

Goldsmiths Research Online

*Goldsmiths Research Online (GRO)
is the institutional research repository for
Goldsmiths, University of London*

Citation

Schmidt, Kathrin. 2021. Performing Salone: The impact of local and global flows on the aesthetics and ecology of contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone. Post-Doctoral thesis, Goldsmiths, University of London [Thesis]

Persistent URL

<https://research.gold.ac.uk/id/eprint/31205/>

Versions

The version presented here may differ from the published, performed or presented work. Please go to the persistent GRO record above for more information.

If you believe that any material held in the repository infringes copyright law, please contact the Repository Team at Goldsmiths, University of London via the following email address: gro@gold.ac.uk.

The item will be removed from the repository while any claim is being investigated. For more information, please contact the GRO team: gro@gold.ac.uk

Performing Salone

The impact of local and global flows on
the aesthetics and ecology of
contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra
Leone

Kathrin SCHMIDT

Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Goldsmiths, University of London
Department of Media, Communications and Cultural Studies

June 2021

Acknowledgements

This research would have never seen the light of day without my involvement with the Freetong Players International in Freetown, Sierra Leone; my experiences with them, the countless conversations we had and all the questions that emerged in my head while working together (already a decade ago now!). So, first and foremost, I would like to thank the Freetong Players International and particularly the Haffner family for welcoming me into their fold and teaching me so much about Sierra Leone, its culture and history. Charlie, Fatie and Tutie – thank you!

I would also like to thank my supervisors who have patiently guided, advised and supported me over all the years it took for this thesis to finally be complete. Couze Venn, thank you for your constant encouragement, positivity and calmness, and your insightful and wise comments. I am sorry this thesis arrives too late for you to still be able to read it. Osita Okagbue, thank you for taking me on as a supervisee at the beginning of this journey, even though my study of theatre in this piece of research might not strictly be considered 'theatre studies', and immersing me in the vast history of African theatre. Shela Sheikh and Carla Figueira, your consistent support, advice, enthusiasm and understanding have been crucial to me in the final stages of this research and have got me to the finishing line – thank you both so much.

A special thank you to everyone who took the time to share their thoughts and experiences with me during my research in Freetown in 2016 and since then, also beyond Sierra Leone, both online and offline. Without your insights, knowledge and generosity, this research would not have been possible.

Finally, I would like to thank my family and friends (especially my parents, Gareth, Klemens and Marion), whose encouragement, interest and emotional support have sustained me over the years. Noah, I hope you will read this one day and appreciate why Mama had to lock herself away in the study instead of playing with you, so many times during the first two years of your life.

Abstract

This thesis analyses contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone ('Salone' in the country's lingua franca, Krio) within the context of a continuum of local and global flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas, and ensuing hybridisation. Rooted in the perspective of postcolonial and cultural studies, which show that cultures and their expressions are of synthetic nature and thus fundamentally hybrid products of continuously changing flows, this research focuses on two different but interlinked aspects: Firstly, the impact of historical, cultural, political, economic and social factors on contemporary theatre aesthetics; secondly, these factors' influence on the structural, institutional and policy context.

The methodology is based on qualitative research, analysed from a political economy perspective. It employs an interdisciplinary theoretical framework, situated at the intersection of postcolonial, cultural, theatre, international development and cultural policy studies, to contextualise the empirical data, which was collected via a multi-method approach, combining semi-structured interviews with the analysis of Sierra Leone's theatre ecology and its cultural policy and legislative framework.

Examining cultural and creative industries and their ecology in the postcolony from the perspective of Sierra Leonean theatre, this thesis argues that cultural productions and their ecology respond to macrocosmic processes through microcosmic transformation, embedding their evolution in their specific local context. The development industry plays a complicated and dualist role within this context; vis-à-vis theatre in Sierra Leone by both circumscribing and endorsing theatre, and vis-à-vis the hybridity between 'local' and 'global' flows and the power structures that guide them.

This thesis seeks to contribute to the study of Krio theatre and thereby to also address the knowledge gap regarding contemporary African cultural productions; to add to the area study of Sierra Leone; and to further insights into links between cultural production, colonial legacies, hegemonic structures, globalisation, commodification and the development industry.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	1
Abstract	2
Table of Contents	3
List of Figures	5
Acronyms and Abbreviations	6
1. Introduction	7
1.1. Research genesis	7
1.2. Situating the research	10
1.3. Framing the research	15
1.4. Designing the research	19
1.5. Thesis structure	23
2. Mapping the reification, commodification and globalisation of culture	26
2.1 The reification and commodification of culture	26
2.2 Local, Global and Glocal	35
2.3 Globalisation of culture	39
2.4 Cultural and creative industries and the creative economy	45
2.5 Culture and Development	53
2.6 Conclusion	57
3. Staging Sierra Leone	59
3.1 A genealogy of Sierra Leone's present – Sierra Leone and its historical, political and cultural background	60
3.1.1 Brief history of Sierra Leone, with a focus on the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism	60
3.1.2 Colonial governmentality, the two publics and the bifurcation of the state	64
3.1.3 Sierra Leone's postcolonial state and its governmentality	70
3.1.4 Sierra Leone's civil war (1991–2002) and its legacy	75
3.2 History and development of theatre in Sierra Leone	78
3.2.1 Characteristics of indigenous African theatre	78
3.2.2 A brief history of theatre in Sierra Leone	80
3.2.2.1 Pre-colonial indigenous theatre	81
3.2.2.2 Theatre in the wake of colonisation (1787–1961)	85
3.2.2.3 Theatre developments in the postcolonial era until the civil war (1961-1991)	87
3.3 Conclusion	91
4. Glocal flows and local aesthetics: Contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone	93
4.1 Foundations of contemporary Krio theatre	94
4.2 Overview of theatre since the end of the civil war (2002–2020)	101
4.2.1 Introduction	101

4.2.2	Developmental theatre	112
4.2.3	Recent activities beyond developmental theatre	120
4.3	Contemporary Krio theatre and its aesthetic choices in a continuum of flows	127
4.3.1	Introduction	127
4.3.2	Literary and popular theatre	132
4.3.3	Aesthetics	135
4.4	Conclusion	147
5.	Glocal flows and the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone	149
5.1	Policy and legislative context for cultural and creative industries in Sierra Leone	150
5.1.1	Introduction	150
5.1.2	The Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and the National Cultural Policy	156
5.1.3	Legal framework for cultural and creative industries in Sierra Leone	166
5.2	Structural and institutional context for the cultural and creative industries in Sierra Leone	177
5.2.1	Governance structures and institutions	177
5.2.2	Education and training	185
5.2.3	Financing and funding	187
5.2.4	Cultural consumption habits and audience development	193
5.3	International organisations and cultural relations	197
5.3.1	Introduction	197
5.3.2	UNESCO	199
5.3.3	The United Kingdom and the British Council	201
5.3.4	The African Union and the Economic Community of West African States	207
5.4	Conclusion	209
6.	Conclusions	212
6.1	Introduction	212
6.2	A seesaw between microcosm and macrocosm	215
6.3	Towards a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector	220
	Bibliography	222
	Appendices	259
	Appendix A – List of interviewees	259
	Appendix B – Interview templates	261
	Appendix C – National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone (2013), page 41	265

List of Figures

Figure #	Title of Figure	Page
Figure 1	Mask in storage at the Cultural Village in Aberdeen, West Freetown in 2016 (photo by the author)	84
Figure 2	Map of spaces used by the CCIs in Freetown (created with Mapbox Studio)	109
Figure 3	Starco Hall, East Freetown, outside in 2016 (photo by the author)	110
Figure 4	Starco Hall, East Freetown, inside in 2016 (photo by the author)	110
Figure 5	Starco Hall, East Freetown, run-down VIP Lounge on the balcony in 2016 (photo by the author)	110
Figure 6	Advertisement for a Pan African Production in East Freetown (photo by the author)	111
Figure 7	The Freetong Players International performing in a school in 2011 (photo by the author)	121
Figure 8	Performance of Amistad Kata-Kata in 2019 at the British Council's auditorium in Freetown (photo by Charlie Haffner)	123
Figure 9	A performance by the Freetong Players International in 2011 with two storytellers, one of them (Tutie Haffner in the front-right) telling the main story in Krio and the other (Charlie Haffner in the front-left) translating it into English (photo by the author)	146
Figure 10	Performance at the National Stadium in Freetown in 2011 (funded by the government) on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Sierra Leone's Independence Day (photo by the author)	188
Figure 11	Performers in the colours of the Sierra Leonean flag at the National Stadium in Freetown in 2011 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Sierra Leone's Independence Day in 2011 (photo by the author)	189

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACP	African, Caribbean, and Pacific Group of States
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (one of the major fighting factions during Sierra Leone's civil war)
APC	All People's Congress (one of the two major political parties in Sierra Leone)
ARIPO	African Regional Intellectual Property Organization
AU	African Union
CCIs	Cultural and Creative Industries
CIGF	Guarantee Fund for Cultural Industries
EU	European Union
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
IP	Intellectual Property
IPRs	Intellectual Property Rights
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MTC	Sierra Leone's Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
RUF	Revolutionary United Front (one of the major fighting factions during Sierra Leone's civil war)
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party (one of the two major political parties in Sierra Leone)
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TRC	Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TRIPS	Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1. Introduction

1.1. Research genesis

The seed for this research project was planted over a decade ago, in 2010, when I started to volunteer with the Freetong Players International, one of Sierra Leone's longest-standing theatre companies, who use both live performance and radio drama to transmit local cultural heritage, inform and mobilise communities and promote human rights and sustainable development – in the sense of development that 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (UN General Assembly, 1987, p. 16). Based on my background in arts management, my role was to support project development and management, develop their online and social media strategy, and help with other aspects of all the theatrical work that happens off stage. The majority of the paid work the Freetong Players received during the year and a half I was working with them was funded by multilateral agencies, international NGOs and occasionally by government bodies, in a context of high illiteracy often using performing arts to 'sensitise' people on topics such as health, domestic violence and the importance of voting, and this is mostly still the case. The time I spent with the Freetong Players – and in particular with their now semi-retired Artistic Director Charlie Haffner, his wife Fatie, the company's General Manager and heart and soul (who sadly passed away, suddenly and way too soon, in 2012), and their son Tutie, who has since taken over as leader of the Freetong Players – allowed me to learn a lot about Sierra Leonean culture, the country's eventful history and its amalgamation of people, traditions and customs.

I began asking myself how responding to set topics and other organisations' agendas affected their artistic freedom and interests, their aesthetic choices, and their drive to tell their own stories and foster Krio (Sierra Leone's lingua franca) not only as a spoken but also written language and a unifying force across 'Salone' (which means Sierra Leone in Krio). Listening to popular Sierra Leonean music, which – at the time at least – seemed to be mostly influenced by American Hip-Hop and Nigerian pop music, also made me wonder more and more how global cultural flows truly work and how they affect local aesthetics and cultural production more generally, especially within the context of past and present structures of power and globalisation.

Quite quickly I realised that my questions needed to be considered within a much wider context of both local and global historical, cultural, political, economic and social processes, and that potential answers to these questions were not as simple as I might have once thought, but full of (much more interesting) tensions, complications and ambiguities. I also realised that these questions on aesthetics and artistic choices needed to be examined from a more holistic

perspective and could not be separated from an understanding of the wider ecology within which these artistic, cultural and creative expressions and products emerge. The notion of the ecology of culture is useful for this research insofar as it particularly directs attention to the relationships and patterns that shape cultural production, 'showing how careers develop, ideas transfer, money flows, and product and content move, to and fro, around and between the funded, homemade and commercial subsectors' (Holden, 2015, p. 2).

The concept of the cultural ecology and in particular cultural policy scholar John Holden's theorisation of it (as per the above) have been criticised by some scholars for portraying the cultural sector as a self-contained system that can survive on its own and thereby underestimating the influence of power, policy and regulation (e.g., De Beukelaer and Spence, 2019). The ecological metaphor may also be misunderstood if we think of it only 'as something natural' or 'naturally given', an understanding which would ignore the production and regulation of the relationships that shape culture by specific historical and current hegemonies and their various forms of expression. However, if we consider the definition of human ecology as an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary study of the relationships between humans and their natural, built and social environments at many different but interconnected levels (which inherently include culture, politics and economics as part of citizenry and society), the metaphor 'ecology' highlights that the relationships and patterns that shape cultural production are in fact in constant flux as a result of multivariate dynamics, external influences and changing flows. Moreover, it also supports the analysis of both the micro- and the macro-level and emphasises the notion of their interconnectedness (which constitutes an important aspect of this thesis, as outlined in more detail throughout the remainder of this introductory chapter and Chapter 2). As such, the term 'ecology' points towards two aspects which are fundamental to my research, the aspects of interdisciplinarity and interconnectedness (not only between the micro and the macro, but also between the local and the global and between aesthetics, politics and history). Throughout this thesis, I thus use the concept of the ecology of culture to examine the complex relationships, patterns and flows that shape and regulate cultural production, without, however, assuming that they are 'natural', inherently in balance, inherently equal or immune to external influences and disruptions, such as power structures, policies and regulation. I also use 'the ecology of culture' to reinforce the understanding of culture and its expressions as being constantly in transition, re-configured and performed as well as the notion of cultural processes as being not linear, but dynamic, multifaceted and messy.

As I came to realise that my questions on aesthetics and artistic choices needed to be examined from a more holistic perspective, I became more and more interested in the ecological aspects impacting the Freetong Players' work, in particular its policy, legislative,

structural and institutional context. As a twentysomething European, and in particular coming from a country with abundant public funding for culture (Austria), I had taken cultural policy and public support for the arts somewhat for granted. But the more time I spent with the Freetong Players, the more I learned about how social, political, economic and policy factors influenced not only their ability to work, but also their work itself.

During my time in Sierra Leone, I also noticed that culture seemed to become one of the major stakes in foreign policy and international cultural relations strategies and an increasingly prominent topic within the international development community and agenda, focusing not only on the instrumentalisation of culture to communicate development goals but also on the celebration of culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development (in addition to social, economic and environmental dimensions of development) and on the potential of the cultural and creative industries (CCIs) for (mainly economic) development. Even though I had always felt uneasy about the instrumentalisation of culture (Where is the limit? Who controls it? What is the real objective?), I could not help but feel excited about this and the potential for arts and culture to be taken more seriously on many different levels – especially in a place like Sierra Leone, where cultural or creative products and services have long been considered a luxury.

All the above led to the investigation that is at the core of this thesis, namely the analysis of contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone since the end of the country's civil war in 2002 within the context of a continuum of local and global flows, ensuing hybridisation and wider postcolonial, social, political and economic processes. During my initial literature research for this PhD, I came across a paper by legal and political philosopher Stephen Guest (2002) that questioned the dichotomy of instrumental versus intrinsic values of culture – much to my interest and relief (more on this in Chapter 2). Furthermore, after reading the work of African cultural practitioners and scholars such as Chinua Achebe and Léopold Sédar Senghor in the early days of my PhD research, and of course the work of African theatre scholar Osita Okagbue (who was one of my initial PhD supervisors), I was finally able to intellectualise what I had informally understood ever since living and working in Sierra Leone: namely, that the concept of art for art's sake (which defies any form of instrumentalism) has risen within a Eurocentric perspective on artistic production and did not exist in various precolonial African epistemologies, where culture and its expressions occupied an important part of both everyday and sacred life (and still do).

In parallel with pursuing my PhD as a part-time student, I moved from working in performing arts management to working as a consultant, researcher and project manager across the cultural and creative industries, initially mainly in the UK but since being based in Kenya from mid-2016 predominantly in Sub-Saharan Africa. Working on a number of different strategy, research and evaluation projects over the last few years for the British Council, the

EU and Africa Artbox (an Africa-wide platform for digital creation and contemporary culture), focusing on sector development, culture and development programmes, as well as policy, mapping and impact studies, allowed me to become more familiar with the cultural and creative industries in diverse African contexts and to develop a degree of ‘insider knowledge’ of both local cultural and creative scenes and the workings of international organisations. It also gave me the opportunity to observe first-hand the impact of different programmes, initiatives and approaches on both the micro-level (for the individual artists and creative entrepreneurs) and the macro-level (that of the wider cultural ecology and its institutions and infrastructure).

Nevertheless, I still feel somewhat uneasy about the instrumentalised approaches to culture of some current discourses (be they for social, political or economic purposes), and I sympathise with some artists’ rejection of the creative industries or creative economy discourse for focusing only on culture’s economic value. However, after researching and working in this field for over a decade now, I have come to believe that in order to enable people to make a decent living with their creativity and passion for culture we need the strong and suitable structures only a well-organised and well-informed sector can provide to support and protect cultural and creative professionals, such as locally-appropriate systems regulating intellectual property (IP) or a business environment conducive for cultural and creative production – like in any other part of the economy. And the creative economy discourse definitely helps shine a light on the importance of such structures for and a strategic approach to sector development.

