (Figure 51). These, *Agba* Sanusie explained, were two animals that were always in battle, like the land and the water. The crocodile, which represents Oju Feray, always defeats the snake. He then had me guess what material they had used to create the teeth of the Cutting Grass and bush pig (Figure 52). I made several guesses, with no success until he playfully revealed the mystery: false nails! Similarly it took months and a trip to Maryland to finally figure out that a Cutting Grass is what we would call a groundhog in America, and the likeness, as in the other masquerade components, was quite identical. Both Sierra Leone and the United States are crawling with them, and both represent the local and cultural stuff necessary for a successful devil.

In the previous chapter I discussed two Ordehlay masquerade costumes made by *kotus* of the Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society in Freetown: *Cutting Grass* from the 2017 Christmas season and the *Pangolin* devil from Christmas 2016. Both were spearheaded by *kotu* Abdoulaye "Taylor" Kamaru and two of his apprentices, Bujju and Dayo (Figure 53). As I tracked their movements and discussed with members the use of WhatsApp to alter their devil's path, it became apparent that not only are members, performances, and aesthetics responsive to their new locality, they are also responsive to the needs of other members and societies. This greatly widens "diaspora" from a specific location to a much more expansive and inclusive definition. However, the devil is still morphed by local members and *kotus* with member feedback so that it reflects their own interests, needs, and tastes—just like

the urban and rural cases. I will here quote Bob Anthony at length, who spearheaded bringing *Cutting Grass* to America:

> To make people understand that this particular devil, for example, when Oju Feray come out with *Cutting Grass*. It's unique. People see *Cutting Grass* for the first time. Nobody ever used *Cutting Grass* in their presentation. Oju Feray was the first one to use it. That doesn't mean that the Hunting is not supposed to use it. It just happened that Oju Feray were the first to use it, to come out with a design like that…Within the country: 'Oh did you see this devil? This is what they present!' It amazed people to see something creative, to see something different. That's why people are using it.
>
> Yes, because they try to change the performance, because most people every time they are going with caribou, elk, moose, you know, it's one too many springbok, deer, so somebody, they sit there and think 'you now what, the other Jollays and Ordehlay coming out, they are coming out with caribou, moose, elk, stuff like that, and deer, I want to come out with something different that nobody else has ever seen.' And, they imagine how the thing gonna look like, or how the *Cutting Grass* gonna look like. Yes, it's just one out of 20 different ones. You know? If it's just 20 of the same, it will not attract you. But if you see one among the 20 that is different from the 19 you will feel so excited about it! And want to know about it. That's how they [Oju Feray] created it.[141]

While underscoring the necessity of newness and creativity within bounds, and the ability of devils to be reused as long as they've never been witnessed before, his comments raise questions about the morphology of Ordehlay and Hunting devils. When *Cutting Grass* comes to America, it will be used by a Hunting society, but in a complex of devil performances indoors. It will have been dismantled and compressed and its necessary or requested parts shipped over with *Olukotu* Mohammed. It has not ceased to be Ordehlay, but has taken on a new identity on top of the old that serves to shock and wow, while fusing existing, traditional, and Sierra Leonean culture with the new. As we've already seen in the work of Till Förster above, the new is laid over the old (2013).

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[141] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, April 30, 2018.

This still raises questions about the differences between the two, and how an Ordehlay devil is recontextualized in its new locale. As Anthony makes clear, these differences are themselves anything but clear:

> The only way I can tell you the difference is to see a picture, or you get a video of Ordehlay, I would be able to explain from top to bottom this, what the Ordehlay is made of, then I will be able to show the Hunting.

To which I responded, "*Cutting Grass* is Ordehlay?" and his response:

> No, yes is not Ordehlay. The reason, you see, the animal itself, all animals is used by Hunting and Ordehlay. You cannot completely design an Ordehlay without using an animal skin or an animal head. You cannot design an Ordehlay without using them because that is the purpose of the devil.[142]

Cutting Grass was absolutely made to come out for an Ordehlay procession at Christmas, and because it paraded in the streets, it ensures that it was public, and therefore Ordehlay. And yet, it appears to have already crossed over into Hunting territory. So, if there are differences, yet cross-over and a devil can be Ordehlay and then Hunting, or a Hunting *Alligator* head part of funeral and then Ordehlay for example, how is this made clear, or how is it translated for and understood by its audience?

The distinction, as it seems lies in the performative. As Anthony stated about the discrepancy between Ordehlay and Hunting "Yeah, we use them both, it doesn't matter." But in regards to the performance,

> It's different, because the way the Hunting perform is different from the way the Ordehlay perform because the beat is different. Yes, the drum beat for the Ordehlay and it's a street procession. Hunting doesn't process in the street. They look for a big open field, they set this up, three people sit down, they beat this drum with sticks, then the devil performs with the beat.[143]

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[142] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, April 30, 2018.
[143] Interview, Bob Anthony, Maryland, March 2, 2018.

Significantly, in September Tiwaniokay Hunting Society will be performing the *Cutting Grass* Ordehlay devil in a large indoor hall—perhaps the diaspora version of the field—with six other devils, not all necessarily Ordehlay or Hunting. Will they become so because of their performance indoors (Figure 54)?[144] Afterwards, it will live yet another life at the Smithsonian's National Museum of African Art where the cultural translation of the beloved Ordehlay and Hunting devils will continue to enlighten new audiences, challenge preconceptions and binaries, and provide status, prestige, and society finances for its creators.

The examples above pinpoint that seemingly calcified borders become much more elusive as shared cultural phenomenon emerge all over the world, feed off of one another, and reshape their own narratives accordingly. Additionally, members are shared across societies on and off the continent, and the organizational structure of devil business is such that a Hunting Society has an associated Ordehlay and a Jollay society, as well as often times an Ojeh. It appears that in America, and probably in other diaspora scenarios, they collapse together in its new environment as a shared expression of cultural unity and togetherness—not unlike the characteristic melting pot within which Ordehlay devils were invented. It frankly is easier to celebrate all of their associated cultural business in one yearly event than keep the societies performing separately as they do in Sierra Leone. Drawing them all underneath an umbrella, a 'Hunting' Society or a U.S.A. Paddle, it brings together multiple organizations across the United States that is a one-stop shop.

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[144] At this time I hope to record the drumming and compare it to the gestures, steps, and drumming that accompanied it in Freetown to record these precise anomalies.

The society's strength ultimately lies in the diversity and the global reach of its membership. Members that reside abroad are able to offer a different level of support to members still in Freetown—especially during times of financial stress for Freetown members, such as funerals.[145] News about such occurrences travels fast, as do requests for support via WhatsApp and other new technologies. As devils process through the channels of international flights and global digital media, they undergo a metamorphisis that doesn't appear to stop, but layers and overlaps as it is performed and rethought time and again.

Other Diasporic Connections and Future Research

Earlier I noted that the *Pangolin* devil (see Figure 43) did not travel from Freetown to Maryland as expected but went to perform in the Netherlands instead. While this shows how connected the greater Sierra Leonean community is through digital technologies and across geographic and national boundaries, it has also offered the potential for this project to expand and continue in perpetuity. I have not yet seen YouTube videos of the *Pangolin* devil but hope to uncover them soon to examine how it was presented and whether any aspects of it were drastically changed, removed, or added.

Other YouTube videos by Sierra Leonean communities in the Netherlands have featured street parades and performances of Jollay, *fairie*, and Ordehlay devils, and even libations being poured for what appears to be an Ordehlay devil about to

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145 Interview, Madakor Cultural Development Organization, Freetown, Dec. 22, 2016; Tiwaniokay Hunting Society WhatsApp messages regarding funeral arrangements, February 12-14, 2018.

process for Holland Paddle 2016 (Figure 55).[146] If it is coming out in the streets and libations being performed publicly, it is likely not a Hunting devil, but it may have been in a previous life. However, some comments on the video noted that this kind of information should not be made public, perhaps confusing it with the more secret Hunting society activities or simply showing the contested terrain and disorientation that comes with the lightning fast movements and adaptations of masquerades due to global digital technologies.