1.2. Situating the research

The politics and economics of contemporary cultural production, distribution and consumption are often linked to the notion of the cultural and creative industries, which are considered to be among the most dynamic and fastest-growing industries in the contemporary global economy (EY, 2015; UNCTAD and UNDP, 2008; UNCTAD and UNDP, 2010; UNESCO and UNDP, 2013). They are also promoted as key elements of the global economic and development agenda, encouraging innovation and sustainable human-centred development and thus addressing current social, political and economic challenges. Substantial evidence of the role of culture and creativity in development has been published over the last two decades. This body of literature, however, tends to focus on the Global North and on culture’s contribution to economic development and its social benefits (e.g., Matarasso, 1997; Taylor et al., 2015; Throsby, 2001).

Furthermore, there is a lack of ‘micro-level analysis of creative or cultural worlds at a ground level, so that theoretical discourse is insufficiently anchored in detailed ethnographies

and policy formulation is inadequately robust' (Kong, 2010, p. 173). In addition, far less attention has been given to specific art forms in relation to development (Stupples and Teaiwa, 2017, p.3). By focusing on a specific art form, theatre, and its ecology in a specific locale, Sierra Leone, this thesis aims to contribute to addressing these gaps. It also seeks to provide a qualitative contribution to the wider research on the relationship between culture and development and to respond to the need for evidence-based policy making based on an understanding of *how* the CCIs work rather than on just quantitative indicators (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 150) by offering qualitative insights into *how* theatre, and the CCIs more widely, work in Sierra Leone.

Chapter 2 will discuss the notion and terminology of the CCIs and their historical and conceptual evolution – also in relation to the wider notion of 'culture' – in more detail. To situate this research and the gaps it is seeking to address, it is important to highlight at this point that the recognition of culture (in all its meanings) as a major factor of sustainable development globally can only be grounded in a critical analysis and subsequent better understanding of the preconditions and factors that shape cultural expressions and productions in a specific locale. This is particularly important as 'each locale has a distinct history that forms the basis of the present [...] [and] these stories and histories are intertwined with local politics, revolutions, struggles, cultures and untold stories' (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 134). Furthermore, with the increasing intensity and accessibility of global cultural flows, 'it becomes particularly important that we be attendant to the danger of falsely assuming familiarity that can accompany the daily consumption of these cultural productions, and of the dangers of presuming a knowledge of culture – by ourselves and others; of ourselves and of others – that is devoid of history, a sense of location and place, and of serious intellectual investment' (Mudimbe, 2012, p. xiv).

However, the recorded knowledge and academic literature globally about the preconditions and factors that shape contemporary cultural production and consumption in a specific locale is limited in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa; especially in relation to contemporary globalisation and commodification of culture or the notion of the CCIs and the global creative economy, whose discourse has been mainly driven by research situated in the Global North. There are, however, of course some exceptions, such as cultural policy scholar Christian De Beukelaer's research on the music industries in Burkina Faso and Ghana (2013; 2014; 2015; 2017), development economist Avril Joffe and cultural policy-maker Monica Newton's research on the creative industries in South Africa (2008), cultural policy scholar Jenny Mbaye's research on the music economy in Senegal and creative entrepreneurship in West Africa more broadly (2011; 2013), philosopher and literature scholar Valentin-Yves Mudimbe's edited volume on contemporary African cultural productions (2012) and cultural economy scholar Andy Pratt's research on the music industry in Senegal (2004, 2008).

This lacuna is certainly linked to a myriad of complex and interrelated reasons, including the relatively recent conceptualisation of the CCIs and the creative economy in the public discourses and policies of many Sub-Saharan countries. But it also has to be seen – more broadly but very acutely – within the context of the marginalisation of African Cultural Studies in the global academy, the fact that the majority of ‘respected’ and ‘influential’ journals are based in the Global North, that African-based scholars often find themselves not having equitable access to publications in these journals and that research on Africa therefore tends to be dominated by non-African perspectives (Basedau, 2020; Dovey, 2016; Kessi, Marks and Ramugondo, 2020). It may also be related to the fact that stories, narratives, and accounts about ‘Africa’, especially when told from a non-African perspective, are still often generalised, ignoring, conflating or at least simplifying the diverse contexts across and within the 54 countries of this vast continent. This leads not only to a lack of nuanced micro-level knowledge but also to significant and serious misunderstandings about the context for and ecology of cultural production in Sub-Saharan Africa, which are also based on existing epistemological gaps.

As I am also a non-African (but at least an African-based) researcher writing about a topic situated in Africa, I have sought throughout this research to very carefully reflect upon and navigate these issues and my particular position in relation to them. I will expand more on this in Section 1.4, where I describe the process of designing this research and its methodology, but it is critical to me at this point to highlight that particular findings and reflections of this research are in no way intended to essentialise or generalise certain phenomena and narratives. Also, while the analysis of the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone in this thesis is at times contextualised by findings and examples from other cultural and creative industries and other Sub-Saharan African countries, this is only done with the intention to enable a linking of particular findings to larger issues of contemporary local cultural production within the context of globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems. Furthermore, it seems important to clarify that I have sought to be as specific as possible in my writing throughout this thesis, but that when I do refer to ‘Africa’ or ‘African’, it is meant as a relational, superordinate category to ‘Sierra Leone’ and ‘Sierra Leonean’ and certainly not as a sweeping generalisation.

Overall, there is a definite gap in the knowledge about and the mapping of cultural productions and their policy, structural and institutional context in diverse African contexts, highlighting how the CCIs really work in a specific locale or country and how they are situated in relation to their wider region, the continent and the world as a whole. Without this knowledge, political commitment, effective policies and the willingness to invest in the CCIs will remain volatile, which does not only threaten the independence of the sector but also the survival of diverse cultural expressions. Therefore, the knowledge about cultural productions in different African contexts and their evidence base need to be enhanced by rigorous research on their

status quo and their 'development' within the current postcolonial and global context – a context that is driven by the globally rising notion of the creative economy, working at the interface between commodified culture and creativity, economics and new technologies.

In terms of art forms globally, the impact of contemporary globalisation and commodification on artistic forms and aesthetics (shaped by a combination of neoliberalism, post-Cold War politics, digital technologies and global finance) is critically engaged with widely within the visual arts (e.g., Bydler, 2004; Carroll, 2007; Harris, 2011), but less so in the performing arts. Theatre in particular is an under-researched area within this context, with some exceptions such as theatre scholar and director Rustom Bharucha's work (1993, 2000) or dramatist and theatre scholar Dan Rebellato's research (2009). However, with regards to globalisation and commodification, but also the notions of culture and development and the global creative economy, theatre is a very interesting and complex cultural product. Theatre productions tend to be labour-intensive and can thus create jobs and income, but they are not as easily transportable, exportable and reproducible as music, film or literature, and are therefore more expensive to produce and tour. Theatre, seemingly more so than other art forms, also has the potential to encourage activism in relation to political and social issues.

Most recent academic research on Sierra Leone has focused on the collapse of the state in the 1970s and 1980s, the country's civil war (1991-2002), the violence it involved and its social, political and economic consequences, the challenges and demands related to the country's post-conflict recovery (e.g., Cubitt, 2010; Ferme, 2001; Harris, 2013; Reno, 1995) or the Ebola epidemic between 2014 and 2016 (Jalloh, 2019), neglecting other aspects of life. Only a few have recently written about culture and cultural expressions in Sierra Leone, such as literature and cultural studies scholar Matthew Christensen (e.g., 1995, 2005, 2019); anthropologist Paul Basu (e.g., 2008; 2011; 2012; 2013; 2015); anthropologist Johanna Zetterstrom-Sharp (2013; 2015); African studies scholar Joanna Skelt (2014); anthropologist Susan Shepler (2010); and historian Joseph Opala (1994).

In countries like Sierra Leone, it is not the lack of cultural activity, but often the lack of appropriate policies, structures and strategies, embedded in an ecology that is suited to the local context, that limits the sustainable 'development' of their CCIs. Hence, in order to strengthen the CCIs in the postcolony ('a timespace characterized by proliferation and multiplicity', Mbembe, 2007, para. 11) and support context-specific and culture-sensitive policy, governance and management models, built on a relationship between artistic imagination and cultural governance beyond current global neoliberal capitalist efforts, it is crucial to understand the local context in a holistic and historicising manner and support grassroots approaches to policy and sector planning. Only this holistic and in-depth knowledge and the commitment to build upon what already exists can lead to meaningful, effective and long-lasting changes, as Christiaan De Beukelaer highlights:

The process of *developing cultural industries* builds on an in-depth understanding of the circular logic that make these businesses work within the existing (and changing) socio-economic framework. This is needed to identify the small, albeit significant changes that can be made. [...] This focus needs the greatest attention *within* the sector, in order to allow the existing cultures of the cultural industries to inform continuity and change. It is precisely at this level that the 'path dependency' of cultural production, circulation and consumption plays a pivotal role. Practices should inform changes in the creative economy discourse, more so than the other way around. (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 152)

To achieve this, research and policy need to be more responsive and relevant to the actual challenges of cultural and creative practices in a specific locale. This also means that theories and concepts need to be adapted to and developed in accordance with the cultural, intellectual and institutional contexts and environments in which they shall function.

Based on all the above, this thesis has a number of objectives. Firstly, it seeks to contribute to the study of theatre, and especially Krio theatre, in Sierra Leone. Secondly, while this research is clearly not about 'Africa', the study of the function and functioning of a specific cultural practice in a specific locale in Africa shall add to the knowledge about the histories, ways of working, opportunities and challenges of contemporary cultural productions in diverse African contexts. Thirdly, being connected to wider historical, social, political and economic questions, this thesis shall also increase the understanding of the links between cultural production, the history and legacies of colonialism and existing hegemonic structures within the present framework of globalisation, geopolitics, commodification and international development. Fourthly, given its multi-layered investigation and interdisciplinary approach, this research aims to contribute to the understanding and strengthening of the relationship between cultural research, policy and practice – a relationship that is often insufficiently reciprocal and syncretic. Fifthly, while this thesis certainly does not wish to and cannot ignore Sierra Leone's civil war, the Ebola epidemic from 2014 to 2016 or the more recent Covid-19 pandemic and their effects on the whole country (including the ecology of culture), it aims to widen the narrative about a country that has much more to offer than stories about violence and natural, health or other disasters.

Finally, based on the discussion throughout this thesis and informed by the practices, insights and views of experts and practitioners in Sierra Leone, the conclusions of this thesis also point towards ways of thinking and points of action that are sensitive to the local context and can lead towards a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector. This also adds a postcolonial perspective to existing theories and approaches to cultural production, governance and policy, which is still largely missing from the current discourse. Overall, the fact that culture has become one of the major stakes in foreign policy and international cultural relations strategies and that culture is increasingly promoted as an enabler and driver of

development and for its contribution to the creative economy adds importance to this research project from a postcolonial point of view.

The following section outlines the disciplinary context within which this research is situated and highlights the research questions that are at the core of this thesis.

1.3. Framing the research

Culture – as a way of life, a set of learned behavioural patterns, but also as the material production through symbols and immaterial representation of experiences (such as theatre) – is the subject of numerous and diverse discourses, interventions and contentions, especially in the context of an increasingly globalised world. Among these, the following two aspects have been particularly relevant for this research: Firstly, it is widely recognised that in the wake of neoliberal capitalism, culture and cultural productions have become increasingly commodified: produced, sold and exchanged on a local and global marketplace. Secondly, interpreting both immaterial and material cultural expressions as a testimonial of the way in which people develop an understanding of themselves and thus their identity, culture is also at the source of, or is instrumentalised for, the identification and promotion of distinct ethnic groups and delimited localities, such as nations. This has led to the notion of culture as a delimited, homogenous and fixed entity and consequently to the notion of monocultures existing next to each other, with their respective specific characteristics and cultural expressions being also fixed and stable.

However, postcolonial and cultural studies show that cultures and their expressions are – and always have been – of synthetic nature and are thus fundamentally multidimensional and hybrid products of continuously changing flows. In the context of this thesis, these flows refer to both the local (or one might say *intra*local, in the sense of within a locality) and global flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas (such as ideas on aesthetics, but also in the form of discourses and policies); based on globalisation theorist Arjun Appadurai's notion of the five dimensions of global cultural flows (Appadurai, 1996) – the ethnoscaples, technoscaples, ideoscaples, financescaples, and mediascaples (which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 2).

Rooted in this perspective and using an interdisciplinary approach situated at the intersection of postcolonial, cultural, theatre, international development and cultural policy studies, this research is concerned with the dynamics and consequences of these continuously changing flows and their particular impact on cultural production in the postcolony, especially within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems. To be able to analyse their impact from a very specific, local perspective, this thesis also examines the structures, specific agents and historical, cultural, political,

economic and social factors that influence, direct, control, translate and transform the flows affecting theatre in Sierra Leone. Hence, examining contemporary cultural production in the postcolony from a point of view of local theatre and from a political economy perspective, this research focuses on two different, but interlinked aspects (whose analysis constitutes the two core chapters of this thesis, Chapters 4 and 5): Firstly, the impact of historical, cultural, political, economic and social factors on current theatre aesthetics in Sierra Leone (Chapter 4); and secondly, their influence on the structural, institutional and policy context for Sierra Leonean theatre and the CCIs more broadly (Chapter 5).

As such, this thesis is centred around the following main research question:

How does the continuum of local and global flows, in particular within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems, impact both theatre aesthetics and the policy, structural and institutional context for theatre production in Sierra Leone?

This main question, however, is connected to several additional, interlinked sub-questions examining the complex nature of these flows and their impact:

1. *Roles and responsibilities:* Who are the key stakeholders in the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone and what are their roles? Which agents, institutions, policies and laws govern local and global cultural flows, both in aesthetic and in structural terms, and the translation and potential transformation of global flows in Sierra Leone?
2. *Power relations and decision-making:* What are the power relations within the local and global flows? How are decisions influenced, made and implemented? What roles do globalisation, neoliberal capitalism, commodification and structural similarities between mechanics of globalisation, hegemonic power systems and geographies of inequality play within this?
3. *Historical legacies:* What is the history of theatre in Sierra Leone and how does it influence current theatre production? What is the legacy of colonialism and its influence on theatre, both in aesthetic and structural terms?
4. *Structures:* What are the cultural, social, political and economic factors that constitute and shape theatre production, distribution and consumption? What are the governance structures, policies, legal frameworks and infrastructure relevant for the Sierra Leonean theatre ecology? How is theatre financed?
5. *Effects:* What are the local effects of global cultural flows? What influence do national and international cultural policies, structures, institutions and relations have on the development of theatre (especially in terms of its specific techniques, content and production processes) and its wider ecology?

All these questions relate to the relationship and tensions between *culture and the political* (including both the implicit and explicit political dimensions of culture and how these translate into creative practices, cultural policy, public and governmental funding for the arts and the link between international development, institutional mechanisms, democracy and culture); between *culture and the economic* (including the economics of culture, creative economy and the contribution of culture to economic development, intellectual property laws and the valorisation of artistic products); and between *culture and the postcolonial / neocolonial*, examining the processes and effects of historical colonialism and more recent instruments and forms of control (such as the politics of contemporary developmental theatre and NGOs utilising local culture to advance global development goals).

The concept and definition of 'the postcolonial' is widely debated in the existing literature and criticised for its theoretical, political and temporal ambiguities (cf. Hall, 1996). But as cultural theorist Stuart Hall (1996) highlights, it is also because of these ambiguities and the tension between the epistemological and the chronological that 'the postcolonial' is a useful and productive concept, referring not only to the 'after' of the colonial but also 'going beyond' it. In this sense, I use the concept of the postcolonial – and by extension the concept of the postcolony – throughout this thesis to describe both the temporal aspect of 'the postcolonial' and the engagement with the cultural, political, social, economic, discursive and structural effects and legacies of colonisation and colonialism as well as the engagement with the responses to colonisation and colonialism. Following on from political theorist and politician Kwame Nkrumah's (1965) coining of it, I use the term 'neocolonial' to refer to practices, dynamics and instruments that pursue forms and effects of colonial control through cultural, political, social, economic, discursive and structural processes.

The politics of meanings across the three fields of tension mentioned above are contested between different orders of knowledge and cultural practices within the local-global dialectic and they are negotiated between individuals, cultural, social, political and economic structures and local and global institutions. This highlights the importance of recognizing and understanding the dynamic and reciprocal inter-relationships between culture, politics and the economy, thus rejecting the demarcation of these categories as is the case in classical political economy and appreciating the social context of production and of relations of authority in shaping the social relations of production (Venn, 2006). It also underlines the neo-Gramscian view that '[material] capabilities, institutions and meaning-making practices [...] together determine ways of being and doing in any specific space' (Venn, 2006, p. 123). Moving beyond aesthetics and theatre as an art form, this research thus envisages how theatre, as a form of cultural production and a cultural industry, and its wider ecology are influenced and shaped by the current context of cultural globalisation and commodification, local and global

hegemonies, international relations, international development paradigms and the more recent context of the global creative economy.

Sierra Leone is a pertinent case study for this research as it occupies an interesting position within the global flows of the past and present due to the complex composition of precolonial, colonial, postcolonial and post-conflict aspects in its make-up. As a consequence of the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism and extensive diasporas overseas, Sierra Leone maintains a very close relationship with the USA and the UK and is thus often thought to be influenced in a very specific and asymmetric way by the 'Americanisation' of the world. However, immigration to Sierra Leone by traders and entrepreneurs from the Middle East (especially Lebanon) over the past century and more recently by Chinese labourers, working mainly on new infrastructure projects, as well as regional migration across West Africa have led to a more heterogeneous ecology of cultural flows to Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone's more recent history has also been determined by its decade-long civil war (1991-2002), which not only destroyed many lives and livelihoods, but also local and national governance structures, which left the state and its institutions extremely fragile. The humanitarian and international development response to the crisis has added another layer of global flows to the Sierra Leonean context, especially in terms of governance and development paradigms. Last but not least, new digital media and technologies also assert and increase their influence on Sierra Leone's society and marketplace.

The ecology of culture in Sierra Leone is dominated by the informal, where transactions escape the formalisation and the authority of the state and its structures. The lack of public support (mostly a consequence of lacking resources and other governmental priorities such as infrastructure, education and health) and a relatively weak average buying power (which means that theatre is often considered a luxury by potential audiences) have led to a tendency among theatre companies to focus on educational and developmental theatre activities which are encouraged and funded by the influx of international aid money and NGOs since the end of the civil war. The following quote by a theatre and media professional in Sierra Leone encapsulates the issues that Sierra Leonean theatre faces:

People say: 'You used to write very good plays, why are you not [writing any more]?' I say: 'It's not a good business, financially.' Even if you don't make any profit, at least if you break even, then that's good. But if you put your money down the hole... it doesn't matter how much you love theatre, it won't work. [...] If there was a policy that the government would really subsidise, then I think we would be doing this and perhaps that is one way we could keep theatre going [...]. Otherwise, it's difficult, you can't keep people 3 weeks, 4 weeks rehearsing and then you don't pay them. So, I tried that, I said: 'I'll try it one more time and see.' [...] The first night was a full house, but after that it was just a struggle. And then I keep having [developmental theatre] contracts to do one after the other, and I can't just put aside those contracts to spend time doing theatre for entertainment. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

The existing theatre companies in Sierra Leone are thus only able to survive by responding to a specific demand for a specific kind of theatre directed by the development industry, using the more direct and dialogical nature of theatre to share information and 'educate' communities on matters such as health, women's and children's rights, hygiene and free elections.

The instrumentalisation of theatre, and culture in general, is not new. Throughout history and throughout the world, theatre has been used for external purposes such as propaganda, education or other socio-cultural functions within society (like giving structure to life through secular or secret performances). However, the African context is special, as performance has always been part of everyday life and thus has a crucial function within society. This and the above-mentioned factors make not only Sierra Leone a very interesting and apt case study, but also contemporary African theatre and theatre theory, especially at its intersection with postcolonial and cultural studies, an important platform to research current political, social and economic dynamics within the CCI's of the Global South.

The following section gives a more detailed overview of the research design and the methodology that underpinned this research.

1.4. Designing the research

As mentioned above, there are obvious tensions in this research project due to the 'critical invasion' of the postcolony and its cultural productions by me, the outsider, non-African researcher, who is not only of a different historical and socio-cultural background but also embedded in a specific institutional context with links to hegemonic epistemologies and analytical tools. These tensions are particularly pronounced when it comes to observing and analysing cultural practices, as anthropologist Jean-Loup Amselle writes:

Every anthropologist with genuine field experience [...] knows that the culture he observes dissolves into a series or a reservoir of conflictual or peaceful practices used by its actors to continually renegotiate their identity. To set these practices in stone amounts to an essentialist vision of culture, which is ultimately a modern form of racism. In this sense, ethnology can lead to a legitimization of exclusion. (Amselle, 1998, p. 2)

Hence, specific findings and conclusions of this research are in no way intended to essentialise or generalise the practices they describe. This does not mean, however, that they cannot be linked to larger and global issues of contemporary local cultural production within the context of globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems.

To avoid essentialism, universalisation and providing or even becoming a platform for neocolonial capture and exclusion, and more generally to attempt to decolonise this research and its design, methodology and presentation, it was important to acknowledge and

interrogate my own biases and positionality throughout the research process; and to do so 'at all levels – from the social and personal to the intellectual and political – as an active subject location of shifting reciprocity where meaning is made and not an essentialized location where meaning is discovered' (Nnaemeka, 2003, p. 361). This included reflecting upon the process of knowledge production and interpretation; from my 'embeddedness' in the theatre industry of Sierra Leone while working with the Freetong Players International to my 'embeddedness' as a PhD student in a university located in the Global North, my professional experiences across the cultural and creative industries in a number of other Sub-Saharan African countries, the literature I read and the people I interviewed, to questions such as 'what information, interpretations, voices, and experiences qualify as "expert"' (Kessi, Marks and Ramugondo, 2020, p. 272).

Therefore, the empirical research in particular, which is at the core of this thesis, was based on continuous critical reflection of the research tools, the position of the researcher as an intermediary – gathering, interpreting and presenting information – and inherent power relations. It was also important to map the intellectual terrain on different levels, such as including as many diverse voices and perspectives as possible and immersing myself in various discourses beyond the ones produced by the Global North and its hegemonic structures.

Globalisation's relationship and interconnectedness with culture and ensuing changes to local cultural forms, institutions, structures and policies are often only described as top-down processes, characterised by a predominantly international perspective. However, while moving around the globe cultural flows lose complexity and thus 'invite re-complexification at the point of local consumption' (Strathern, 1995, p. 168). Hence, to understand the localisation of global flows and the impact of globalisation on local cultural production, it is crucial to analyse contemporary global phenomena from below, pay attention to the local context of cultural production (in all its dimensions) and look for all the cracks, disjunctures and contradictions within the continuum of local and global flows.

The methodology for this research is therefore based on qualitative research, analysed from a political economy perspective and underpinned by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework situated at the intersection of postcolonial, cultural, theatre, international development and cultural policy studies. This theoretical and conceptual framework is employed to contextualise the empirical data, which has been collected via a multi-method approach, combining an in-depth observation and interpretative study of the Sierra Leonean CCIs (in particular of theatre), semi-structured interviews with local experts, theatre practitioners, arts managers, policy makers and representatives of international organisations with the analysis of Sierra Leone's cultural policy and legislative framework.

The current debate on the political economy of culture does not offer a single definition of this approach and some writers also prefer the term 'critical political economy' to differentiate their approach from classical political economists, such as Adam Smith, and the ambiguous role of states and large businesses in cultural production (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 52-53). But it is generally agreed that analysing cultural production from a political economy perspective requires a historicising and holistic approach, thus analysing cultural production as historically, politically, culturally, socially and economically situated. This approach also seeks to 'challenge the lack of an adequate ethical perspective in the neoclassical paradigm of mainstream economics' (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 53) and thus 'engage[s] with basic moral questions of justice, equity and the public good' (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p. 54). Analysing contemporary theatre production in Sierra Leone from a political economy perspective hence also involves the need to understand the relationships and interconnectedness between individuals, institutions, governments and public policies that constitute the production, distribution, consumption and regulation of cultural production, especially within the context of power structures shaped by colonialism, postcolonialism and globalisation.

Chapter 3 of this thesis therefore situates this research within its historical, political, social and cultural context, including the historical development of theatre in Sierra Leone. The empirical research, which makes up the core of this thesis (presented in Chapters 4 and 5) and underpins the originality of this research, covers, in terms of its temporality, the developments within the ecology of theatre since the end of the civil war in 2002 and especially the developments over the last decade (2010–2020).

My empirical research in and about Sierra Leone (for which I also completed an ethics review) provided me with essential qualitative data about current theatrical and other creative practices, their political economy and the relationship between the aesthetic, the institutional, the political and the economic in the continuum between 'the local' and 'the global'. Following sustained observation of the Sierra Leonean CCIs, and theatre in particular, since September 2010, when I started working with Freetong Players International, more targeted research was undertaken in June and July 2016. This was aimed at gathering information on recent developments, also within the context of the Ebola epidemic between spring 2014 and March 2016, when Sierra Leone was declared Ebola free by the WHO.

The research in Sierra Leone in 2016 entailed semi-structured interviews with 27 individuals (some of whom I met and interviewed several times), which provided me with updates on and more detailed insights into developments within the ecology of theatre, both on an aesthetic and on a policy, structural and institutional level. The time I spent in Sierra Leone in 2016 and another trip to Freetown in March 2017 as part of another research project, commissioned by the British Council, also granted unplanned encounters and conversations as well as participation in and attendance of formal group discussions, informal debates,

rehearsals, performances and visits to a number of different organisations and sites. All this added to my contextual knowledge and provided me an entry point into existing conversations about what is important to cultural producers and workers. After I returned to my PhD research in April 2020 following the interruption of my studies, I conducted another series of interviews with five individuals, three of whom I had interviewed before, to receive further insights and updates on recent developments, this time also in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. The table in Appendix A lists all interviewees by reference number and their role, and outlines the time, place and form of communication with them (which included face-to-face interviews, interviews via online platforms, written interviews and follow-ups via email and WhatsApp). For coherence and ease of reading, I refer to all these forms of communication as ‘personal communication’ when quoting them in the main body of the thesis.

These in-depth qualitative interviews gave me access to information otherwise not available and brought me to certain conclusions that led me to review the theoretical and conceptual framework, investigating some aspects more widely or in more detail and abandoning other research trajectories. The interviewees thus also helped produce knowledge ‘from below’ in a circular fashion, separate from any agendas from above or without.

The format and structure of the interviews followed the same guidelines across all interview partners, but individual questions were added to the core template questions (which are listed in Appendix B), depending on the specific context and priorities of different interlocutors. At the beginning of each interview, I discussed issues of confidentiality and anonymity with the interviewee and asked for their consent to include their views in this thesis (which was given by all interviewees). The interviews were conducted in English and based on focused, but open-ended questions, thorough observation, active listening and ad-hoc follow-up questions on specific themes that emerged during the interview, giving interviewees the space to talk freely and explore processes in their own terms.

In addition to taking notes, I recorded the conversations, if permission to record was granted (which was the case for all interviews). Recording of the conversations allowed me to concentrate on the actual conversation and interact more with the interviewee, producing a more detailed and accurate record of our interaction and thus enabling a more in-depth analysis of both the collected data and of how the narrative process unfolded in the interview. The latter is as important as the former, because people do not interact in a historical and socio-cultural vacuum but are embedded in and draw on broader cultural, institutional and organisational contexts – which makes interviews embodied productions of socially embedded and performative character (Rapley, 2004). Hence, to conduct and analyse interviews as situated, co-constituted and interactional events acknowledges that ‘interview interactions are inherently spaces in which both speakers are constantly “doing analysis” – both speakers are

engaged (and collaborating in) “making meaning” and “producing knowledge” (Rapley, 2004, p. 30).

My analysis and coding of the interviews progressed along three levels to identify the key themes, issues and meanings in the data set (Watts, 2014). While the first order or descriptive coding served to ascertain meaning in the data, the second order led to the abstraction of super-ordinate constructs and themes from the data, based on data-driven interpretation. Finally, the third order or pattern coding placed the super-ordinate constructs within the wider conceptual and theoretical framework of this research, with further interpretation drawing upon external theories and concepts.

Most observations and quotes drawn from this analysis are anonymized in this thesis, to protect interviewees and their openness and to permit critical engagement with the data without compromising the ‘informants’. Only when the identity of my interviewees would have been obvious from their quote or the context of the analysis, I used the real names of interviewees to avoid cross-referencing with other, more sensitive quotes.

The fact that the trajectory of this research has been characterised and shaped by a *longue durée* engagement with cultural production in Sierra Leone since 2010 affords me a longer-term perspective on cultural developments in Sierra Leone, and the wider region, and thus enables me to contextualise the empirical data in a more holistic and historicising manner. Furthermore, the access I have benefited from during this time, both specifically in terms of this research and more widely in professional terms (as noted above), also enabled me to reach, I would argue, more nuanced and holistic conclusions. But this *longue durée* approach as well as the circular relationship between theory and practice, mentioned above, also led to necessary updates of some parts of the research, taking into account new developments and changes over the last decade in the ecology of culture in Sierra Leone as well as in the discourse on cultural production in the postcolony more generally.

1.5. Thesis structure

In this introductory first chapter I have situated my research, outlined its disciplinary context and described its design and the methodology underpinning it. The remainder of this thesis is developed over five further chapters, which can be summarised as follows. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the theoretical, conceptual and historical context that this interdisciplinary research inscribes itself in; they situate this thesis within existing research and discourses, lay out its key parameters and clarify the terminology used throughout the thesis. Chapters 4 and 5 constitute the core of this thesis and underpin the originality of this research, presenting the qualitative empirical research that this study is based on, contextualised by the theoretical, conceptual and historical framework developed in the earlier chapters.

Chapter 2 thus establishes the theoretical and conceptual framework for this research. Based on a brief discussion of the multifaceted concept of 'culture' and its evolution over time, especially within the context of colonialism, and of the dialectics surrounding the notions of 'the local' and 'the global', Chapter 2 traces the reification and commodification of culture and explores the concepts of globalisation of culture, the CCIs and the creative economy as well as the relationship between culture and development.

A grounded analysis of contemporary theatre and its ecology necessitates an understanding of their aesthetic and socio-historical foundations, which relate not only to theatrical, formal and spatial developments and the socio-cultural contexts of actors and audiences, but also to wider political, economic, historical, cultural and structural factors. Hence, to be able to analyse contemporary theatre production and its ecology in Sierra Leone throughout Chapters 4 and 5 from a political economy perspective and to understand the relationships between individuals, institutions, governments and public policies as they constitute the production, distribution, consumption and regulation of cultural production in Sierra Leone, **Chapter 3** establishes the necessary context by discussing relevant Sierra Leonean historical, political, cultural and social developments and dynamics. The first part of Chapter 3 thus provides a brief account of Sierra Leone's modern history, with a focus on the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism, and analyses the historical, political and cultural developments and legacies that have shaped Sierra Leone, the role and authority of the postcolonial state and its institutions and governmentality. The second part of Chapter 3 examines the origins, history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone, which set the foundations for contemporary theatre in the country. As such, it begins by outlining the characteristics of indigenous African theatre before giving a diachronic account of Sierra Leonean theatre, from precolonial, indigenous theatre via theatre developments in the wake of colonisation (1787 to 1961) to theatre in the postcolonial era until the civil war (1961 to 1991).

Based on this outline of Sierra Leonean theatre's context, history and development in Chapter 3, **Chapter 4** focuses on a micro-level analysis of contemporary Krio theatre since the end of the civil war and the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes within the context of a continuum of local and global flows, especially in terms of the cultural, political, social and economic factors that shaped the past two decades in Sierra Leone. As such, it identifies particularly the relationship between contemporary Krio theatre and the development industry and develops a wider critical argument about the strategies, compromises and transformation of local theatre practices in the wake of current flows and structures reinforced by neoliberal globalisation, commodification and the paradigm of culture and development.

Chapter 5 focuses on the macro-level, the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone, and on the impact of historical, cultural, political, economic and social factors on the relevant policy,

structural and institutional context. As many of the issues Sierra Leonean theatre faces, especially at the macro-level, also apply to the CCIs more generally, the chapter analyses the policy, legislative, structural and institutional framework that constitutes and shapes cultural production, distribution, consumption and regulation in Sierra Leone more broadly. As such, Chapter 5 also locates both the enabling potential and possible threats of governance structures, legal frameworks and infrastructure as well as the role of international cultural organisations and cultural relations for viable and sustainable CCIs in the postcolony.

The conclusions in **Chapter 6** draw on the arguments developed throughout this thesis to relate its findings to the larger debate on contemporary cultural production within the continuum of local and global flows against the backdrop of contemporary globalisation, commodification, international development and existing hegemonic systems. Based on the insights, opinions and views of experts and practitioners in Sierra Leone highlighted throughout this thesis, the conclusions also point towards ways of thinking and points of action that can lead towards a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector, while also being sensitive to local complexities.