As demonstrated here, WhatsApp and YouTube make it easier to form diaspora branches and maintain relationships with the idealized home in Freetown, advertise and remind of performances, events, and meetings, and share and track available masquerade arts to pull off said performances and events. These generate income for the society in America and for the societies in Freetown who often create the original devils. It thus is the primary vehicle for generating social and economic capital both on and off the continent, and simultaneously disintegrates borders between Freetown and diaspora. Further, Ordehlay moves to America along manufactured lines of travel that mirror invented kinship connections in order to help construct the new diasporicic identity for disparate migrant communities, and offering it the aesthetic and organizational foundation necessary to create society offshoots. Using YouTube as an essential complement, WhatsApp brings communities closer and closer together, facilitating through yet another manufactured body that allows

[146] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTWoM3-IqLY&t=312s. Accessed May 30, 2018.

greater opportunities for self-stylizing. By having a model to push against yet converse with, it builds prestige and status, as well as cash incentive for all sides.

These lines are not straight, nor are they fixed, nor are they unidirectional. As such, future research will expand to other communities also in on the conversation, each creating and/or utilizing the same paths, structures, artists, and masquerades. One such Sierra Leonean community active in Los Angeles is directly connected to Tetina Cultural Ordehlay Society in Freetown. While perusing the Facebook page of the United Brothers and Sisters of Sierra Leone (UBSSL), I saw a live post by UBSSL member Macmillan Carter who was at the 20th anniversary dinner and dance on May 6, 2018, which also celebrated Sierra Leone's 57th Independence.[147] This post featured a masquerade performance that looked uncannily like an indoor version of Ordehlay. After several freeze frames and staring at blurry stills of a whirling devil, I recognized Tetina's *Woman Tote Man* that danced in Freetown in 2016. However, every aspect of the devil other than the carved and painted portion was different. Through Facebook Messenger I was able to speak with a UBSSL representative and confirm that it was in fact Tetina's *Woman Tote Man*. I was given a phone number to contact another member who will be able to arrange for me to see the devil and speak further about their connections with Tetina. Once again social media provides and connects, strengthening ties, expanding communities, and furthering research prospects.

[147] https://www.facebook.com/ubssl.org/. Accessed most recently on May 30, 2018.

As another example, an interview with Ibrahim Ali Kamara, Head of Paddle in Pepel alerted me to connections to London Paddle, whom also consistently post YouTube videos. However, his connection upline is indirect and members in the United Kingdom (UK) primarily work with and travel to Freetown. As he stated:

> Those in London usually come to Freetown, but they hardly come here….The ones danced in the UK are purchased in Europe. It's all about migration anyway. These guys started their own holiday in Freetown, from there they migrated to the US or the UK. After they get there they form or revive the other one. Whatever, it's up to them to select a date, anyway. This is how we are gonna do it. These ones need support. The wood carving, buy this one from us, send photos of all the carvers, the tiger, the lion, or whatever, and they say 'oh, we are interested in that.'[148]

As this dissertation has argued, it is apparent that the formation of branches abroad as in Sierra Leone is indeed all about migration, and that networking between London and Sierra Leone operates similarly to Maryland. Relying on the strengths of imaginary communities connected through social media, the transferal of masquerade images, and apparently the purchase of materials in Europe and South Africa, as he also mentioned, it opens up new avenues for research.

Other communities mentioned and whom I am currently forming contacts with therefore include Paddle in London, Los Angeles, and the Netherlands, as well as masquerade societies in Australia, the Gambia, Texas, and Ohio. Many of these avidly post videos on YouTube where I have been able to gain at the least knowledge of their existence, if not a sense of the differences and similarities of their masquerades to those already experienced and researched. For example, prolific YouTube poster Arthur Cates added a 2014-2015 Highway Jollay video to his YouTube profile that features "Jollay play" of various *Fairy* and other acrobatic

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[148] Interview, Pepel, December 20, 2017.

performances in association with Gunshot Hunting Society and Ekun Baba Odeh Hunting Society in the Gambia (Figure 56).[149] Highway Jollay is a noted Freetown-based Jollay society, so are these diaspora communities or reinventions of Jollay by Gambians?[150] *Kotu* Sheku Fofonah has certainly created Ordehlay-looking devils for communities in the Gambia, so are they connected (Figure 57)?

As another example, the West African Masquerade Awo Society (W.A.M.S.) posted a 2012 video entitled "W.A.M.S. Hunters Society In The U.S.A. 8 Years and Counting" with the video tags: "Abou Whyte, nollywood, daddy ramanu, Yoruba, salone, sierra leone, Banjul, the gambia, gambia, nigeria."[151] It appears here that performances in the diaspora often include many different kinds of devils and societies, much like one sees in State-sponsored or folklore festivals on the continent. Sierra Leoneans in the United States don't live in the same state, so opportunities for communities to come together don't happen as frequently. Tiwaniokay in Maryland includes members from DC, Maryland, Virginia, and even Oregon. Though I have not yet had the opportunity to attend their yearly celebration, which occurs in September, I've gotten the impression from interviews with Bob Anthony and other members that at least seven different kinds of devils will come out in the same large convention hall or space. While some are being created specifically for Tiwaniokay in America, others were previously danced, such as *Cutting Grass*. Tiwani is also planning a

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149 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9V34SbwoXm8. Accessed May 30, 2018.

150 One of the comments on the video reads "Araba use to play e members me when was back home any time watching hiway e make me feeing good n also make feeling bad i miss my culture back home you doing good" and indicates that it may very well be connected to Sierra Leone or another "home" community.

151 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8BFsyaRgBGw. Accessed May 30, 2018.

celebration for a different society based in Ohio which is occurring in July 2018 and which I also hope to attend. Future research has as much to discover as these vibrant societies, *kotus*, and masquerades have to offer—if only scholarship can keep up.

In this chapter I used the example of a Tiwaniokay Hunting Society meeting in Maryland and the *Cutting Grass* devil purchased from Freetown to elaborate on the membership and connections of diaspora societies to the parent Hunting and Ordehlay Society organizations. In association with these movements, as in the meetings, YouTube videos, and shared events, I delved into how members communicate from one diaspora to another, why this is significant, and in what ways these connections drive masquerade performances—whether economic, social, or communal. I also looked at examples of artforms and components sent from communities in the United States back to Freetown, where they are re-contextualized and re-invented to serve new needs and concerns, just as Freetown masquerades were in the United States. As part of this discussion, I briefly surveyed other Sierra Leonean communities that are active abroad, and that will be the subject of future research. Their existence is noted, and known, not only by members in Freetown and Maryland, but also globally through their visual and virtual presence online, specifically in social media apps like Facebook and uploaded performance videos on YouTube channels.

In summary, it is the particularities of a diaspora, the relationship of diasporan communities to those in the homeland, their imaginary of said homeland to create from or measure against, and the technological, political, economic, and cultural

capital that diasporan communities offer to Freetown that gives them their strength in Sierra Leone. Conversely, Freetown is the basis for the particularities of how to deal with the new migrant reality of the diaspora, providing the art historical, cultural, and political tools for apprehending and dealing with this reality. This arrives in the shape of Ordehlay and Hunting and amidst a kaleidoscope of cultural borrowings, provides the basis of the imaginary of home. The connections and the existence of these diaspora groups rely primarily on new social and information technologies, especially social media tools like WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube because of their ability to provide accessible, affordable messaging and media exchange. Arguably these societies and their masquerades wouldn't even exist without it, and certainly not in the shape that they do. Without social media making the exchange of images and communication expedient and immediate, accelerating the brisk, dizzying interchange of ideas, styles, aesthetics, performances, events, and finances, *kotus* and their arts wouldn't be able to expand to reach the markets that are otherwise closed to them. Empowering and connecting Sierra Leonean communities across age, space, and time, social media has fundamentally altered urban masquerade societies and their arts, expanding their reach, and accelerating the pace at which they alter and react to the present. Breaking down barriers and binaries in a more expanded sense, globally-connected Ordehlay and Hunting societies change the way the world thinks about, and communicates about, the arts.

Conclusion

Pushing Concepts of Diaspora: Contemporary Arts

The mistaken vision of Africa as a homogenized place of one-dimensional or derivative arts set at odds with the diaspora or with the West and their respective canons is a concept that was relatively new to me at the commencement of this research, particularly in relation to contemporary arts. Over the course of the last several years, I must here gratefully credit Derek C. Murray for introducing me to contemporary African and diaspora arts, and the exceedingly influential recent scholarship that has framed discussions surrounding artistic and curatorial interventions. It is because of his coaching that I was able to re-think urban masquerade as part of a global, transatlantic dialogue that is neither strictly contemporary nor traditional, and thereby expose the strengths and realities of shared diasporic localities for society members and their *kotus*. Scholarship and exhibitions on contemporary African and diaspora arts illuminated the dangerous and dismissive binary codes that have provided so much inspiration for this project, and subsequently my professional, curatorial, and academic efforts. It is with closing remarks that sprouted from these compelling conversations and studies that I would like to conclude this dissertation, and as a continuation of the conversation I began in the Introduction. Through these closing ruminations, I hope to insert Ordehlay into the dialgoue on traditional and contemporary African arts, both of which have either removed it or excluded it from their canon.

As seen in the last chapters of the dissertation, the prominence of Ordehlay and Hunting societies in America, as in the visibility of African arts and artists, has accelerated as a result of globalism and globalization and because of its characteristic collapse of time and space. With the large numbers of migrations of the 1990s, the rise of the internet, and through the encounter of museum and gallery displays—one of the primary way westerners have formed perceptions of African art—contemporary African art especially began to receive a great deal of attention. Now household names, some of these celebrated artists include El Anatsui, Yinka Shonibare, Julie Mehretu, Wangechi Mutu, Ghada Amer, William Kentridge, Chéri Samba, Ibrahim El Salahi, and Sokari Douglas Camp. One then wonders, will that attention eventually include Ordehlay?

Now past the urgent moment of awareness for African arts, especially those residing off the continent, scholars, curators, and artists must continue to fight to represent, create, and be recognized for their groundbreaking arts and ideas beyond continental or diasporic identities. Regardless, the artists who receive recognition have formed a certain kind of cosmopolitan identity that doesn't necessarily characterize the *kotus* in Freetown and the *olukotus* in America, who aren't formally trained in the canonical art historical sense, but do train for years as apprentices. Since they themselves often cannot move or train abroad for lack of financial backing, they instead keep connected to their societies, branches, and clients internationally as they watch, internalize, and reintegrate the world into their practice. This of course primarily happens through the internet and social media. While they

want to succeed financially and receive recognition, and while their arts are beginning to be represented in museum and gallery spaces, their concerns are different and more social, or socially-realized, than the contemporary African artists on the art market radar.

Yet, and though they might not articulate it as such, *kotus*, Hunting, and Ordehlay societies are activist in nature. Theirs is part of a network that as we've seen in the previous chapter and the urban-rural connection functions outside of familial and kinship bonds, but also outside of the connections that come from the market and blockbuster art exhibitions that have shuttled certain artists or kinds of arts to the forefront. Even though these masquerade societies behave on a manufactured relationship that exists outside of blood, it creates connections that are just as deep and meaningful and perhaps more productive financially than those that other contemporary artists struggle to manifest or access. Those connections are perhaps much more difficult to attain, and certainly they aren't playing anyone's game but their own.

As in the Freetown-upline case, these manufactured bonds are also structuring aesthetics and local and global imaginaries. Most recently, these imaginaries are technology-driven and driving technology, especially social media, and yet they are overlooked as contemporary artists because as in the aforementioned struggle for recognition, they don't "fit" into this newly-designed canon of contemporary African arts that doesn't include "traditional," performative art, or art made by untrained artists (aka: folk art, self-taught art, or even vernacular art). Ordehlay isn't necessarily

falling into the Western-defined category of traditional African arts either because they are current, urban, and carnivalesque. They are thus an obscured part of a diasporic and global dialogue that should not be taken for granted and that needs to be paid attention to. Theirs is an art of building, design, performance, and migration that is wholly current, local, and global and that operates through the accessibility of the internet, WhatsApp, Facebook, and YouTube. It is the present, and the reality for a group that masquerades to generate a connectivity to the world and to the financial stability it can offer. I would ask: how is this much different from the concerns of many recognized contemporary artists, particularly those working in or through new media?

Since the 1990s, social science discourse on new and social media has been railroaded by development and educational agendas and on the differential access and distribution of such technologies, with little focus on its affects on the art world or on social formations and networking in culture and the arts. When it is discussed, it is usually in relation to a contemporary artist and their production or use of new media (Mariátegui, Cubitt, and Nadarajan 2009, 217; Vogel 1991; Oguibe and Enwezor 1999; Oguibe 2004; Tribe, Jana, and Grosenick 2006). However, a select few recent accounts focus less on the individual contemporary artist and more on the decisive role that the technological muse plays in "new senses of belonging fostered through networked access to the languages, cultures and political activities of migrants' home countries" (Mariátegui, Cubitt, and Nadarajan 2009, 219; Pindayi 2017). Scholars José-Carlos Mariátegui, Sean Cubitt, Gunalan Nadarajan, and Brian Pindayi pinpoint

the radical change of viewpoints concerning the technological apparatus from that of being value neutral and a "given" as it is in the West, to being a cultural process that evolves as it appropriates in local contexts to suit their imperatives. While their work is extremely useful for this study, it still overlooks less visible artists and arforms such as urban masquerade and the more untethered approach one must take to home and diaspora, and to the economic use of social media for the proliferation and continuation of art between and across home and diasporic locales.

Yet one of the ways this scholarship has come closest to the concerns of this study is in recognizing the manufactured value that lies in the creative adaptation of information and communication technologies beyond national or specific cultural agendas. I would here extend the argument to market and blockbuster agendas for contemporary African and diaspora arts. Then our discussions about African urban masquerade phenomenons and its mobilization of global technologies becomes that much more telling, contributive, and worthwhile. Ordehlay members will continue to make do and create in an increasingly complicated world inadvertently challenging binaries and structures. It is these kinds of artists, strategies, and creative misuses of technology that maneuver the (in actuality) narrow fissures between "contemporary," "traditional," "African," "diasporic," and that can push the boundaries of art history and humanities scholarship because it is all of these things, yet wholly none of them.

Closing

This study thus argued that Ordehlay masquerades were, and still are, an essential aspect to the lived experience of the city's, the town's, and the diaspora's

political, economic, and cultural landscape. Formed by marginalized migrant and youth communities, it became increasingly central to successful communal and city life wherever it has been employed, or mobilized. Functioning along invented bonds outside of familial kinship, age, or religion, it seeks other channels of strength: multiculturalism, open membership, hybridity, social media; all of which can be read in the very fabrics, quills, *bindis*, shells, and fake nails of the masks. One could infer that these arts work similarly to, or could perhaps be referred to as, activist art.

In a broader sense, this dissertation has ultimately sought to examine and deconstruct art historical terms hemmed in by air quotes—the “urban” and the “rural,” “tradition” and “modernity,” “traditional” and “contemporary,” “home” and “diaspora,” “Africa” and “the West” to show that all of these concepts and terms are constructions rather than definitive, and oftentime predatory, each poaching from the other to reify itself. Culture itself is a construct varying from place to place at any given time, and so too is Ordehlay; which is precisely why it is so malleable and difficult to ‘capture.’

Ordehlay is born of traditional and modern, local and global concerns and everything inbetween, then correspondingly enacted with international and local materials and ideas. It perhaps comes as no surprise then that urban masquerades such as Ordehlay have not been included in art historical or contemporary art canons because they straddle the lines between what is considered to be classical, or “traditional,” and what is largely considered to be “contemporary,” or “art” by Western standards. It is arts like these—ones that slide in and out of the faultlines of

expectation and assumption—that can agitate long-standing conventions and binaries. As such, the dissertation is contributing to scholarship in African arts, the humanities, and art history, having impact not only in international academic settings, but in museum settings where practitioners face curatorial dilemmas in presenting the dynamic arts of Africa in a bounded public space.

As an academic and museum practitioner it is my aim to continue the work of decolonizing the arts of Africa and their subsequent display, as well as the associated understanding, or misunderstanding, of the continent. Africa can no longer be thought of as the elsewhere of the West, just as "tradition" can no longer be thought of as a static calcification of the past. Rather, it is something being constantly negotiated and reinvented in the present.