2. Mapping the reification, commodification and globalisation of culture

This chapter lays out the theoretical and conceptual framework that underpins this research, located at the intersection of postcolonial, cultural, theatre, international development and cultural policy studies, to situate this thesis within existing literature and discourses, but also to lay out its key parameters and clarify the use of specific concepts and terminologies throughout this thesis. For ease of reading, the following sections are organised by the core concepts that have shaped and guided this study. But the critical discussion throughout this chapter aims to illustrate how these concepts have been brought together and integrated in the overall framework upon which this interdisciplinary study has been based, also bringing visibility to postcolonial issues within these, in order to understand the functions and functioning of contemporary theatre production in Sierra Leone. As such, this chapter explores the reification and commodification of culture, the dialectics surrounding the concepts of ‘the local’ and ‘the global’, the relationship between globalisation and culture, the CCIs and the global creative economy, and the concept of ‘culture and development’; especially as these concepts and the discourses related to them are relevant for Sierra Leone and this particular research.

2.1 The reification and commodification of culture

Before discussing the reification and commodification of culture, it is useful to outline the historical development of the multifaceted and complicated concept of ‘culture’ itself, especially within the context of colonialism which is most relevant to this research, as this conceptual development is a record of the historic political, economic and social dynamics that eventually led to the reification and commodification of culture and subsequently also to the conception of the cultural and creative industries and the creative economy.

The etymology of the modern term ‘culture’ can be traced back to classical antiquity where the Latin term *cultura* and its derivatives had a number of different meanings and uses, all of which, however, referred to a concrete process, especially to the tending of natural growth, including ‘inhabit, cultivate, protect, honour with worship’ (Williams, 1976, p. 87). Only from the 16th century was the meaning extended from the concrete ‘tending of nature’ to the more metaphorical process of human cultivation and the development of human subjectivity. The metaphorical use of the term describing these individual processes was over time widened to depict a more general, abstract process and the product of such a process, as such also referring to ‘civilisation’ and the notion of a universal ‘historical self-development of humanity’ (Williams, 1976, p. 89). The latter usage became prominent in the 18th and early 19th century,

coinciding with the increase of imperialism and colonialism and their ideological justifications based on 'civilising missions' (Young, 2014, pp. 1056-1058).

This unilinear and universalist approach (framed by the way of life of European elites) was criticised by some scholars at the time, who argued for a use of the term 'culture' in the plural, to appropriately describe 'the specific and variable cultures of different nations and periods, but also the specific and variable cultures of social and economic groups within a nation' (Williams, 1976, p. 89). This connotation led to the rise of 'culture' as a central concept in archaeology and anthropology, describing learned behaviour and activities. In this sense 'culture' refers to the classification of both a specific way of life of specific peoples *and* the material production and representation of experiences through actual symbols. This culturalist and essentialist approach, which categorises people by their forms of thought and practices and interprets culture as a natural property of spatially localised people (often equated with regional or national borders), is, however, based on the 'relationship among distant societies through exploration or conquest [reinforced through colonialism and imperialism], as well as the selection of decontextualised cultural traits' (Amselle, 1998, p. 2).

'Modern' ideas of universality and cultural purity as well as Eurocentric civilisation and modernisation theories, which had developed within European history of thought and were underpinned by capitalist systems, helped to justify and explain colonialism and its inherent hegemony. Furthermore, the categorisation of distinct ethnic groups helped to administer and expand the colonies. Cultural essentialism and the naturalisation of colonial relations between Europeans and non-Europeans thus provided legitimation for separation and exclusion, which further enhanced the colonial project, its governmentality and matrix of power (Mignolo, 2011), spreading Eurocentric norms and controlling the economy, authority, subjectivity, culture, knowledge and the production of knowledge, gender and sexuality. Built on the paradigm of culture's transcendent status, nineteenth-century anthropology and the rigid systems of classification of 'modern' Western dualist thinking thus led to the conception of cultures and their expressions as closed, separate and different entities, de-contextualised and de-historicised in their totality (Amselle, 1998; Appadurai, 1988, 1996; Clifford, 1997; Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, 1993, 1997; Geschiere, 2009; Gupta and Ferguson, 1992). Anthropology has since been widely criticised for these essentialist and dualist views and the idea that culture is a natural property of spatially localised people, often equated with the boundaries of a nation-state (Amselle, 1998; Appadurai, 1988, 1996; Clifford, 1997; Gupta and Ferguson, 1992).

The conception of distinct ethnic groups, along the lines of their cultural 'traditions', was especially contradictory in Africa, where indigenous groups and their relationship with each other had been characterised by fluidity, flexibility and synthesis. Colonisation thus 'dissolved networks of interconnectedness [...], replaced [them] by circumscribed and reified societies

and cultures' (Amselle, 1998, p. xiii) and created different kinds of imperial subjects through rigorous disciplinary structures. As many Africanists, historians and political analysts continue to highlight (e.g., Adejumbi, 2001; Blanton, Mason and Athow, 2001; Mamdani, 1996), contemporary ethnic conflicts in Africa are a direct consequence of the imposition of these classificatory systems and categorisations on originally fluid groups.

But the introduction of classificatory systems through colonialism also led to the more pronounced conceptualisation of the colonising cultures themselves, in order to produce and highlight the difference from the 'Other', thereby attempting to fix and construct cultural characteristics and differences. The colonial attempt to 'modernise' Africa thus created dialectical processes that changed the everyday lives of everybody involved, both of the colonisers and the colonised, engendering hybrid cultural forms (despite the claims about cultures being separate and fixed entities) and setting off both local and global dynamics that continue to affect our contemporary times. Several African studies scholars, anthropologists as well as cultural and postcolonial theorists (e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992; Venn, 2000) argue that the whole 'modernity project' and its rise in Europe, thus not only the economic, but also the cultural and 'moral' development of Europe, were built on these colonial encounters, the privileges of a hegemonic system and the dialectics between the 'centre' and 'periphery', which both created and limited each other. Colonialism and its links to the rise of liberal capitalism (Venn, 2009) were thus also crucial for the making of the European metropole. This perspective, which challenges the simple dichotomy between 'the centre' and 'the periphery' – while recognising that the periphery was necessary for the production and rise of the centre – and which highlights the complex and multidirectional nature of the flows between them, is particularly useful for this research in terms of thinking through the directions and reception of global cultural flows.

In summary, throughout modernity and its Eurocentric view of universal teleology, but also as a consequence of colonialism, 'culture' and its various forms of representation have come to be used to categorise people as separate and different entities, to define distinct ethnic groups and to reify and differentiate their respective customs. But postcolonial and cultural studies show that cultures and their expressions are – and always have been – inherently hybrid products of complex and instable processes and cultural flows.

The reification of culture and the focus on similarities and differences between cultures is also linked to the notions of 'authenticity', 'tradition' and 'folklore', which have also evolved within Eurocentric ideologies of universal development and modernisation theories and the dualist thinking reinforced by Enlightenment, modernity and colonialism mentioned above. 'Authenticity', 'tradition' and 'folklore' are used to describe unchanging and fixed aspects of cultures, which portray them as monocultures. The concept of monocultures is, however, not only theoretically problematic, but also historically impossible, because all cultures have

emerged historically from local, regional and transnational flows and multiple influences, and have thus always been far from being static – as African studies scholars Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff highlight in the following quote:

Culture always contains within it polyvalent, potentially contestable messages, images and actions. It is, in short, a historically situated, historically unfolding ensemble of signifiers-in-action, signifiers at once material and symbolic, social and aesthetic. (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, p. 28)

Despite this predominantly academic recognition of the synthetic nature of cultures, so-called traditional arts continue to celebrate ‘the authentic’, ‘the primordial’ and ‘the intemporal’, in opposition to ‘the ephemeral’, ‘artificial’ and ‘corrupted’. Furthermore, there are increasing concerns about the disappearance of ‘traditions’, and the ‘authentic’ identities they found, due to intensified cross-cultural contact and the weakening of ‘authentic minority cultures’ due to the ‘Westernisation’ or ‘Americanisation’ of the whole world in the wake of cultural neo-imperialism and globalisation. I will discuss this fear of cultural loss and homogenisation in more detail later in this chapter (in Section 2.3 on the globalisation of culture) and then in relation to the particular case of Sierra Leone and the aesthetics of theatre in Chapter 4. It is important though to note at this point that these concerns can be both a result of an Orientalist view – constructing ‘other’ cultures as static and frozen in a time warp of ‘tradition’ – and a reaction by indigenous communities in the Global South to increasing levels and speeds of potentially unwanted change.

This also highlights how concepts such as ‘tradition’ and ‘authenticity’ are very politically charged and often utilised in dichotomous ways within hegemonic systems (Lo, 2002; Young, 1995). For example, when (ab)used by one group (usually the majority) to categorise cultural representations and find legitimations for exclusion, the sign of ‘the authentic’, driven also by the dominant’s desire for ‘the exotic’, can become a fetishized commodity. On the other hand, to resort to the notion of ‘authenticity’ or ‘tradition’ might allow another group (usually the minority) to represent and assert their cultural history, identity and authority. While this involves the danger of being reductionist and essentialist, it also provides potential for agency through the capacity to shape markers of authenticity.

Despite various attempts, described further above, to conceptualise cultures as fixed entities, locked in and by dichotomies, they are in fact shifting semantic fields that continuously produce changing symbols and materialisations. This performative aspect of culture thus confirms that the world is not composed by separate and internally homogenous cultures, each characterised by their own unique essence. The performativity of culture is also increasingly identified as a valuable (and fundable) tool for change and is thus being instrumentalised and commodified in economic, local regeneration, development and cultural

policy discourses. However, this is not a completely new phenomenon, as culture as a commodity has a long history.

Commodification describes ‘the process of something becoming understood as a commodity [something that has both use value and exchange value according to Karl Marx], as well as the state of affairs once this has taken place’ (Ertman and Williams, 2005, p. 1); in other words, it describes the transformation of goods, services, practices, ideas and other entities into a commodity, and it thus renders previously unsaleable entities into saleable objects. This transformation does not have to form part of mass production processes, but it affects how people value things, practices, themselves and others. Hence, although cultural products and services are created, produced and distributed in different ways to other merchandises, they still can and need to be studied as commodities, as they are also considered as socioeconomic factors engrossed in local, national and global policies.

The commodification of culture, directed by complex political, economic and social processes, can be traced along the lines of intricate historical developments outlined in the remainder of this section. Economic processes are considered to have been closely linked to social norms before the establishment of the market society, ‘organised around the principles of reciprocity, redistribution and subsistence production’ (Best and Paterson, 2010, p. 3). Common goods such as labour, land and money were, however, transformed into commodities in the wake of the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of the market economy, a supposedly self-regulating system directed by market prices and the premise to keep production up – which had immense consequences for the organisation of society itself, as economic historian and sociologist Karl Polanyi points out:

Labor and land are no other than the human beings themselves of which every society consists and the natural surroundings in which it exists. To include them in the market mechanism means to subordinate the substance of society itself to the laws of the market. (Polanyi, 2001, p. 75)

Culture, which had been considered as an end in itself and an autonomous sphere where people developed their subjectivity, followed. With Polanyi, one could thus argue that extending the rationale, mechanisms and laws of the market to culture turned ‘intellectual and especially artistic activity’, ‘intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development’ and every ‘particular way of life’ (following cultural studies scholar and critic Raymond Williams’ definitions of ‘culture’, Williams, 1976, p. 90) into an economic function. As a consequence, ‘human society [becomes] an accessory of the economic system’ (Polanyi, 2001, p. 79). It has since, however, been argued that this ‘disembedding’ of culture, economy and politics as a consequence of the confrontation between the economic as an autonomous and self-regulating entity and the social, political and cultural realms never took place as such; it did

not detach markets from culture, but instead reconstructed what the content of 'culture' was (Best and Paterson, 2010).

While this may be true and while the historical, political and economic context is also different in the Global South and especially in the postcolony (which this in-depth study of Sierra Leone demonstrates), Polanyi's foregrounding of the fact that the ideology of the free-market economy served specific new industrial interests at the time of the commodification of labour, land and money highlights the interrelatedness between hegemonic ideologies and their economic strategies, often disguised as economic science and policy. This point is still relevant today. Furthermore, Polanyi's analysis of the domination of the capitalist market rationale remains important to the critic of today's flows within the global neoliberal order.

With modernity, the move from feudalism to capitalism and the commodification of common goods came the emphasis on private ownership and thus also the requirement to 'own' a culture and, with and through it, an identity. However, commodity production as such, which has a longer history than capitalism, cannot be conflated with capitalism. It is the latter's principle of unlimited accumulation which also industrialised, capitalised and commodified culture and subjected it to the laws of the market economy. The development of technologies of reproduction further simplified and accelerated the commodification of culture (and continues to do so with contemporary technologies of digitalisation). The culture industry was born, as cultural studies scholars Scott Lash and Celia Lury explain:

Culture, once a space of freedom, came under the principle of instrumental rationality [...]. It meant that culture, previously a source of edification, the Bildung of human potential, turned into a machinery of control, whose main goal was the expenditure of resources in the interests of the financial profitability of corporate oligopolies. Culture took on the same principle of accumulation already widespread in the capitalist economy. [...] Now culture, previously associated with the development of human subjectivity, became objective like any other commodity. (Lash and Lury, 2007, pp. 2-3)

The emergence of the industrial dimension of cultural activities led, once more, to debates about definitions (including the recurring questions 'What is culture?' and 'What kind of artistic expressions may be included in this 'culture'?), but also introduced the notion of the production of culture. The latter is significant insofar as it moved the debate on from the previous notion of culture as a product, 'defined by elite groups and categorised by material qualities, or experiences, with a dominant reference to the past' (Pratt, 2004, p. 13). The notion of the production of culture highlights instead the various creation, support and distribution activities as well as the resources and infrastructure that are needed.

Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (1969), among the most notable critics of this new culture industry, postulated that culture was being homogenised as a result of its commodification and submission to the economic principles of industrial capitalism. Their

criticism of cultural mass production, popular culture, its instrumentalisation for hegemonic purposes and the subsequent loss of any critical culture has, however, since been put into perspective by the work of other scholars, who highlighted the duplicity of culture and its potential to also be a source of resistance (e.g., Gilroy, 1992; Hall and Jefferson, 1976). These latter authors argue that culture, while being a commodity and as such subjected to the laws of capital, has also always had the potential to defy and subvert the latter. Furthermore, it has been suggested that the 'specific allure' (including the local context) of cultural commodities leads to a volatility of demand and thus the inability to completely control it in a hegemonic sense (e.g., Peterson, 1990; Ryan, 1992; Caves, 2000). Lash and Lury (2007) have also argued that since Adorno, Horkheimer and Hall, globalisation has changed the *modus operandi* of the culture industry.¹ As a result, 'culture', previously set in the superstructure, collapsed into the infrastructure and thus moved from the symbolic to the real. As such it no longer primarily works in terms of domination and resistance. Culture has instead become ubiquitous and part of everyday life.

An issue that arises with regards to the above theories about the commodification of culture and their application in the African context relates to the fact that indigenous African cultures, and expressions that emerge from the latter, have always been ubiquitous and part of everyday life in indigenous African societies. Hence, the meaning and consequences of commodification, but also the concepts of cultural dominance and resistance, need to be analysed within their specific local context, just as the notion of 'culture' itself.

[A] commodity does not bestow an unequivocal meaning on cultural life and commodification does not necessarily lead to a reconfiguration of ontologies; instead, the meaning of commodity is culturally negotiated – commodity does not mean the same thing in all places and to all people. (Mukhopadhyay, 2012, p. 28)

The unstable meanings of commodities thus also provide opportunities for agency and control and 'make them potentially or actually liberating, and not just potentially or actually subjugating' (Radin and Sunder, 2005, p. 14), for example by enforcing the right to compensation for cultural losses by indigenous peoples or regulating the use of a community's cultural symbols for commercial purposes outside the community. The danger here, however, is that the right or the capability to commodify is also embedded in hegemonic structures, so the question remains who dominates and controls the terms of the sale – a question that is at the core of this study of the flows impacting theatre in Sierra Leone. The example of the right to compensation for communities (to which I come back when analysing the legislative context for Sierra Leonean theatre and the CCIs more broadly in Chapter 5) also raises further

¹ The conceptual move from Adorno and Horkheimer's culture industry (in the singular) to the contemporary cultural and creative industries (in the plural) and the more recent discourse on the creative economy will be discussed in Section 2.4.

questions about the politics of belonging, determining inclusion and exclusion, which I discuss in the next two sections of this chapter.