Chapter Five Figures

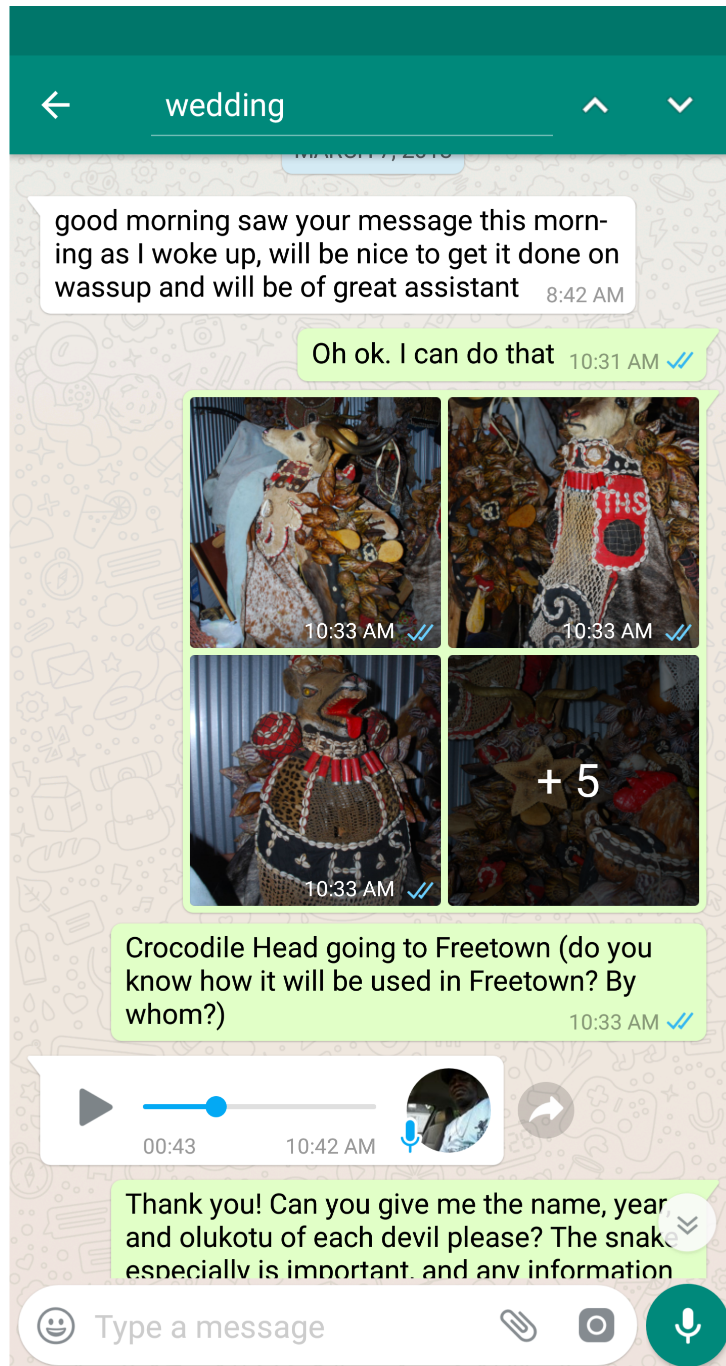


Figure 45. Screenshot of the WhatsApp conversation with Bob Anthony showing the images the author sent and the voice message reply. The two blue checks means the message was received and read. March 7, 2018.

Figure 46. The Alligator Head being sent by Tiwaniokay Hunting Society to *Kotus* Taylor and Dayo in Freetown for re-use. White House, Maryland, March 4, 2018.

Figure 47. The *Snake* devil danced in Freetown and sent to Tiwaniokay Hunting Society in Maryland. The back of the snake's head is visible in the center. White House, March 4, 2018.

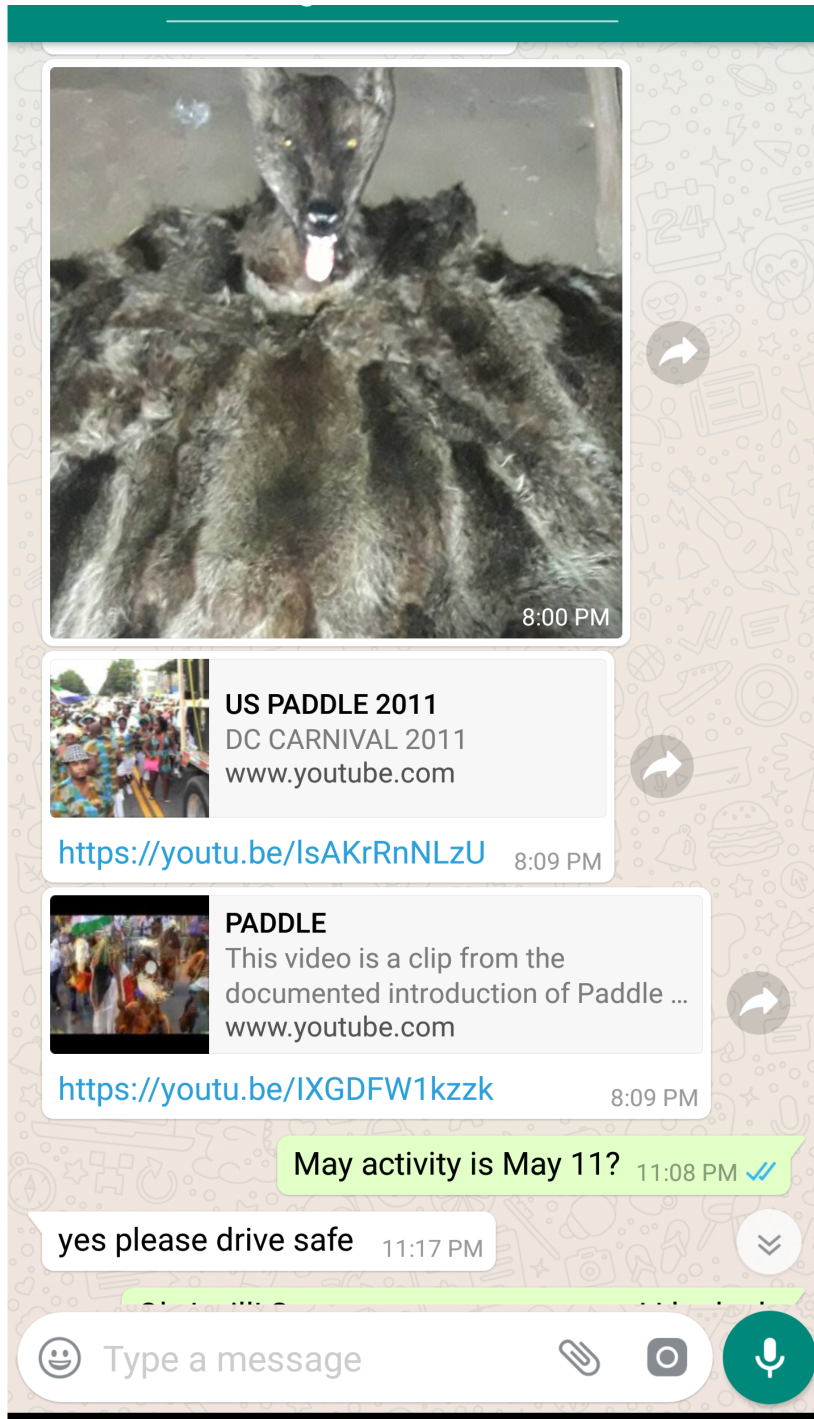
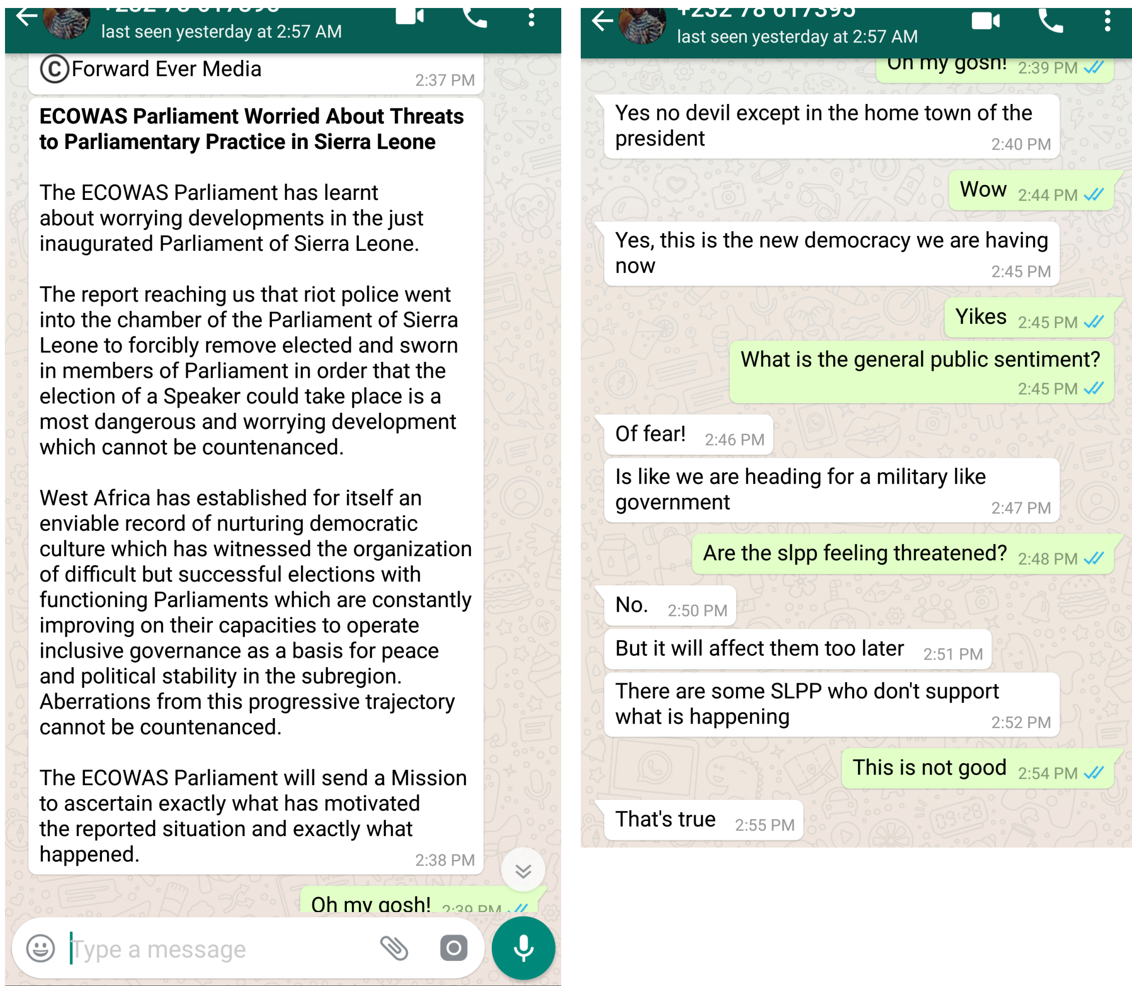


Figure 48. Screenshot of the WhatsApp conversation with Bob Anthony showing the *Fox* devil being made in Freetown and the YouTube links sent to the author. April 22, 2018.



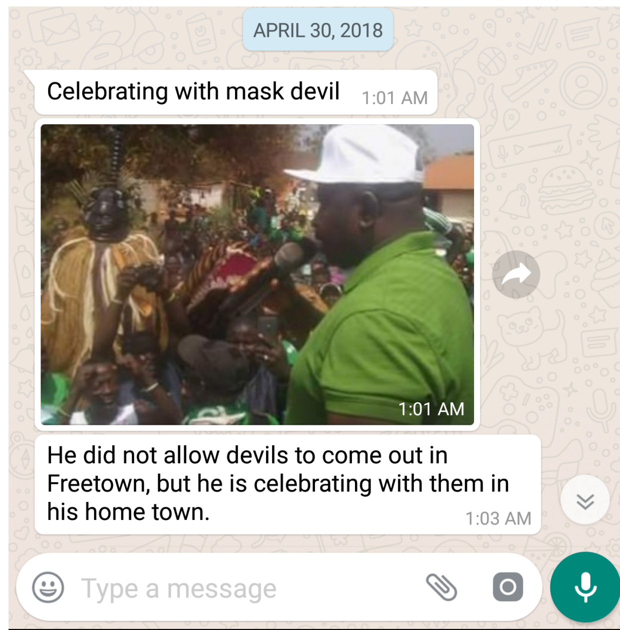


Figure 49. Screenshots of the WhatsApp conversation with Alpha Kanu regarding the banning of Independence Day devils and the local reception of it. April 27 and 30, 2018.

Figure 50. Two advertisements for the One Love Carnival sent to me several times on Tiwaniokay's WhatsApp forum. Various dates, 2018.

Figure 51. Back of the *Cutting Grass* devil featuring a crococile with a snake in its mouth. Also visible are pepper seeds, rice, porcupine quills, large snail shells, and wooden combs. Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society house, Freetown, December 22, 2017.

Figure 52. Detail of the *Cutting Grass* devil featuring a bush pig with open mouth and fake nails for teeth. Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society house, Freetown, December 22, 2017.

Figure 53. ***Cutting Grass*** **devil with Oju Feray members and** ***kotus*****. From left to right: unknown member,** ***Agba*** **Sanusie Zubairu, Adedayo "Dayo" Cole, Abu Bakarr "Bujju" Koroma, and Abdoulaye "Taylor" Kamaru. Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society house, Freetown, December 22, 2017.**

Figure 54. Save the Date announcement for Tiwaniokay Hunting Society's yearly celebration sent via Tiwaniokay WhatsApp forum, and personally to the author by Bob Anthony several times from March through May 2018.

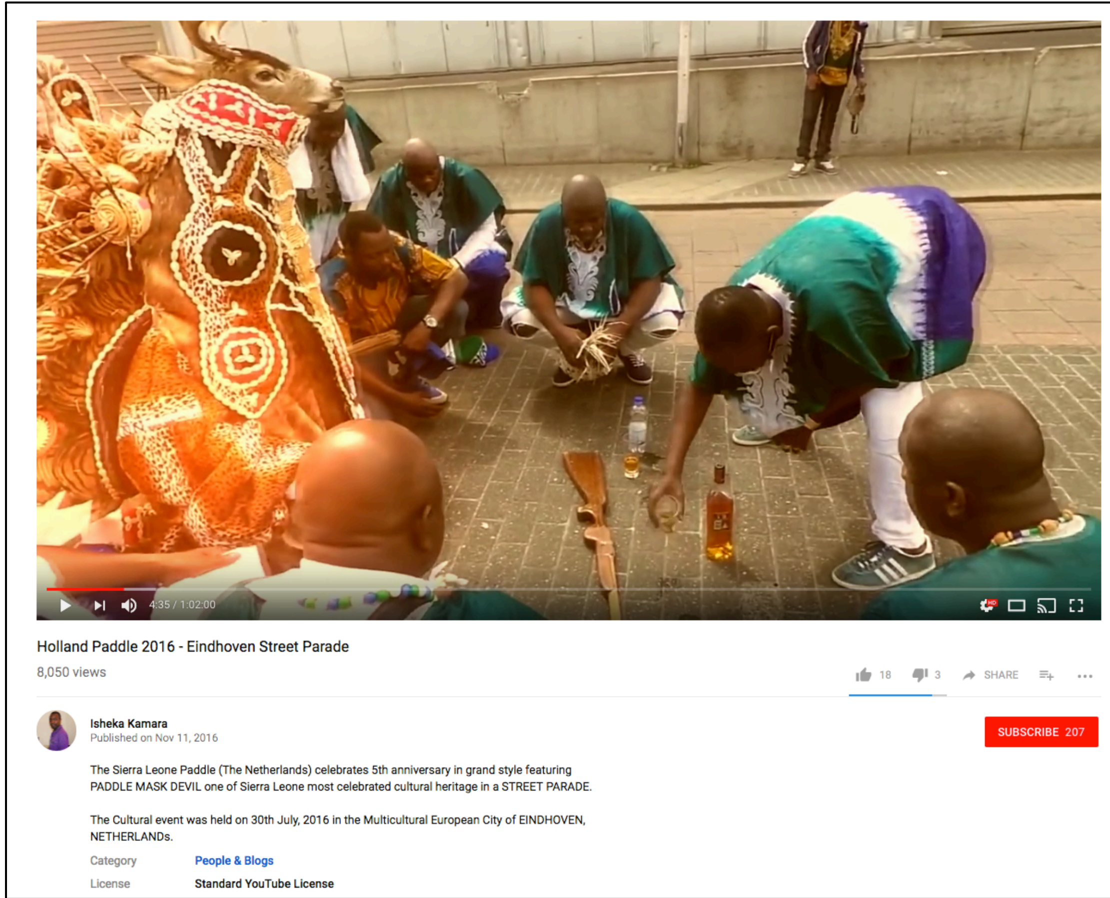


Figure 55. Still from a 2016 YouTube video of Holland Paddle performing libations in front of an Ordehlay devil. Eindhoven, Netherlands, Accessed May 30, 2018.