Appadurai also argues that it is politics (in the wider sense of relations, assumptions and struggles linked to power) that connects the value and exchange of commodities:

What is political about this process is not just the fact that it signifies and constitutes relations of privilege and social control. What is political about it is the constant tension between the existing frameworks (of price, bargaining, and so forth) and the tendency of commodities to breach these frameworks. This tension itself has its source in the fact that not all parties share the same interests in any specific regime of value, nor are the interests of any two parties in a given exchange identical. [...] Yet, since commodities constantly spill beyond the boundaries of specific cultures (and thus of specific regimes of value), [...] political control of demand is always threatened with disturbance. (Appadurai, 2005, pp. 42-43)

The recent discourse on commodification is not only characterised by a relativisation of the meaning of commodity, but also by arguments against the bifurcation of the world into 'an economic arena dominated by rational self-interest and self-interest alone ("the market"), and a sharply different arena of intimacy and altruism that must be protected from the kind of instrumental behaviour that is appropriate in market contexts [...], [as] intimate relations typically have economic dimensions, and market relations often do not adhere to the model of self-interest and self-interest alone' (Ertman and Williams, 2005, p. 4). The postmodern cultural studies approach to commodification, in particular, which focuses on the production and circulation of meanings as commodities traverse different local and global flows, questions the binary and totalising categories of modern Western dualist thinking, such as commodified versus noncommodified, gift versus sale, market versus family or material versus spiritual (Radin and Sunder, 2005).

Appadurai also argues for an approach to commodities at the juncture of temporal, cultural and social factors; 'as things in a certain situation, a situation that can characterize many different kinds of things, at different points in their social lives, [this means] looking at the commodity potential of all things rather than searching fruitlessly for the magic distinction between commodities and other sorts of things' (Appadurai, 2005, p. 36). This also challenges 'the production-dominated Marxian view of the commodity, [...] focusing on its total trajectory from production, through exchange/distribution, to consumption' (Appadurai, 2005, p. 36).

The relationship between culture and commodification is thus characterised by a number of tensions, contradictions and ambiguities, as the following quote illustrates. But their relationship also must be seen within the context of hegemonic structures.

This view of culture and commodities in opposition – with culture as a differentiating impulse and commodification as a homogenizing one – evokes a deeper tension between meaning and markets. Under one view, commodification aids culture-building – individuals express and create commonality through

markets. Under another view, markets strip away local meanings and contexts, universalizing a good and making it common, rather than unique. And when global markets are controlled by powerful, Western corporations, their universalizing goods and services overrun local ones: cultural and market imperialism converge. And yet, placing cultural commodities outside the market by declaring them sacrosanct can also impede cultural evolution. As Appadurai warns, 'enclaving' cultural resources – controlling culture through select guardians of culture – favors the powerful members of society. (Radin and Sunder, 2005, p. 12)

In addition to this, there are further dynamics and market forces at play in the postcolony. The commodification of culture in the postcolony is also shaped by dynamics of cultural essentialism, external appropriation and exoticism, 'an aestheticising process through which the cultural other is translated, relayed back through the familiar' (Huggan, 2001, p. ix). While the initial fascination with and desire for 'the exotic' was fed by European exploration of the world and the following colonisation thereof, contemporary exoticism can be linked to globalisation and 'commodifying processes by which generalised cultural differences are manufactured, discriminated and consumed, [...] [supported by a] fetishising process, which turns the [...] cultures of the "non-Western" world into saleable exotic objects' (Huggan, 2001, p. 10). However, there is again potential for agency in this hegemonic system as 'exoticism', just like 'authenticity' and 'tradition', can also be re-politicised, 'redeployed both to unsettle metropolitan expectations of cultural otherness and to effect a grounded critique of differential relations of power' (Huggan, 2001, p. ix-x). An alternative and independent cultural and creative sector, which many of Sierra Leone's artists and creative entrepreneurs increasingly seek to foster, can provide a platform for such critique and also deconstruct stereotypes of 'authenticity' and 'exoticism'.

As in the Global North, business, economics and culture are also becoming increasingly entwined in many postcolonies, often at a cost to artistic experimentation and the development of a more independent cultural and creative sector. The difference in the postcolony (especially in many sub-Saharan African countries) is, however, that due to an often weak local buying power, certain cultural productions are targeted solely at external audiences or consumers. These cultural productions are thus completely market-driven, responding to what is favoured by tourists and international buyers, and can therefore easily become fetishised commodities.

To reflect the wide range of existing discourses, practices and dynamics surrounding the multifaceted and complicated concept of 'culture', as touched upon in this section, I have decided to follow cultural theorists Yudhishtir Raj Isar and Helmut Anheier's (2010) conceptualisation of culture for this research. When discussing 'culture' I thus refer to a broad understanding of it, as follows, unless otherwise stated:

Culture is the social construction, articulation and reception of meaning. It is the lived and creative experience for individuals and a body of artefacts, symbols, texts

and objects. Culture involves enactment and representation. It embraces art and art discourse, the symbolic world of meanings, the commodified output of the cultural industries as well as the spontaneous or enacted, organized or unorganized cultural expressions of everyday life, including social relations. It is constitutive of both collective and individual identity. (Isar and Anheier, 2010, p. 5)

Although the production of cultural meanings, symbols and expressions is very much embedded in and shaped by local realities, as discussed throughout this section, these meanings, symbols and expressions are also linked to dynamics at the global level, which are also impacted by cultural, historical, social, political and economic factors. The following two sections are therefore concerned with the dialectic between 'the local' and 'the global' (Section 2.2) and the definition of and discourse on globalisation and its relationship to culture (Section 2.3).

2.2 Local, Global and Glocal

In his writing on the cultural dimensions of globalisation, Appadurai categorises the global flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas in the following five '-scapes': ethnoscaples (characterised by the movement of people), technoscapes (the movement and distribution of technologies), financescapes (global capital and financial transfers), mediascapes (referring to the distribution of the electronic capabilities to produce and disseminate information as well as the images created by these media) and ideoscapes (referring to ideas, discourses and symbols) (Appadurai, 1996, pp. 33-36).

These global cultural flows have extended or even annihilated the boundaries and limitations of concepts such as 'nation' and 'identity', which in turn also complicates the notion of 'locality' as an analytical category and a point of reference. The recent discourse on globalisation thus deconstructs the conception of 'the local' as a naturally given, fixed and stable entity (similar to the deconstruction of the static and homogenising notion of culture described above), highlighting that at no point in history localities were 'pure' and 'authentic'.

There is no point of departure – localities never had any timeless 'authenticity' secreting 'ontological moorings' for their members. To talk of 'global flows' resulting from capitalist globalization (Appadurai) or the 'multiscalar' nature of today's local (Sassen), is to assume that once these boundaries were impermeable, that there was no transgression. (Mukhopadhyay, 2012, p. 6)

To speak of *the* global and *the* local is thus not only theoretically, but also empirically, incorrect; not only because both concepts do not represent fixed entities and always exist in the plural, but also because they do not mutually exclude each other. The conception of their rigid, impermeable dichotomy is flawed, because 'if one focuses on the local it vanishes in the realisation that one person's local forms are another's global ones, and vice versa' (Strathern, 1995, p. 169). 'The global' and 'the local' are thus not binary oppositions, but intrinsically linked

to each other through a dialectic relationship and thus affect and constitute each other. Cultural studies scholar Bhaskar Mukhopadhyay even describes 'the global' as 'an inflated local, in the triumphant assertions about the epochal and ubiquitous character of globalization' (Mukhopadhyay, 2012, p. 8).

Hence, if the two concepts are grounded in one another and in their relationship, 'each is also grounded in the contrast between them' (Strathern, 1995, p. 158). Whereas 'the global' is self-referential, 'summons no further exemplification [and represents] whatever we imagine as intractable [and] a macrocosm, a complete image, [...] [requiring] no theoretical underpinning' (Strathern, 1995, p. 167), 'the local', representing specificities and thus also differences, is a 'relational epithet [...], [which] you cannot imagine [...] alone' (Strathern, 1995, p. 167). According to anthropologist Marilyn Strathern, drawing on cultural anthropologist Roy Wagner's theory of conceptualisation, the dialectical relationship and interaction between these two seemingly conflicting perspectives is crucial to the development and the history of humankind, as 'human subjects construct nothing without moving between macrocosm, an entity in non-reducible, self-referential form, and microcosm, a specifying and thus reducing or limiting system of references' (Strathern, 1995, p. 167). This perspective has been crucial for this research, not only in terms of thinking through the relationship between the microcosm in the sense of Sierra Leone and the macrocosm in the sense of the world, but also in terms of analysing the inherent links between the microcosm of theatre aesthetics and the macrocosm of the wider ecology of theatre.

This concurrent presence of both universalising and particularising dynamics and the continuum in which the local and the global intersect also define other concepts linked to the discourse on the local / global dialectics: 'Globalization' describes 'the imperialistic ambitions of nations, corporations, organizations, and the like and their desire, indeed need, to impose themselves on various geographic areas' (Ritzer, 2007, p. 15). 'Glocalisation' refers to the permeation and the interdependency of the local and the global, challenging the notion of globalisation as a linear process from the centre to the periphery, and is thus closely linked to notions such as hybridity and the relativity of space (Robertson, 1992).

This notion of hybridity of 'the local' and 'the global' is crucial for this research as it underpins the hypothesis that artistic, cultural and creative production happens in a continuum of cultural flows, transformation and translation across localities, regions and national borders. Throughout this thesis the analysis of the local reception, decoding, interpretation and appropriation of global cultural ideas, trends, discourses and policies in Sierra Leone establishes how global cultural flows are disseminated and consumed in a specific locality and how this contributes to the production of hybrid forms. I argue throughout the remainder of this thesis that cultural productions, such as theatre, respond to macrocosmic processes through microcosmic transformation and translation, embedding their historical development in their

local cultural, social, political and economic context. The perspective of a continuous seesaw between macrocosm and microcosm also points to the duplicity of attempts to essentialise the local.

In the case of Sierra Leone, processes of glocalisation can be identified at various stages in history, as will be described in more detail in the next chapters, by a returned focus on 'the traditional' and 'the local' (to support, for example, identity and nation building) and an ensuing localisation of global symbols and their materialisation. Strategies of glocalisation can also be identified in various examples of Sierra Leonean cultural productions, such as the use of popular Western cultural forms in indigenous masked performances or the localising transformation of African American music.

It is crucial, however, not only to analyse transnational movements and ensuing hybrid cultural forms, but also the production of locality itself (Appadurai, 1996); including globalisation's ambiguous role in the making and unmaking of localities and in the relationship between flux and constant (Meyer and Geschiere, 1999). Despite the theoretical complications discussed above, tendencies towards localisation and essentialising 'the local' have increased as a kind of balancing reaction to intensified neoliberal and digital globalisation and its accelerated global flows. These tendencies also figure as the backdrop for increased debates about the politics of belonging and the dialectics between autochthony and cosmopolitanism, marked by 'a fascination with globalization's open horizons [that] is accompanied by determined efforts toward boundary-making and closure, expressed in terms of belonging and exclusion' (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001, p. 161).

Although it has been argued that Appadurai's 'locality' coincides too much with the idea of geographical space and 'the ethnological notion of place as locations of coherence' (Mukhopadhyay, 2012, p. 6), Appadurai's notion of 'the production of locality' is still useful for this research, as it stresses the fact that locality and 'the local' are not constant and fixed entities but are continuously produced and performed by multiple and potentially diverging or even opposite dynamics. This also means that a locality can be considered as a particular moment in networks of relations – be they social, economic or cultural.

The intrinsic relationship between 'the global' and 'the local', but also the agency of 'the local', are further confirmed by the fact that global conceptualisations and flows are always received and embedded at a local level, which indicates that meaning is negotiated and produced locally – as Comaroff states so clearly in the quote below.

Denotations may be global. But connotation is always local: meaning is never inherent in a sign, it is always filtered through a culturally endowed eye or ear. (Comaroff, 1996, p. 174)

This is also apparent in the global cultural and creative industries, whose offer may be globalised, but whose reception always remains localised. Global and transnational

phenomena encounter and impact human beings at the point of reception in their localities, and consequently cultural products

no longer circulate as identical objects, already fixed, static and discrete, determined by the intentions of their producers [...] [but] spin out of the control of their makers: in their circulation they move and change through transposition and translation, transformation and transmutation. [...] In this movement, value is added. (Lash and Lury, 2007, pp. 4-5)

The notion of continuous translocation and transformation of cultural symbols and products challenges the Neo-Marxist concept of producers of commodities controlling the latter's meaning and value and instead supports the idea of an active and empowered local agency within the reception and consumption of global cultural flows. Consumption is 'a privileged site for the fabrication of self and society, of culture and identity, [...] closely tied to the changing status of work under contemporary conditions' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001, p. 9). The concept of consumption as agency can thus turn cultural flows into reciprocal and heterogeneous processes.

Hence, especially in an era of global cultural and creative industries, cultural products cannot be seen as static, identical objects in Adorno and Horkheimer's sense, but are indeterminate, also in their effects. Lash and Lury (2007), but also Appadurai (1996) and Robertson (1992), describe how local agents choose diverse and transformative ways of receiving and decoding 'the global' into their local context. These agents perform their own version of 'the global' and thus constantly construct and produce 'the local' anew. This also not only means that the idea of 'the local' is globally informed and vice versa, but also that if 'the local' is constructed, so must be 'the global'.

The notions of reception and decoding also relate to the notions of translation, translocation and transformation, which are useful for this research in terms of analysing the application and hybridisation of global flows in a specific locale and ensuing globalisation; not only in terms of aesthetics but also in terms of discourses and policies. Walter Benjamin (1968) postulated in his writings on language and the translation of literature that translation performs, and as such renews and transforms the original. The translation and translocation of cultural ideas, forms and expressions across mental and geographical space thus leads to culture always being in transition, re-configured and performed when it encounters an 'Other'.

Translation in the context of translocation thus functions 'as processes of encounter, exchange, and transformation, disruption, and renewal, revision and the emergence of the totally new' (Prentice, 2010, p. xix). Hence, it also refers to a spatial and a temporal aspect of culture that interrogates the modernist Eurocentric constructs of linear, universal and homogeneous time, progress and development, highlighting 'repetition, interruption, uneven

flows, instantaneity, simultaneity, haunting, and the ambivalent temporality of memory or commemoration' (Prentice, 2010, p. xvii).

The critique of a temporally and universally unified modernity and its fixed notion of culture can also be extended to the critique of the construction of a nation as a 'pure' and unified cultural entity. As seen throughout history, national borders change and also do not impede the transnational flow of cultural forms and products. In fact, especially border regions, as the framing and performative context for cultures, are often fertile ground for hybridisation or cultural renewal (Gómez-Peña, 2001; Yúdice, 2003). Hence, the concept of a nation as a cultural unity can only be a fictitious concept and needs to be viewed instead as intrinsically hybrid and 'contaminated'. This view can also be applied to artistic productions representing national culture, such as Sierra Leone's National Dance Troupe, which will be discussed in Chapters 3 and 4.

2.3 Globalisation of culture

Globalisation is not a recent phenomenon, as global exchange and trade have existed for centuries, also before the European Age of Exploration and voyages to the 'New World' (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995, 2009; Robertson, 1992). Furthermore, large-scale globalisation already commenced during the 19th century when imperialism and colonialism led to mass migration, new inventions such as steam ships and railways made the transportation of goods and people easier, and new and more efficient technologies such as telegraphy increased general connectivity (Nayyar, 2006).

However, there is a general consensus (despite the controversies relating to the concept and effects of globalisation) that globalisation's pace, scope and intensity have increased over the last few decades, shaped by constant technological change and the steadily growing cultural flows mentioned above and as a result of being heavily intertwined with neoliberal capitalism (Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). Globalisation as a general concept should though not be equated or conflated with this latest version in the form of capitalist globalisation. In this sense, the working definition of 'globalisation' for this research is defined as 'the intense and instantaneous time-space compression created by the movement of objects (goods, services, finance and other resources, etc.), meanings (language, symbols, knowledge, identities, etc.) and people across regions and intercontinental space' (Isar, Viejo-Rose and Anheier, 2011, p. 1).

It is generally recognised that capitalist globalisation in the wake of neoliberalism has destabilising effects on people and communities on many different levels all over the globe, especially as neoliberalism applies the principles and values of the market economy to every part of society and life in general, including the arts and other cultural expressions.

There has been multiple questioning of the benefits of globalisation and the equity of market-led development. [...] This has given rise to a widespread sense of disorientation and anxiety, some of which has manifested as authoritarian and exclusionary nativism. But the 'age of anger' also spread to a range of 'losers' some of who [sic] are the cultural workers themselves, feeling cheated by the failure of the promise of cosmopolitan globalisation and its creative futures (see Mishra 2017). (O'Connor, 2019, p. 10)

The dynamics of neoliberal globalisation and market-led development have also affected the role of the state and led to its contraction and the increasing take-over of former stately functions by civil society and – especially in the case of many African countries – NGOs. This has also significant implications in terms of governance, state capacity, aid dependency, government 'ownership' of development initiatives and corruption. For example, it has been found that in particular in countries with weak institutions high levels of aid make governance reforms more difficult, and instead 'aid becomes part of the system of patronage and political survival' (Bräutigam, 2000, p. 62).

Furthermore, as NGOs receive significant amounts of funding by aid and development agencies, which themselves are mainly financed by governments in the Global North, the World Bank, the UN or multinational corporations (Bräutigam, 2000; Edwards, 1999; Roy, 2014; Werker and Ahmed, 2008), one could argue that NGOs are part of the same global political and economic structures that are currently driven by a neoliberal agenda (Roy, 2014). One of the main points of criticism of the contemporary development industry is thus its propensity to create aid dependency and enhance the power imbalances and inequalities that come with this, especially as long as international aid and 'expertise' continue to flow mainly from the Global North to the Global South. But critics, like Arundhati Roy, also suggest that NGOs alter the public psyche and affect the potential for alternative politics while taking over some of the responsibilities of the retreating state.

Their real contribution is that they defuse political anger and dole out as aid or benevolence what people ought to have by right. [...] They turn people into dependent victims and blunt the edges of political resistance. NGOs form a sort of buffer between the [...] Empire and its subjects. They have become the arbitrators, the interpreters, the facilitators. [...] They unwittingly reinforce racist stereotypes and reaffirm the achievements, the comforts and the compassion (the tough love) of Western civilization. They're the secular missionaries of the modern world. (Roy, 2014, para. 4)

Furthermore, the capital of NGOs increasingly dictates local agendas – of development, but also of cultural production (which the following chapters illustrate) – and thus depoliticises resistance:

Eventually [...] the capital available to NGOs plays the same role in alternative politics as the speculative capital that flows in and out of the economies of poor countries. [...] It turns confrontation into negotiation. It depoliticizes resistance. It interferes with local peoples' movements that have traditionally been self-reliant.

NGOs have funds that can employ local people who might otherwise be activists in resistance movements, but now can feel they are doing some immediate, creative good (and earning a living while they're at it). Real political resistance offers no such short cuts. The NGO-ization of politics threatens to turn resistance into a well-mannered, reasonable, salaried, 9-to-5 job. With a few perks thrown in. (Roy, 2014, para. 7)

Neoliberal capitalism, capitalist globalisation and their impact on both culture and international development have been widely discussed in both the anti-globalisation discourse and scholarly writing. To further develop the theoretical and conceptual framework for this research it is useful to refer to some aspects of this discourse, especially to the debate about the relationship between globalisation and culture, issues of homogenisation and heterogenisation and their implications for the making and unmaking of cultural forms, expressions and identities.

At the outset, the following issue with regards to the notion of a 'globalisation of culture' needs to be stressed: The idea of a globalisation of the concept of 'culture' and of an actual form of 'global culture' is problematic as it can only result from a de-contextualisation and universalisation of culture (both as a concept and a performed form), which conceals its diversity, relativity and relation to specific local factors 'on the presumption that cultures manifest a universal form of self-consciousness about identity [...] [and that] global culture appears to constitute its own context' (Strathern, 1995, p. 157). Although Strathern's terminology seems imprecise and questionable when using global culture in the singular, especially as she describes it as 'the spread either of Euro-American (Western) products or else of "indigenous" products facilitated by Euro-American (Western) technology' (Strathern, 1995, p. 157), her point highlights that the analysis of 'the particular' and 'the local' must not lead to universalist claims.

Critics of globalised culture, in the tradition of modernisation theories, historical materialism, critical theory and, more specifically, Horkheimer and Adorno's condemnation of the culture industry, argue that capitalism, globalisation, technological innovations and the commodification of cultural production threaten so-called minority cultures, and diversity in general, resulting in the homogenisation and increasing uniformity of cultures and cultural expressions throughout the world. These critics thus identify commodified, market-driven culture and the cultural and creative industries as the source of cultural hegemony and the 'Westernisation' or 'Americanisation' (as it is not an actual 'globalisation') of the world.

Responding to these critics, one could, however, ask (somewhat cynically) with economist Tyler Cowen (2002): Who fears the homogenisation and assumed loss of diversity more, the 'Western explorer and traveller' looking for 'authentic, exotic experiences' or 'the local' inspired by 'other', 'foreign' elements (Cowen 2002)? Cowen also questions the concept of diversity in itself, as it is often equated with the level of cultural differentiation across

geographic space, and he argues instead that 'cultural diversity has multiple and sometimes divergent meanings' (Cowen, 2002, p. 14): While diversity across societies might be reduced in the wake of globalisation, the diversity within societies might be enriched. Hence, the real question, according to Cowen (2002), is not whether there is more or less diversity per se across the world, but rather what kind of diversity globalisation enhances or threatens. Homi Bhabha questions the usefulness of the concept of diversity in its entirety, and he argues for the conceptualisation of 'an *international* culture, based not on the exoticism or multiculturalism of the *diversity* of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's *hybridity*' (Bhabha, 1995, p. 209; italics original).

The fear of total cultural loss, universalisation and homogenisation as a consequence of globalisation has been both theoretically and practically refuted, as contemporary lives, cultures, cultural practices and expressions world-wide have not been entirely universalised and turned into identical sameness, despite globalised markets and media, technical advancements and the commodification of cultural production (e.g. Appadurai, 1996; Featherstone, 1990; Meyer and Geschiere, 1999; Nederveen Pieterse, 2009). This phenomenon is certainly linked to the agency of the local recipient of global cultural flows who, as discussed above, plays a crucial role in the creation of meaning and its continuous reinterpretation and transformation. With regards to theatre and performing arts, localisation as a reaction to globalisation is, for example, particularly visible in community theatre and site-specific performance (Rebellato, 2009). Another reason for challenging this fear of total homogenisation relates to the fact that it seems to stem from an outdated Eurocentric perspective, characterised by a linear view of history-as-progress and the idea of unidirectional flows from the centre to the periphery.

However, refuting the notion of a general homogenisation of culture as a result of globalisation, at least as understood in the context of this research, does not in any way imply that cultural globalisation refers to processes of innocent and equal flows, resulting in a happy and easy exchange or mixing of different cultural forms. As culture is often 'a matter of argument, a confrontation of signs and practices along the fault lines of power' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 1992, p. 18), it is important to underline that trans-local encounters are obviously also embedded in relations of power, based on historical, political, economic and social factors, that impact the construction and deconstruction of boundaries, localities and cultures and the directions of flows across and through these.

Liberalism and the market society have promoted the idea of new opportunities and the stimulation of cultural production, dissemination and consumption through increasing wealth and improved technologies, an idea of a 'cultural utopia based on freedom of choice' (Cowen, 2002, p. 2). However, this freedom of choice is hardly the same everywhere and for everybody. Because of structural disadvantages in countries like Sierra Leone and unequal opportunities

regarding the access to the global cultural marketplace both in terms of production and consumption, this 'choice' is often not as free and widely available. Hence, the choice 'may be not so much whether to 'succumb' to market forces as how to use them judiciously to suit one's own, and other people's ends' (Huggan, 2001, p. 11).

There is also a growing body of work that postulates an increasing hybridisation of cultural forms, expressions and identities as a result of the faster and faster movement of cultural flows across increasingly larger geographical space. However, some scholars, such as African studies scholars Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (2001) and economist Tyler Cowen (2002), argue logically and convincingly that globalisation does not only have either homogenising or hybridising consequences and that cultural homogenisation and heterogenisation do not exist in a simple dualism, similar to the local / global dialectics discussed above.

Several scholars also refer to growing cultural clashes and uncertainties as a consequence of capitalist globalisation and the weakened role of the nation-state (e.g., Featherstone, 1995; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001; Geschiere, 2009; Yúdice, 2003). Although nationalism is still enhanced by nation-states, often through the construction of a national culture, national (cultural) identity is now contested on a free market of identities (Billig, 1995; cited in Figueira, 2015) and 'cultural diversity, reinforced by processes of globalization, has challenged the dominance of the state' (Figueira, 2015, p. 180).

Furthermore, larger political and economic unions and subsequent decentralisation of political power enhance attempts to reaffirm (and fix) local cultural roots and identities and the ensuing search for singularities, authenticity and 'true' autochthony, which leads to growing cultural differentiation and fragmentation. Hence, capitalist globalisation and neoliberalisation enhance, somewhat paradoxically, 'a decidedly nonliberal tendency toward closure and exclusion' and 'an intensification of the politics of belonging' (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001, p. 159) – and thus debates about the criteria for belonging, determining inclusion and exclusion. Especially in the African context this is a very paradoxical development, as indigenous African societies have been described 'as highly inclusive, marked by an emphasis on "wealth-in-people" (in contrast to Europe's "wealth-in-things") and a wide array of institutional mechanisms for including people (adoption, fosterage, the broad range of classificatory kinship terminology)' (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001, p. 159).

If globalisation is understood in terms of this seesaw between liberalisation and closure, 'notions of autochthony, with their paradoxical combination of staggering plasticity and celebration of seemingly self-evident "natural givens" [...] [respond] to rapidly changing situations in which [...] even the Other is constantly becoming another (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001, pp. 184-185). It has therefore also been argued that globalisation has taken on a theatrical form, 'with the global system writing the script, directing everyone's entrances

and exits, and casting some people in the leading roles and the rest as spear-carriers (Valaskakis, p. 153; Chaudhuri, p. 172)' (Rebellato, 2009, p. 9). The relationship between globalisation and theatre itself has been described by a growing interconnectedness of theatre cultures, enhanced by international theatre festivals, international tours of blockbuster plays and the franchising and ensuing standardisation of international 'megamusicals' (Rebellato, 2009). But Rebellato (2009) argues that the general impact and dynamics of globalisation are so complex and ubiquitous that they have also led to the need for completely new theatrical forms and ways to represent them, as evident in performance art.

Globalisation's relationship and interconnectedness with culture and ensuing changes to local cultural forms, institutions, structures and policies are often only described as top-down processes. These analyses are characterised by a predominantly international perspective, which can only be abstracted, deducted and simplified, as the large, or 'the global', 'cannot approximate the phenomenological realness, the sensuous materiality of an actually existing form of life' (Mukhopadhyay, 2012, p. 12). Furthermore, the notion of globalisation is very much linked to Euro-American ideas of scale; 'the farther things travel, the more distance they have covered, the more global they seem to be' (Strathern, 1995, p. 168). However, while moving around the globe these commodities, goods or ideas lose some of their cultural symbolism and complexity and thus 'invite re-complexification at the point of local consumption' (Strathern, 1995, p. 168).

Hence, to understand the localisation of global flows and the impact of globalisation on local cultural production, it is crucial to analyse contemporary global phenomena from below and to look for the global in specific local sites, while still acknowledging the complexities of the local / global dialectics dissected in the previous section. It further necessitates the abandoning of other dualisms and binary oppositions created and performed by modernity (such as 'centre' versus 'periphery' and 'North' versus 'South'), which in turn was based on Eurocentric thinking generated by Enlightenment. But it is also important to identify the tensions and frictions – 'the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference' (Tsing, 2005, p. 4) – which occur at the intersection between 'the local' and 'the global'. This also requires the recognition of global flows as being disjunctive and 'deeply perspectival constructs' (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33) as well as not being entirely equal and free. Therefore, both the directions *and* reception of global cultural flows need to be interrogated, focusing on how they are controlled *and* subverted, by whom and where. This also pertains to the global flows of concepts and discourses, such as the discourse on the 'cultural industries', the 'creative industries' and the 'creative economy', which the next section examines in more detail.

2.4 Cultural and creative industries and the creative economy

As discussed above, culture and the economic have become increasingly intertwined since the Industrial Revolution and the emergence of the market economy, which has naturally not only affected their relationship and its effects on cultural production, but also the discourse on it. To account for both local and global social, economic and political changes, the concepts and terminology within the discourse about the commodification of culture and the business of culture have also been changing over the past few decades. As this has already been illustrated significantly across existing literature (e.g., De Beukelaer, 2015; Hesmondhalgh, 2019; Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005; O'Connor, 2000, 2010; Throsby, 2001), this section gives only an overview of the main conceptual changes and theoretical arguments.

As a consequence of the general transformation from mass production to flexible specialisation, niche markets and Post-Fordism, Adorno and Horkheimer's 'culture industry' gave way to the 'cultural industries' (O'Connor, 2010), recognising the fact that each sub-industry within these industries exhibits considerable differences in terms of organisation, process and markets, in other words 'different ways of realising exchange value, different ways of managing demand and creative labour, and different levels of capital investment and corporate control' (O'Connor, 2010, p. 25). Furthermore, while cultural production across the world has seen fundamental structural and aesthetic changes in the wake of capitalist globalisation and commodification, different art forms and industries have been affected in different ways. As a consequence of international art biennials, for example, visual arts have very much entered the global flow of capital, both in the figurative and the material sense. Theatre, however, as a more ephemeral and less object-based art form, does not entice similar amounts of capital investment and, hence, is more likely to captivate and represent different aspects within globalisation and global flows.

The cultural industries are difficult to define, especially if one considers the different realities of cultural production across the world. There has been much debate about the classification of the cultural industries and the terminology involved, and these conceptual challenges are also linked to the difficulties to define 'culture', discussed above, and 'industry'. In addition, the complex relationship between culture and the CCIs, such as the commodification of culture through the CCIs, arguably neglecting the cultural complexity of societies and communities (De Beukelaer, 2012), complicates matters even further. The usefulness of the concept of the cultural industries in itself has been questioned, as 'even if the cultural industries are a helpful concept, they are not a panacea for the challenges of cultural production, distribution and enjoyment' (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 127).

But generally, the cultural industries are considered to be 'involved in the making and circulating of products that, more than the products of any other kind of industry, have an

influence on our understanding and knowledge of the world' (Hesmondhalgh, 2019, p.7). As such, most conceptualisations of the cultural industries include the following: television and film; radio; literature and publishing (both in print and electronically); music; the performing arts (which includes theatre); visual arts; crafts; museums and galleries.

The emergence of new discourses in the 1980s and 1990s foregrounding the economic impact of cultural production and, more generally, the emergence of new keywords for economic success, such as 'creativity' and 'innovation', together with the wider growth of new, fragmented and fluid markets and thus the growth of small and medium sized enterprises, saw the discourse shift from 'cultural industries' to 'creative industries'; the latter being heralded as drivers of economic growth based on innovations and new knowledge, and as such as prototypes of a new and dynamic 'creative economy'. While there is also much debate about the definition of the creative industries and the creative economy, including the differences and links between the cultural and the creative industries, there seems to be a large consensus that the 'creative industries' cover more industries than the 'cultural industries', such as design, fashion, architecture, advertising and marketing, video and computer / digital games and software development.

UNCTAD (the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development) has defined the 'creative economy' as 'the interface among creativity, culture, economics and technology as expressed in the ability to create and circulate intellectual capital, [with] the potential to generate income, jobs and export earnings while at the same time promoting social inclusion, cultural diversity and human development' (UNCTAD and UNDP, 2008, p. iii). This creative economy is driven by the creative industries, but it has been argued that the creative economy is not to be reduced to the creative industries and is not merely about consumption goods (Mbaye and Pratt, 2020). According to UNCTAD and UNDP (2010), the creative industries englobe four main groups: heritage, arts, media and functional creations. These are further divided into nine subgroups: traditional cultural expressions (arts and crafts, festivals and celebrations), cultural sites (including museums and libraries), visual arts, publishing and printed media, design, performing arts, the audiovisual, new media (software, video games and digitalised creative content) and creative services (such as architecture, advertising and recreational services).

The terminology within the current discourse on these industries has become somewhat conflated, and 'cultural industries', 'creative industries', 'cultural economy' and 'creative economy' are often used interchangeably, especially in policy documents and local development analyses and strategies. However, these notions have different meanings, as briefly outlined above. They are also part of and support different political and economic agendas. It has been argued that the discursive shift from 'cultural' to 'creative', initially emanating mainly from the UK, Australia and Canada, was part of political changes in the

1990s, a growing trend towards neoliberal public policy (complicated by disjunctures between neoliberal theory and practice as in the case of the UK; Hesmondhalgh et al., 2015) and attempts to move away from 'subsidised public arts' (Cunningham, 2002). But this shift also marked the opportunity to include software, publishing and media industries in the mapping of the overall sector and thereby to support the claims about its size and potential growth (Garnham, 2005). The discursive shift towards the 'creative industries' and the 'creative economy' was further enhanced by the emergence of related concepts, such as 'global city' (Sassen, 1991), 'creative city' (Landry, 2000) or 'creative class' (Florida, 2002). Interestingly, this shift has long been ignored in France, which had a significant impact on the debate in Francophone countries, also in Africa (De Beukelaer, 2015).