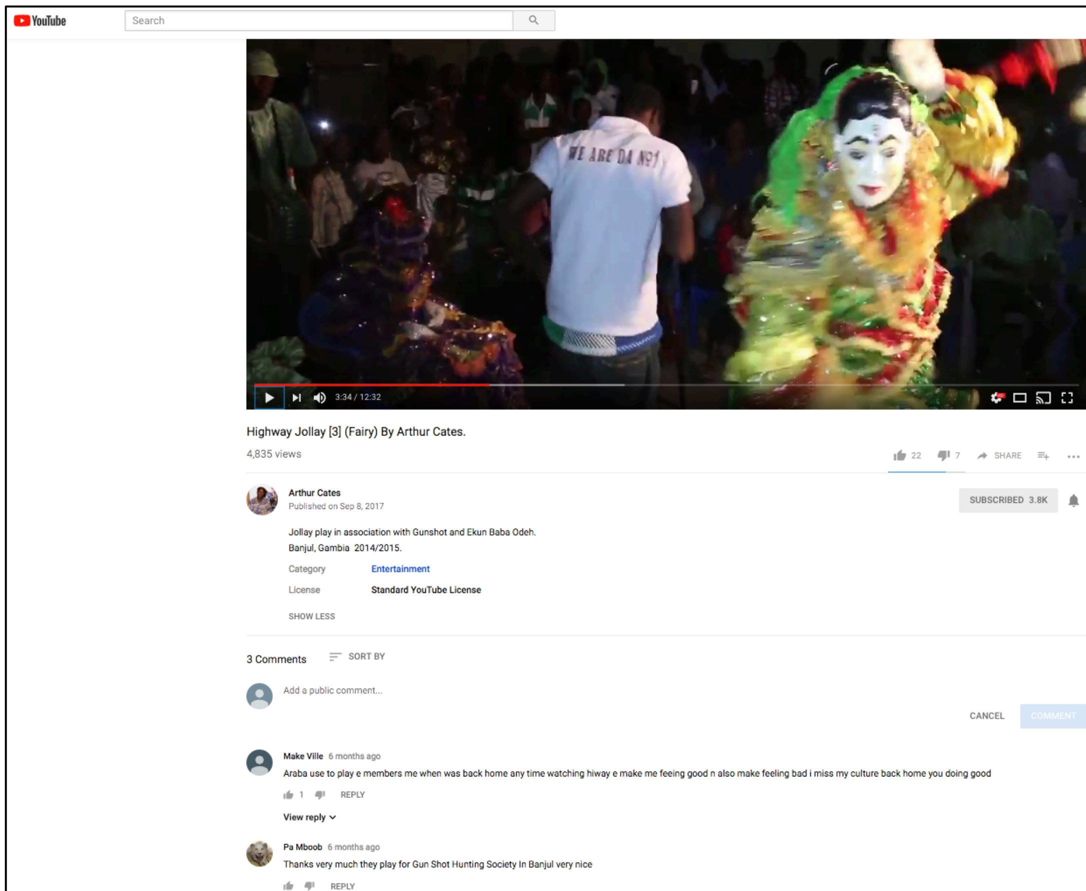


Figure 56. Still from a 2014-2015 YouTube video of Highway Jollay posted by Arthur Cates. The video was posted as being in association with Gunshot and Ekun Baba Okeh in the Gambia. Accessed May 30, 2018.

Figure 57. Ordehlay-type fancy devil created by *kotu* Sheku Fofonah for a society in the Gambia. Photo courtesy of the artist.

GLOSSARY: Terminology and Ethnic Groups

Agba: The *agba* is the head of the Ordehlay organization, in charge of the public performance, or street parade, as opposed to the management and organization of the meetings themselves, which is run by the Chairman. Though the Hunting Society is related, usually to a particular Ordehlay society as part of a pantheon, the head of the Hunting Society is called a General, not an *agba*.

Akorie: The flat basket that collects the small cash gifts that the devil will accumulate throughout the procession, carried by a society member called the *owoh akorie*. This money can be given directly to the performer under the foot or offered collectively to the society by placing it on or near the animal's snout or head, tossing it towards the devil, or just placing it on the ground near the devil. The *owoh akorie* also regularly fans the devil, presumably to keep him cool.

Ashobie: *Ashobies* are the matching shirts worn by each association to signify uniformity and neighborhood belonging, if not official association membership. Spelling it "aso-ebi" and treating it as a verb, anthropologist Kenneth Little defines *ashobie* as "the practice of a group of people, who are friends or members of the same association, of wearing the same form of dress and accessories—for women head-tie, necklace, and sandals." (Little 1962, 199)

Bila: *Bila* is a wooden approximation of a gun, or an imitation gun. It is carried by a

prominent member of society or a politician. The honor can be purchased by whomever can afford it, or it can be awarded to a person of note as a courtesy and a significant bestowal of respect. I had the great pleasure of being asked to be the *bila* (wo)man for Christmas Day 2017 processions in Port Loko, and found it a great honor. In procession, the *bila* man controls the devil, placing the wooden gun to its nose or forehead to tell it to proceed, or laying the gun down on the ground in front of it to tell it to stop, or to dance. The *bila* man is the most important person of the procession—even more so than the devil itself, because it *controls* the devil, and therefore the procession and by extension the society, for the duration of the procession.

<u>*Devil*</u>: The central, most prominently visual figure of the Ordehlay masquerade is known as the "devil," or sometimes "debil." This 'devil' characterization was originally used by Christian missionaries to demonize the masqueraders during the early missionary period, which subsequently exiled them to the margins of the urban scene, even at this stage. By designating them as handmaidens or products of Satan, they hoped to deter their use and encourage conversion. Instead, the societies used the appellation to their advantage to generate fear amongst non-members, and it is the local designation for all masquerades that process with a masked character, including Hunting, Ordehlay, and Jollay. The term is now used as a catch-all for masquerade societies and their activities in Sierra Leone.

Ethnic Groups: The two major ethnic and language groups in Sierra Leone are Temne and Mende, making up approximately 30% of the total population each. Temne populations reside primarily to the north and east of Freetown and dominate the All Peoples Congress (APC) party, while Mende speaking peoples are primarily found to the south and southeast and Liberia, and dominate the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP), broadly speaking. Another major language and ethnic group in Sierra Leone is of course the Krio community, who are primarily found in the greater Freetown area (and the diaspora), and whose present speakers stem from the original Freetown settlers. They were, and are, largely educated and financially better off than other groups, and tend to join foreign associations such as the Masonic Lodge, rather than Hunting, or Oje. Other ethnic populations found in Sierra Leone are Vai and Gola, along the border of and into Liberia, Kissi and Kono to the far east, Sherbro and Bullom along the coastal regions, and Limba and Kuranko to the far northeast. All populations are represented in Freetown. Many are represented in Ordehlay membership.

Jollay (Jolly): The epitome of fancy, Jollay applies to both the devils and the associated masquerade societies. Its aesthetics entail brightly colored fabric superstructures, carved representations of women and mythical characters such as Mami Wata, Al Buraq, dragons and snakes, and acrobatic performers dressed head to toe in loud fabric costumes. One of the other main Jollay characters is the *fairie/feiry*

(Fairy), who dons a prettily painted face mask, and whose gestures and movements mimic those of a pampered woman. In performance, she shakes her buttocks, and coquettishly tempts onlookers (see Figure 12). Like Ordehlay, Jollay is an essentially urban artform created by young, primarily male, migrants that flooded into the city in the early to mid-20th century. The diverse migrants brought their cultural traditions, stepping into an already vibrant scene of multicultural hybridity. All of these groups lived in close approximation with one another, making this a creolized artform at its core (Nunley 2010; Drewal 2008). Jollay is entirely for entertainment purposes, and according to Jeremiah Cole (and other interviews), is primarily staged by the children and younger members of the society. Like Ordehlay, it comes out in the streets primarily during holidays or celebrations, like Christmas, New Year's, Easter, and cultural events and weddings (for a fee). It is part of a larger pantheon of connected masquerade societies, and thus relates to Ordehlay, Hunting, and others that work in concert for different ends. Jollay exists purely for entertainment and enjoyment, and is closely related to, yet separate from, Ordehlay, sharing many of the same members, and occasionally even having the same Head of a joint Ordehlay and Jollay society. For example, in Bo, Arie Kakua (Ordehlay) and Central Jollay are different organizations, but have the same *agba*. A related Jollay and Ordehlay society will not come out at the same time, but different times of the year.

<u>*Kekere*</u>: The devil made by the younger boys of the Ordehlay societies and cultural organizations. They are typically smaller, less ornate versions of their elder versions

and less costly to produce. They have the same general themes and also include taxidermy or carved animal heads, shells, quills, cowries, etc. The small boys associations form a wing of each Ordehlay society and they also have their own *kotus* and *agbas*, mimicking the organization of the umbrella society.

Kotu: *Kotu* means "builder," and the equivalent term for art historians would be "artist"—a problematic term that has been exhaustively challenged in scholarship (see especially Dean 2006). Locals and Ordehlay members do not use the term "artist," however, and resisted its application when asked. Rather, they call the masquerade builders "*kotus*," and think of them as constructors or assemblers. There are head *kotus* and assistant *kotus*, which are younger apprentices. Members attach the term to a name like a revered title: *Kotu* Sheku, or simply '*Kotu*.'

Masquerade: I here invoke the pioneering work of Elizabeth Tonkin (1979) and the many scholars who have followed, to define masquerade as maskform+performance=masquerade. The performance extends to include the various members that accompany the devil, including the member holding the flat basket for collecting money and fanning the devil, the members wearing matching *ashobies*, the *bila* man, and the audience.

Mami Wata (Mother Water): This provocative water spirit embodies the hybridity, transnationalism, and constant innovation that characterizes the city. Seen, and

celebrated throughout West and Central Africa and the African Atlantic, she symbolizes wealth, beauty, protection, good luck, and sexuality. She is a tempting but tempestuous figure who can grant riches as easily as she can cause misfortune, making her particularly popular for seeking assistance in the harsh realities of urban life. She is fearsome, but beautiful, powerful, yet benevolent—one could say she embodies the fancy and the fierce simultaneously. A rich array of arts surrounds her and she seems to crop up rather frequently in urban arts, such as Ordehlay. Often portrayed as a mermaid, a snake charmer, or a combination of both, she is widely believed to have foreign origin and her depictions have been profoundly influenced by representations of ancient, indigenous African water spirits, European mermaids, Hindu gods and goddesses, and Christian and Muslim saints (Drewal 2008).

Ordehlay/Ode-Lay: The term "Ordehlay" has also been spelled "Ode-Lay," specifically by scholar John Nunley (1981, 1982, 1987, and 1988) and other variants include "Odelay" as King and Albrecht (2014) have published it and "odelay" as published by Abdullah (1998, 2002) and Opala (1994). I prefer the spelling "Ordehlay" as this is how Freetown's Ordehlay Union spells it, and the spelling currently used the most. However, I have also seen it spelled "Ordehley" and "Odehlay." Throughout the dissertation, when referring to another scholar's writing, I will use the spelling they opted for in that particular publication. However it is spelled, the term "Ordehlay" derives from the words "ode/ordeh" and "le/ley" which together mean "one who does not hunt in the bush," "those who do not go to the

bush," or "he stays in town/at home" (Wyse 1978; Chapter Three).

Upline: The term "upline" is commonly used in Sierra Leone to collectively designate anyplace outside of Freetown. It was originally used to separate the colonial borders of Freetown from the Protectorate, and was coined along with the construction of railroad lines during the industrialization and urbanization efforts of the colonial period, with specifically commercial motives in mind (Dumbuya 1973, 55). Alternative terms commonly used are: upcountry, Hinterlands, and Protectorate.

Appendix

Appendix 1

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) BETWEEN THE SIERRA LEONE POLICE AND THE ORDEHLEY UNION

The Ordehley Union located at No. 1A Adams Street off Mountain Cut; Freetown is responsible to regulate all the activities of Ordehley Societies in the Western Area of Sierra Leone.

The Ordehley Union requested the Sierra Leone Police to grant permission to the under mentioned Ordehley Societies to hold a procession and play-out on Monday 26th ,Tuesday 27th,Saturday 31st December 2016 and Monday 2nd January 2017 from 11: 00 am to 6: 00 pm. respectively.

The procession will be using the following routes:

- Mountain Cut
- Kissy Road
- Fourah Bay Road
- Siaka Stevens Street
- Kroo Town Road
- Adelaide Street
- Campbell Street
- Pademba Road
- Circular Road
- Goderich Street/Regent Road
- Main Motor Road
- Syke Street

Procession and Play-out Schedule for Ordehley Societies

S/N	SOCIETY	ADDRESS
	MONDAY-26TH DECEMBER, 2016	
1	Tetina	Oniel Street
2	Japan	Susans Bay
3	Red Indians	Heddle Street, Kingtom
4	United Nations	Naimbana Street
5	Madakor	Hope Street
6	Sea Ruff	Kissy Dock Yard
7	Kalasona	Blyden Lane, Off Savage Square
8	Arie Iceland	Wharf Road, Portie
9	Arie Thunder	Thunder Hill ,Kissy
10	Attitudinal Change	21 Adesanyah Street, Brookfields
11	Arie Rizla	Canteen Lane
12	Tank Wanj-Gay	Fergusson Street
	TUESDAY 27TH DECEMBER 2016	
1	Gladiators	Quaker Lane, Off Cline Town
2	Mission Mary	Cannon Street, Congo Market
3	Oringo	Upper Bombay Strret
4	Western Terminal	Aberdeen Ferry Road
5	Kampala	Berwick Street
6	Patton Mombassa	Patton Street, Off Kissy Road
7	Arie Bambara Town	Frederick Street
8	Arie Liner	Magazine Cut
9	Arie Oju Fery	Water Lane, Off Mountain Cut
10	Arie Bus Station	Maroon Town/Bus Station
11	Arie Kroo Town Road	Kroo Town Road
12	Burning Stone	Waterloo
13	Arie Kerry Town	Kerry Town-Waterloo/Tombo Axis
	SATURDAY 31ST DECEMBER 2016	
1	Arie Ashantee	Hastings
	MONDAY 2ND JANUARY 2017	
1	Fire Stone	1A Adams Street, Off Mountain Cut
2	Loda Masi	Waterloo Street
3	Arie Correctional	Pike Street-C/o Correctional Service Canteen

4	Arie Sweissy	Howe Street
5	Rocky Stone	St. John Bridge
6	Arie Be Careful	Gorie Street
7	Nimbo Movement	Main Road Congo Town
8	Arie Leicester Road	Leicester Road
9	Kissy Liner	Shell, Kissy Bye Pass Road
10	Arie Kababa	Regent Street
11	Arie Mansion	Benjamin Lane
12	Sea Marble	Moa Wharf
13	Arie Constantine	Magazine Wharf
14	Arie Lumley	Lumley
15	Arie Spain	Kroo Bay

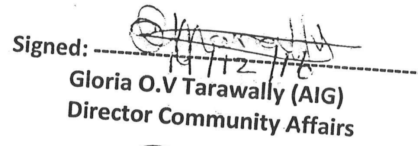
The Community Affairs Directorate held frank discussions with the executive which then culminated to the drafting of this MoU aimed at ensuring that the processions are peaceful.