It is important to note that this discourse – and with it existing models of the cultural and creative industries (which are often treated as global 'best practice' examples) – have developed within the context of the Global North and its ontologies. Furthermore, it has been highlighted that there is a risk of the global discourse on the creative economy and cultural and creative entrepreneurship being endorsed and embraced without fully taking into account different local trajectories, contexts and specificities, neglecting to translate diverse practices of cultural production into a range of diverse discourses, policies and normative frameworks (De Beukelaer, 2015; Mbaye, 2013). As a consequence, cultural productions and practices that do not speak to the current global discourse and its categorisations often fail to be recognised by it.

Appadurai (1996), however, already argued in the mid-1990s that the 'new global cultural economy' must be understood as a complex and dynamic process, characterised by disjunctures between culture, politics and economy:

The new global cultural economy has to be seen as a complex overlapping, disjunctive order that cannot any longer be understood in terms of existing centre-periphery models (even those that might account for multiple centres and peripheries). Nor is it susceptible to simple models of push and pull (in terms of migration theory), or of surpluses and deficits (as in traditional models of balance of trade), or of consumers and producers (as in most neo-Marxist theories of development). (Appadurai, 1996, p. 32)

As noted above, the creative industries have been promoted as a model for economic growth and job creation, especially in the Global South, as they are considered to exhibit a relatively low need for initial investment and low professional entry barriers, building on materials and skills already available within a community. Underperformance in the creative industries has thus been considered as a missed opportunity for significant contributions to youth employment and inclusive and sustainable growth (Dalberg, 2016). Therefore, the creative industries have been especially endorsed for economic development in areas with exhausted or limited natural resources or uncompetitive manufacturing industries due to high

production costs, offering new opportunities especially for ‘developing countries’². Critics, however, argue that a career in the creative industries requires levels of education and skills which challenge the educational resources of the Global South (O’Connor, 2019). I wonder though if this point could still be pursued if the discourse on the cultural and creative industries was not dominated by the Global North and its understanding of cultural productions and practices, and of the notion of a ‘career’.

In the 1990s the cultural and creative industries showed a growth rate that ‘exceeded twofold that of the service sector and fourfold that of the manufacturing sector in the OECD countries’ (Bandarin, Hosagrahar and Sailer Albernaz, 2011, pp. 18-19). They generated a total income of USD 1.3 trillion world-wide in 2005 and accounted for more than 7 percent of global GDP, while global exports of creative products, with a total revenue of USD 600 billion, grew by 14 percent on average in 2008 (Bandarin, Hosagrahar and Sailer Albernaz, 2011, p. 19). The global creative industries also proved resilient in the economic crisis of 2008, which saw international trade fall by 12 percent while global export of creative goods and services kept growing to USD ‘592bn in 2008 – more than double their 2002 level, indicating an annual growth rate of 14 percent over six consecutive years’ (UNCTAD and UNDP, 2010, p. xxiii). The trade in cultural products and services has been reported to be growing globally at around 14 percent year on year and 13.5 percent in ‘developing countries’, with the Global South accounting for almost half of all global trade in creative goods by 2011 and taking over the Global North in 2015 (O’Connor, 2019, p. 3). The latest UNCTAD Creative Economy Outlook and Country Profiles report (2018) also argues that there has not only been significant growth in the creative economy but that the CCIs can also make valuable contributions to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

But the varying definitions of the cultural and creative industries and the lack of comprehensive data in many areas of cultural production as well as in many countries across the globe make it impossible to build a thorough understanding of the cultural and creative industries’ true volume and impact. Furthermore, critics of the creative industries and the creative economy have highlighted significant flaws within the measurements of the creative economy and reported statistics on the CCIs, apart from the fact that ‘not every manifestation

² The dichotomy between so-called ‘developing’ and ‘developed’ countries has become outdated for a number of reasons, which have already been widely discussed in the existing literature; for example, ‘developing’ countries that do well are now called ‘emerging’; ‘developed’ countries are in ‘crisis’; ‘Africa’ is ‘rising’; and all countries are in fact ‘developing’ (Cornwall, 2007; De Beukelaer, 2014; Neuwirth, 2013; Nothias, 2014 ; all cited in De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 33). This research situates itself within this logic and therefore seeks to avoid this terminology and dichotomy. However, at some points throughout this thesis this terminology has to be used when referring to a certain discourse or specific statistics. This is in no way meant to be an endorsement of the rationale (be it political, economic or other) of this dichotomist conceptualisation.

of creativity can be placed on the same scale and measured according to fixed criteria' (Bharucha, 2010, p. 32).

For example, the claims about *the* Global South overtaking the Global North in terms of global trade in creative goods cannot be substantiated once one takes a closer look at specific countries and China in particular, globally the single largest exporter of creative goods in 2010 (De Beukelaer, 2014), is not counted as part of the Global South. In this scenario, the Global South is only left with just over a fifth of total global trade in creative goods and the 49 'least developed countries' only accounted for 0.11 per cent of it in 2010 (De Beukelaer, 2014). Furthermore, the classification of 'creative goods' comprises a large number of goods that China excels in producing and exporting, such as furniture, glassware, ceramics and toys, while the 'creative services', which cover digital content (including film and TV), copyright and licensing and where the 'high value' economy still lies, is still dominated by the Global North (O'Connor, 2019).

Critics of the creative economy's promotion for economic development across 'developing countries' also challenge the dominant narrative of the creative economy as a new opportunity for 'developing countries' by highlighting that the growth of CCIs in the 'developed countries' generally followed economic development, with the demand for entertainment growing as a result of economic growth, increased leisure time, urbanisation and a young population (Bakker, 2008; cited in De Beukelaer, 2014). Others argue, however, that as the global value of the market share for cultural and creative products is generally growing, countries with currently 'less developed' CCIs have, in principle, a growing export market opportunity, which could stimulate local CCIs and development more widely (Pratt, 2004).

Critics of the creative industries and the creative economy also highlight that economic interests have come to overshadow other benefits and values and have reduced the consideration of aesthetics and artistic expressions (e.g., Hewison, 2014; Oakley, 2009). Another aspect of this critique is that the creative economy model 'inverts the traditional idea of economic development as part of a wider cultural or civilisational development, [...] [accepting], rather than [challenging], the existing configuration of infrastructure and ownership stemming from the global 're-regulation' of the 1980s and 1990s (O'Connor, 2019, pp. 8-9). Bharucha's critique highlights, in particular, 'the appropriation and decontextualization of "creativity" from its diverse manifestations as well as the phenomenological processes underlying artistic and cultural expression [...] [as well as] the singularization of the creative economy within the strictures of the so-called "knowledge economy" or "information society", consolidated and driven by the technologies of "copyright, patent, trademark, and design industries" (Howkins, 2001: xiii)' (Bharucha, 2010, p. 22). Philosophers Pierre Bourdieu (1996) and Jacques Rancière (2010) have also argued that 'the historical specificity of art (with all its complex bourgeois, governmental and Eurocentric

aspects) [is] nevertheless a space of autonomy and dissent that we lose at our peril' (De Beukelaer and O'Connor, 2017, p. 40).

To reflect the developments dissected above and refer to the wide range of existing debates and practices, but also because in Sierra Leone both terms, the 'cultural industries' and 'the creative industries', are used, I have decided to use the umbrella term of 'cultural and creative industries' (CCIs) throughout this thesis to describe general cultural production in Sierra Leone; unless the use of other terms, such as 'creative economy', is required to discuss specific aspects of the discourse or particular policy developments. This, however, shall in no way diminish the tensions and contradictions that have been – and continue to be – identified in the different terminologies and, more generally, the relationship between culture and the economic. The remainder of this section serves to dissect the CCIs and their characteristics in more detail, in particular within the African context.

Globalisation and commodification have changed, and keep changing, the *modus operandi* of the CCIs in many ways. They have intensified certain challenges, such as issues relating to equal access to the global cultural market, the control of intellectual property rights (IPRs), the preservation of diverse heritages and tensions between commercial forms and those that fulfil a more socio-cultural function. For example, the commodification and subsequent potential external domination of cultural forms with a specific function in society (such as identity and nation-building) may be interpreted as a threat to society and the nation-state itself (Pratt, 2004). These challenges and potential threats come especially to the fore when analysing the impact of global flows from a local perspective. Especially in many African countries, where the CCIs often do not yet play an important role for the overall local economy, global 'free' trade and 'open' markets can pose a problem.

However, globalisation and commodification of culture are also considered to have provided new opportunities for the CCIs (e.g., Barrowclough and Kozul-Wright, 2008b), although these opportunities have been dismissed by some critics as too optimistic due to issues related to the rise and impact of digital networks (e.g., Hesmondhalgh, 2019). Some of these opportunities and their criticism include: changes to the ownership and control of media (critics, however, argue that power is still concentrated and centralised, which also leads to questions about surveillance); potentially easier and wider access to information and communication technologies (I say 'potentially' as access is also shaped by external factors, such as socio-economic status, education or the availability and affordability of internet, and access can thus be far from equal); potentially enhanced connectivity and movement of artists and creative producers (again, this potential is also determined by external factors, such as access to digital tools or physical limits to mobility due to lacking finance or visa issues); and new models of creative content generation, production and distribution (which have been argued to lead to increased unpaid labour).

As noted above, culture in the context of the contemporary CCIs no longer works primarily in dichotomist terms of resistance and domination, surpluses and deficits or consumers and producers (Appadurai, 1996; Lash and Lury, 2007), which implies that everyone can become a creator of cultural products and thus of value. The challenge is, however, to find a market for these products. In terms of their market rationale, CCIs are in many ways like other industries as they also need to not only keep creating new products, but also develop or access a market for each of these products in order to sustain success. However, the CCIs have a more complex relationship to markets and consumers or audiences, as they are driven by taste, which can only be generated and controlled to a certain degree (Pratt, 2004).

As there has been a continuous growth in global trade in cultural products since 2000, it is argued that the CCIs could support African economies in gaining their share of the global market and diversifying their economies. Furthermore, the fact that in 2015, 226 million people in Africa were aged between 15 and 24 – with projections of this figure nearly doubling by 2030 (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015, p.1) – suggests an increasing potential for cultural producers and consumers, which could significantly expand African CCIs.

However, although the potential of African CCIs is more and more recognised, especially following Nollywood's success in Nigeria, which accounted for USD 7.2 billion or 1.42 percent of Nigeria's GDP in 2016 (Omanufeme, 2016, p. 30), Africa's overall share of the CCIs is currently still very low: A 2015 report on the CCIs world-wide shows that Africa (which oddly includes the Middle East in this study) achieved USD 58 billion in revenues (3 percent of the total) and 2.4 million jobs (8 percent of total CCI jobs) (EY, 2015, p. 16). If the Middle East is taken out of this equation, one can imagine that Africa's share in the global CCIs drops even further, possibly to an often-quoted figure of around just 1 percent – with the key contributors to this 1 percent being North African countries, Nigeria and South Africa, and the exports mainly coming from the fashion, music and film industries.

These statistics are not surprising as in many African countries cultural and creative products and services are still often considered a luxury (and thus also highly taxed) and not a priority in comparison to other substantial necessities. Other reasons that are often quoted as impeding the fulfilment of the CCI's potential in Africa are linked to their fragmentation and fragile value chains, leading to divisions in the cycle of creation, production, distribution / dissemination and consumption / reception / transmission (cf. UNESCO Section for the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, n.d.; De Voldere et al, 2017, p. 38) and to low commercialisation, insufficient networks and inadequate operational mechanisms. The following chapters will indeed demonstrate how the existing cultural capital in Sierra Leone is constrained by the lack of a suitable and enhancing support system, but they will also argue that this is only one part of the bigger picture.

The CCIs are often discussed as being located within a wider ecology, highlighting the notion that they are linked to and support other industries, such as leisure and tourism, and that they often operate in a cross-sectoral manner. The global rise of the CCIs has thus also been associated to strategies for 'creative cities' and urban economies, targeting issues such as regional or national branding, place making, cultural tourism and urban regeneration. The rising interest in the CCIs in Africa is also associated with its growing tourism industry, and especially with increasing cultural tourism linked to local and regional cultural and natural heritage. Between 1990 and 2012, the number of tourists arriving in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) grew by over 300 percent (!) with receipts from tourism in 2012 amounting to over USD 36 billion and directly contributing 2.8 percent to the whole region's GDP (World Bank, 2013). A more recent *Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report* (World Economic Forum, 2019) highlights that SSA continues to outperform the global average growth in international tourism arrivals and receipts. But the African travel and tourism market is still small; in 2018 the industry's GDP totalled USD 42.1 billion – only 1.6 percent of the global total – and SSA had a total of 37.4 million tourist arrivals in 2017 – only 3 percent of the global total (World Economic Forum, 2019, p. 54). While the steady growth in cultural tourism certainly enhances the safeguarding or development of cultural infrastructure and offers opportunities for job creation in the CCIs, it also creates a number of challenges, which will be discussed more in Chapter 5.

Whereas the number of tourists is well documented in terms of arrivals to each African country and their economic contributions are easier to analyse (as seen above), it is difficult to obtain reliable and comprehensive data on the various dimensions of the CCIs in numerous African countries, partly also due to the fact that the majority of cultural and creative activities take place in the informal sector. Many existing statistics are therefore only based on an extrapolation or estimation, such as UNCTAD's statistics on the trade of creative goods for Sierra Leone.

Beyond their contribution to tourism and their potential economic gains the CCIs are, however, also more and more recognised in many African countries for their potential social and other non-monetary benefits and their contribution to people-centred, inclusive and sustainable development, which also seems to stimulate policy debates and efforts to integrate the CCIs into strategies of national and pan-African growth. Especially civil society and not-for-profit organisations support cultural productions for their non-monetary benefits, often as part of their own development agendas (which will be analysed in the context of Sierra Leone in Chapter 4). But there is a significant lack of in-depth quantitative and qualitative research and data about the holistic values of cultural production in many African countries, which makes more targeted, strategic and sustainable interventions more difficult.

The cultural turn in development theory and practice and the emergence of concepts such as ‘culture-sensitive development’ and ‘culture for development’, which attempt to draw together economic, cultural, technological, social and environmental aspects of development, are, however, at least a step towards a more holistic perspective on the multiple and diverse values and benefits of culture, both in the sense of a particular way of life *and* cultural, artistic and creative expressions. This will be examined further in the following section.

2.5 Culture and Development

The discourse on culture and its wider benefits to society tends to focus mainly on the instrumental values of culture as means towards a greater economic, developmental, social or political end and to neglect its intrinsic qualities such as aesthetic pleasure and enjoyment. This may be related to the fact that culture’s intrinsic qualities are often considered as exhibiting primarily personal value (as opposed to public value) and qualitative characteristics, which makes them less tangible and measurable and thus less ‘useful’ than instrumental values to increasingly results and numbers-driven public policies. However, some writers argue that the dichotomy between culture’s intrinsic and instrumental values is misleading, as intrinsic values are central to all other values and thus also contribute to public interests, together with the other values with which they are interrelated (Guest, 2002; McCarthy et al., 2004; Shusterman, 2007). The deconstruction of the binary opposition between intrinsic and instrumental values implies instead a hierarchy of values, stretching from ‘less noble’ values (such as economic functions) to ‘nobler’ ones (such as personal consumer benefits) (Guest, 2002).

Furthermore, from a postcolonial standpoint and especially within the context of Africa, the distinction between culture’s intrinsic and instrumental values loses any form of validity, as the concept of art for art’s sake (which defies any form of instrumentalism) has risen within a Eurocentric perspective on artistic production and does not exist historically in African ontologies. Many postcolonial African thinkers have also emphasised that indigenous arts and artists take on at the same time many different functions in society, such as entertaining, educational, moral and utilitarian functions, and that performances in particular are an important part of both everyday and sacred life (Achebe, 1975; Okagbue, 2007; Senghor, 1974). This also means that the value of culture is constantly in flux, ‘performed and experienced in situational, relational and ethnographic contexts’ (Walmsley and Oliver, 2011).

Although this thesis is to a certain degree critical of the instrumentalisation of culture and the following chapters will outline issues and concerns related particularly to the instrumentalisation of culture within the context of ‘culture and development’ and by agents of power, such as the state, ‘traditional’ authorities or international organisations, it also seeks to

situate this research in the postcolonial attempt to deconstruct binary thinking and classifications, such as intrinsic versus instrumental. As Chapters 4 and 5 will illustrate, the instrumentalisation of culture does not just 'exploit' culture. It can also highlight culture's intrinsic values, enhance the recognition of culture's importance, and support the growth of an ecology that is beneficial to local cultural production. This is not to say, however, that there are not significant challenges and tensions within the relationship between culture and its instrumentalisation or 'instrumentalisers', as highlighted by the development industry's complicated and dualist role vis-à-vis theatre in Sierra Leone, analysed in Chapter 4.