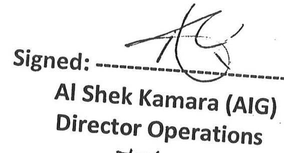
The Memorandum of Understanding hereby reads as follows:

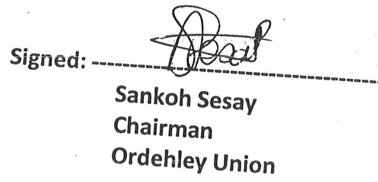
1. The Ordehley Union must furnish the Police with the name(s) of leader(s) (Agba(s)) including their residential addresses and phone numbers.
2. The Ordehley Societies must adhere to established routes agreed upon during the deliberations and should provide focal person(s) to directly interface with the police operations teams.
3. They must comply with the stipulated time agreed upon for the procession.
4. The leaders of the Ordehley Societies shall ensure they occupy one end of the street/road so as to allow other road users to go about their normal businesses unhindered. In addition, they must discourage the idea of tapping on vehicles along the road.
5. No bottles or offensive weapons should be allowed in the procession.
6. No drug intake or abusive languages or political songs during the procession.
7. The Ordehley Societies shall discourage all forms of clique and gang activities and the use of color hoods (mufflers) is prohibited.
8. No public sale of alcohol on handcarts (omolankay) during procession.
9. Fighting (affray) during the procession is strictly prohibited and leaders must ensure strict compliance.

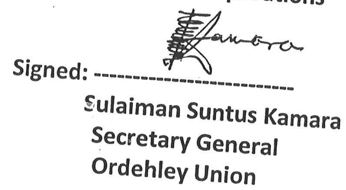
10. The head/leader of Ordehley Society takes/bears responsibility for any breach of the **Public Order Act** and/ or the **MoU**.
11. Any serious violation of the **MoU** would lead to suspension of the Ordehley Society for two years.

Dated this ..19th....of December, **2016.**

Signed: ------------------------------------

Gloria O.V Tarawally (AIG)
Director Community Affairs

Signed: -------------------------

Al Shek Kamara (AIG)
Director Operations

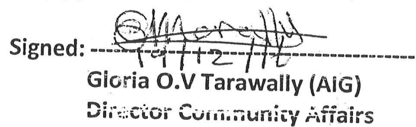
Signed: ------------------------------------

Sankoh Sesay
Chairman
Ordehley Union

Signed: -------------------------

Sulaiman Suntus Kamara
Secretary General
Ordehley Union

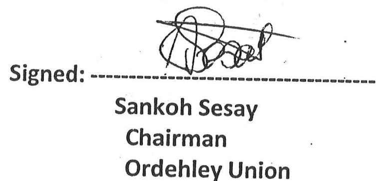
AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE SIERRA LEONE POLICE AND THE ORDEHLEY UNION

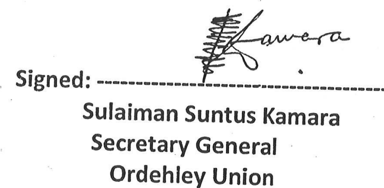
On today's date..19th December 2018.the Ordehley Union reached an agreement with the Sierra Leone Police to strictly comply with the terms and conditions set out in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Sierra Leone Police and the Ordehley Union.

The Ordehley Union further pledged to accept the sanctions that may arise from any breach or violations as stipulated in the MoU.

Signed: 
Gloria O.V Tarawally (AIG)
Director Community Affairs

Signed:
Al Shek Kamara (AIG)
Director Operations

Signed: 
Sankoh Sesay
Chairman
Ordehley Union

Signed: 
Sulaiman Suntus Kamara
Secretary General
Ordehley Union

Appendix 2

PARADE JUNCTION PEACE COMMITTEE

In collaboration with

Ordelay Union (SL)

CERTIFICATE OF PARTICIPATION

This is to certify that

AMANDA MAPLES

Participated in the Ordelay Street Carnival on

NEW YEAR'S DAY - 2017

Dated this SECOND day of JANUARY TWO THOUSAND AND SIEVENEEN

Togetherness

CHAIRMAN
Ordelay Union

CHAIRMAN
Parade Junction Peace Committee

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Anthony, Bob (Maryland). General of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Arie Bus Station (Freetown). *Agba* Alhaji Mansaray, Secretary General Inan Sesay, and other members.

Arie Kakua Ordehlay and Central Jollay Societies (Bo). Various members including *Agba* Sesay, Wamed Koroma, *Kotu* Gabriel Vanjeh, Chairman Solomon Humper, Mammy Queen Yata Toka, and Secretary General Saidu Sowa.

Bangura, A.O. (Port Loko). Executive member of Bolobine Ordehlay Society and Port Loko liaison; contact for Sheku Fofonah.

Bangura, Alimamy (Freetown). Elder in relation to several Ordehlay and Hunting societies; Research Assistant and Coordinator.

Beach Boys Ordehlay Society (Bo). *Agba* Christopher Johnson, Assistant *Kotu* Sahr Lebbie, Mammy Queen Finda Lebbie, and Coordinator Jonathan Koroma.

Cole, Adedayo “Dayo” (Mountain Cut, Freetown). *Kotu* of Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society.

Cole, Jeremiah (Los Angeles). Art Collector and Dealer; grew up dancing Jollay and Ordehlay in Freetown.

Conteh, Alimamy (Bo). Beach Boys Ordehlay Society member; Liaison for Bo Ordehlay and Jollay Societies.

Davis, Augusta (Maryland). *Iyaamie* in Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Fofonah, Sheku “Goldenfinger” (Clinetown, Freetown). *Kotu* for Gladiators Power Ordehlay Association; prolific artist and *kotu* for many other societies in Sierra Leone, the Gambia, and international organizations.

Goba, John (Goderich, Freetown). Artist and *kotu* for several Ordehlay and Jollay societies in Freetown; trained many of the practicing *kotus* in Freetown.

Goba, Shattanatu (Goderich, Freetown). Wife of John Goba and contributed knowledge about women's roles in masquerade societies.

Grant, Juliette (Maryland). *Iyaamie* in Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Haynes, June (Maryland). *Iyaamie* in Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Kamara, Abdulai (Mountain Cut, Freetown). Manager of Highway Jollay Society.

Kamara, Abie Musa (Mountain Cut, Freetown). General of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, Freetown branch.

Kamara, Abubakarr (Port Loko). Executive and founding member of Bolobine Ordehlay Society.

Kamara, Ibrahim Ali (Pepel). *Agba* of Paddle Ordehlay Society, Pepel.

Kamara, Ishmeal (Freetown). Scholar and Cultural Officer at the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (MTCA); Coordinator and Mentor of Youth Arise! in Freetown.

Kamara, Sulaiman (Mountain Cut, Freetown). Secretary General of the Ordehlay Union and prominent member of Firestone Ordehlay Society.

Kamaru, Abdoulaye "Taylor" (Mountain Cut, Freetown). *Kotu* for Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society.

Kanu, Alpha (Freetown). Research Assistant, Driver, and budding politician.

Kanu, Joseph S. (Lunsar). *Agba* of Masabone Ordehlay Society.

Kanteh, Ishmael (Makeni). Member of Ari Mayanka Ordehlay Society.

Kanteh, Shekuba (Makeni). *Kotu* of Ari Mayanka Ordehlay Society.

Kargbo, Josephine (Freetown). Curator at the Sierra Leone National Museum.

Kebbie, Alpha (Bo). *Agba* of the Matolo Ordehlay Society.

Keita, Muhammed Mamdie (Makeni). Member of Wusun Cultural Organization.

Koroma, Abdul (Susan's Bay, Freetown). *Agba* of Japan Tokyo Cultural Ordehlay Society.

Koroma, Abu Bakarr "Bujju" (Mountain Cut, Freetown). Kotu for Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society.

Macauley, Jalil (Maryland). *Omo Ajadeh* of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Muctarr, Abdul L. "Ajaniokay" (Mountain Cut, Freetown). Artist and *kotu* of Firestone Ordehlay Society

Nicole, Marvella (Maryland). *Iyaamie* and Financial Secretary of Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Nunley, John (St. Louis). Ordehlay scholar and art historian.

Samura, Sullay (Freetown). Chairman of the Parade Junction Peace Committee.

Sesay, Clefforda (Maryland). *Iyaamie* in Tiwaniokay Hunting Society, DMV branch.

Sesay, Siaka (Susan's Bay, Freetown). *Kotu* for Japan Tokyo Cultural Ordehlay Society.

Simabu Ordehlay Society (Pepel). Various members, including Sheku Koroma, Ishmael King, and Momoh Conteh.

Smith, Isatu (Freetown). Chairman of the Monuments and Relics Commission.

Spencer, Dr. Sylvanus (Fourah Bay, Freetown). Senior Lecturer and Head of the Department of History and African Studies, Fourah Bay College.

Zubairu, Sanusie (Mountain Cut, Freetown). *Agba* of the Oju Feray Cultural Ordehlay Society.