The relationship between culture and development (in the sense of social, economic and political development) is a long and complicated one that has already been analysed on a number of different levels in the existing literature (e.g., Basu and Modest, 2015; De Beukelaer, 2012, 2015; De Beukelaer, Pyykkönen and Singh, 2015; Marañá, 2010; Nederveen Pieterse, 2010; Pratt, 2015; Radcliffe, 2006; Radcliffe and Laurie, 2006; Schech and Haggis, 2000; Singh, 2015, 2019; Stupples and Teaiwa, 2017; Vlassis, 2017; Wiktor-Mach, 2019; Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013). The aim of this section is to give a brief overview of the existing debate, dissecting in particular the more recent relationship between culture and development.

Culture has long been instrumentalised by development thinking in a number of ways, especially to support and promote certain epistemologies and 'truths'. For example, as discussed above, culture was (ab)used by imperialism and colonialism to rigorously categorise and hierarchise ethnic groups, but also to justify the conceptualisation of different stages of 'development', in the sense of 'progress' towards the model of European civilisation called modernity (De Beukelaer, 2012). But the cultural turn in development studies in the 1980s, recognising that many development policies and programmes that did not take local culture into account failed, changed the way development theory and practice were conceived and implemented. It particularly highlighted the value of culture to human well-being and thus the importance of envisioning 'culture', in the sense of a particular way of life (shaped by particular local knowledge, institutions and resources), as the foundation for development (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010). Even former UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon admitted that

development has not always focused enough on people. To mobilize people, we need to understand and embrace their culture. This means encouraging dialogue, listening to individual voices, and ensuring that culture and human rights inform the new course for sustainable development. (UNESCO, 2013, p. 9)

It has also been argued that post-development theorists have underestimated the complexity of the relationship between development and local cultural contexts and the importance of local agency within this relationship:

Post-development frameworks of rejecting development as a 'monolithic imposition of Western notions of modernity, progress, and knowledge', have arguably perpetuated a dichotomy of an 'evil North and a noble South' (Radcliffe and Laurie 2006b: 234). So, they argue, disenfranchising the involvement of local and national actors in responding to development initiatives, and overlooking how development has been indigenised by different localities. (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013, p. 36)

Some research has also highlighted the importance of not just conceiving of culture as the base of development, but also of establishing a development value defined by local culture (Radcliffe and Laurie, 2006). Central to the varying paradigms of 'culture-sensitive development', 'culture-appropriate development', 'culture for development', 'culture in development' and 'culture and development' is the recognition of the fact that 'development' and 'progress' have different connotations in different contexts as well as the realisation that not only outcomes, but also the processes that lead to these outcomes matter. To support sustainable development, these processes need to be based on culture-sensitive, locally appropriate and more participative and collaborative policies and initiatives.

Highlighting culture's importance to and role in sustainable development was also at the core of the World Decade for Culture and Development (1988-1998) and UNESCO's Commission on Culture and Development, whose 1995 report, *Our Creative Diversity*, has arguably contributed to 'that circulating concatenation of ideas, terms and images that characterizes what we might regard as the "ideoscape" of international development' (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 94). This global 'ideoscape' has been further shaped by other UN resolutions, reports and conventions, such as the 2005 UNESCO *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions* or the 2010 UNESCO report *The Power of Culture for Development*, and international standard-setting instruments, such as UNESCO's Culture and Development Indicator Suite. The African Union's *Charter for African Cultural Renaissance* (2006) and its *Algiers Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa* (2008), for example, also address culture's contribution to social development and economic growth as well as the existing precarity for African artists. It has been argued, however, that all these various resolutions, action plans and reports have increasingly led to different, and sometimes opposing, notions of the relationship between 'culture' and 'development' and of culture's importance for and role within development.

Alongside such buzzwords as 'participation', 'empowerment' and 'poverty reduction' (Cornwall and Brock 2005), there has been a programmatic diffusion of ideas that link the realms of 'culture' and 'development'. Thus 'culture' is said to be 'a fundamental component of sustainable development', 'a powerful global economic engine', 'a vehicle for social cohesion and stability', and 'a repository of knowledge, meanings and values that permeate all aspects of our lives' (UNESCO 2010: 2-6). (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 94)

This programmatic diffusion of ideas that link ‘culture’ and ‘development’ also lies in the different meanings and understandings of ‘culture’, discussed above. This is evidenced by the fact that ‘culture’ is linked to ‘development’ in a number of different ways, for example as ‘product’ (such as local cuisine or crafts), as ‘service’ (such as cultural tourism), as ‘institution’ (using, for example, ‘traditional’ authorities as agents of development) and as ‘creativity’, encouraging innovation (Radcliffe and Laurie, 2006). UNESCO’s strategy on culture and development also aims to both incorporate culture (in the sense of a particular way of life) into all development policies (such as education, science, communication, health, environment or cultural tourism policies) *and* support the development of the cultural sector and its contribution to poverty alleviation through the CCIs (UNESCO, 2020). It has been argued that the latter aspect, linking culture in the form of the CCIs to the contemporary international development discourse and agenda, has been particularly promoted by the UN’s Creative Economy Reports (UNCTAD and UNDP, 2008; UNCTAD and UNDP, 2010; UNESCO and UNDP, 2013; UNCTAD, 2018). De Beukelaer suggests that, as a consequence,

the ‘creative economy for development’ debate is largely presented as the logical continuation of earlier (and present) ‘culture and development’ debates [...] [which is problematic as] the creative economy debate remains a predominantly Western affair, particularly given the limited engagement of non-Western countries with the underlying contradictions of the debate’. (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 22)

Although culture is thus increasingly celebrated as both an enabler and driver of development, culture still does not occupy a central role in international development strategies. Culture was not included in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – but a separate ‘Culture and Development’ Thematic Window of the MDGs Achievement Fund was set up to alleviate this – and it is still not explicitly mentioned in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were built on the MDGs and came into force in 2015 and are intended to be achieved by 2030. One can argue, however, that although none of the 17 SDGs focuses directly on culture, there are some references in the SDG’s sub-targets to cultural aspects, such as the appreciation of cultural diversity, creativity, cultural tourism and the safeguarding of cultural heritage (UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, 2021).

Furthermore, despite the progress that has been made since the late 1980s, the continuing unequal power dynamics and disenfranchisement of local actors as a result of the predominantly North-to-South flows of international aid and ‘development expertise’ continue to be central to the conceptual and practical relationship between culture and development (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013), arguably leading not only to economic dependency, but also to ideological dependency:

As it has become codified in UN-sponsored reports, institutionalized in policy statements and operationalized in organizational practice, [the ‘culture for development’ approach] has, however, also become part of the development

ideoscape. Rather than representing an alternative approach, 'culture for development' has become another power-inflected, globally circulating discourse, which often fails to translate into meaningful practice as it meets with the disjunctures and frictions that exist between different geopolitical contexts. (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 130)

Bharucha also argues that for the relationship between the cultural and development industries to be truly synergetic and productive, structures and ways of working need to be established that make sense to both the development and cultural worlds with their respective terminologies, epistemologies and priorities and that avoid the mere instrumentalisation of culture for 'greater' development goals. Only 'a process of re-imagining that seemingly innocent conjunction "and" [set between culture and development]' (Bharucha, 2009, para. 3) will bridge the existing schism between culture and development and challenge the tendency to focus on culture's economic benefits, as Bharucha argues:

We need languages which can challenge the existing indices of 'measuring' the developmental content of art practice. Only when funding agencies can create new evidence-based indices which can show that the arts do make a difference in the social and political world, can the economist priorities of state-driven development be meaningfully countered. (Bharucha, 2009, para. 4)

Hence, if managed carefully and sustainably, the relationship between culture and development can be a very synergetic one, creating a virtual circle through which they enhance each other. It has even been argued that while 'development' makes use of 'culture' (in particular 'heritage') to become more locally relevant, 'culture' similarly makes use of 'development' to connect to wider local agendas (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013), but also to access funds denoted for 'development', for example. This, and its implications, will be discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter outlined the theoretical and conceptual framework that underpins this research, exploring in particular the reification and commodification of culture, the dialectics surrounding the concepts of 'the local' and 'the global', the relationship between globalisation and culture, the CCIs and the global creative economy, and the concept of 'culture and development'.

Throughout modernity and its Eurocentric view of universal teleology, but also as a consequence of colonialism, 'culture' and its various forms of representation have come to be used to categorise people as separate and different entities, which also influenced the notions of 'authenticity', 'tradition' and 'folklore' to describe static and unchanging aspects of cultures. However, postcolonial and cultural studies show that cultures and their expressions have always experienced transformation and are of fundamentally synthetic and hybrid nature.

Furthermore, the performativity of 'cultures in translation' renders the notion of a fixed point of origin or a timeless 'authenticity', producing ontological and essentialist features, futile.

The notion of the hybridity of culture, as well as between 'the local' and 'the global', is crucial for this research as it underpins the hypothesis that cultural production happens in a continuum of cultural flows, translation and transformation across localities, regions and national borders. The concepts of translation and transformation are insofar important in this context as they highlight the fact that meaning is created by the receiver and that connotation is thus always local. This, for example, also applies to the meaning of 'commodification', which is equally culturally negotiated and thus engenders different implications in different locales.

This perspective not only reaffirms the agency of the local but is also useful for analysing the application and hybridisation of global flows in a specific locale, both in terms of aesthetics and in terms of discourses and policies (such as the creative economy discourse or the discourse on culture and development, which celebrates culture as both an enabler and driver of development). It is crucial to remember, however, that global flows are 'deeply perspectival constructs' (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33) and that trans-local as well as intra-local encounters and processes are embedded in systems of power that impact both the directions and the reception of flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas. To answer the main research question of this thesis – how does the continuum of local and global flows impact both theatre aesthetics and the policy, structural and institutional context for theatre production in Sierra Leone? – it is therefore important to also interrogate how these flows are controlled *and* subverted and by whom.

As discussed in Section 1.4 on the design of this research, the analysis of contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems, which is at the core of this thesis, requires a political economy approach underpinned by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework situated at the intersection of postcolonial, cultural, theatre, international development and cultural policy studies. Hence, to be able to analyse contemporary theatre production in Sierra Leone throughout Chapters 4 and 5 as historically, politically, culturally and socially situated and to understand the relationships between individuals, institutions, governments and public policies that constitute the production, distribution, consumption and regulation of cultural production in Sierra Leone, the next chapter (Chapter 3) dissects relevant historical, political, cultural and social developments and dynamics, including the historical development of theatre in Sierra Leone.

3. Staging Sierra Leone

Theatre is embedded in local histories and their socio-cultural textures, but at the same time it is also responsive to wider dynamics of social, economic, political and cultural transformations. Theatre is thus very much 'alive' and constantly being recreated, reinterpreted and repositioned within the wider context of the society it emerges in. A grounded analysis of contemporary theatre and its underlying structures therefore requires an understanding of its aesthetic and socio-historical foundations, which relate to not only theatrical, formal and spatial developments and the socio-cultural contexts of performers and audiences, but also to wider political, economic, historical and structural factors impacting cultural production, distribution and consumption.

In addition to this, an analysis of contemporary African theatre, and the fundamental hybridity and synthetic approach that characterise it, needs to be founded in its specific postcolonial context, as 'the theatre, the narrative, the drama and the performance culture we have [in Africa] have been modified by the colonial experience' (Adeyemi, 2017b). An important dimension in the understanding of this postcolonial context and the political economy of cultural production in Sierra Leone relates to the differences in the set-up, role and authority of the postcolonial state and its governance structures compared to conventional theorisations of the Western state. These are differences that evolved from, amongst other things, the legacy of colonial governmentality (in a Foucauldian sense), the emergence of the 'two publics' (each representing a different public realm between the claims of 'modern' and 'traditional' life; Ekeh, 1975; Mbembe, 2001) and Sierra Leone's civil war and its legacy (all of which I discuss in Sections 3.1.2 to 3.1.4).

This chapter is divided into two main parts. The first section develops a genealogy of the Sierra Leonean present, giving a brief account of the country's modern history and analysing the historical, political and cultural developments that have conditioned the present and shaped Sierra Leone, the postcolonial state, its institutions and their governmentality. The second section is concerned with the origins, history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone, which set the foundations for contemporary Krio theatre, whose analysis is at the core of the next chapter (Chapter 4).

3.1 A genealogy of Sierra Leone's present – Sierra Leone and its historical, political and cultural background

3.1.1 Brief history of Sierra Leone, with a focus on the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism

Historians and archaeologists have determined that Sierra Leone, on the West African coast, has been inhabited for at least 2,500 years and was continuously populated from other regions in Africa (Kup, 1975; Fyfe, 1962). Today this relatively small African country is officially the home of sixteen different ethnic groups with each their own language and cultural characteristics. The first documented contact with Europeans took place in 1462, when the Portuguese explorer Pedro de Sintra landed on the shores of what is now Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital. Sierra Leone was subsequently named after his calling the mountain formation around Freetown 'Serra Leoa', Portuguese for 'Lion Mountains'.

The transatlantic slave trade started not much later and thrived by the 18th century, with slaves from the rice-growing regions of the West African coast, especially from Sierra Leone, often being sold to the colonies of South Carolina and Georgia, where their special rice-farming skills could be exploited. There are different estimations with regards to the total number of Africans who were enslaved and shipped to the Americas over the centuries (ranging between ten and twenty million) and of those who died during the journey, especially on the slave ships during the so-called middle passage, which formed a crucial part of the Triangular Trade system that connected slave trade, plantation economy and European industrialisation (Venn, 2009). But historians David Eltis and David Richardson conclude in their *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (2010) that the most approximate number of Africans shipped off as slaves across the Atlantic is 12.5 million, of which 1.8 million (14.4%) did not survive the journey. It was not until 1807 that the slave trade was legally abolished by the British and its navy started trying to actively stop it by patrolling the shores of the African coast and the Atlantic more generally.

British philanthropists had already begun from 1787 to settle freed slaves in the 'Province of Freedom', close to what was to become Sierra Leone's present-day capital, Freetown. Failing economically and socially, the Sierra Leone Company was created (supported by the British government) to take over and manage this resettlement 'experiment' as well as British commercial and missionary interests on site. Shortly after, in 1808, the British government, however, took over completely and Freetown became an official colony (Alie, 1990; Kup, 1975). This coincided with a general tendency in the 19th century by European imperialists to move from an 'informal hegemony', characterised by military influence and economic dominance, to formally establishing colonies.

The British continued to use their Freetown colony to resettle freed slaves from the American colonies as well as slaves who had been recaptured by the British navy (now monitoring the compliance with the abolition laws) from the still running slave ships. This 'Sierra Leone resettlement experiment' involving predominantly Jamaican Maroons, African Americans, Nova Scotian settlers and members of other African ethnic groups (mainly originating from the West Coast) obviously had an enormous and long-term effect on the indigenous population and their make-up, in an even more complex way than other colonial projects. The descendants of this mixed group of freed slaves were to develop a new language, 'Krio', and form a new ethnic group, 'the Krios', whose culture is, due to diverse ethnic and regional influences as well as significant European impact, very different from all other local indigenous cultures (Harris, 2013; Kup, 1975; Wyse, 1991).

The Krios, favoured by the British, quite quickly emerged as elite over the local ethnic groups and significantly impacted the cultural, judiciary and political life in Sierra Leone, despite their relatively small numbers. Today, according to the 2015 Census, only 1.3% of Sierra Leone's population are of Krio ethnic origin, but 18.2% of the population report Krio as their main household language (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2017, p. 91). Furthermore, Krio is used as Sierra Leone's lingua franca throughout the country to bypass potential communication difficulties between the diverse sixteen ethnic groups, with 77.26% of the population reporting Krio as their second language and a total of 97% speaking Krio either as their first, second or third language (Translators without Borders, 2020). Krio is also 'used as a viable medium of bilingual and multilingual education, in political ceremonies and speeches, but above all in the rich history of orature that includes proverbs, stories, riddles, poems, and most prominently, drama' (Worman, 2006, p. 34) and thus has significant cultural influence.

As industrialisation began to enhance European interest in Africa's resources and new opportunities for commerce were sought, the 'Scramble for Africa' (in terms of colonisation and trade possibilities) intensified and was formally regulated at the Berlin Conference of 1884/85. While most of West Africa was under French rule from the 19th century until independence in the 1960s, Sierra Leone was one of only a few British colonies in West Africa, together with the territories that constitute today's independent nations of The Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria. British West Africa was ruled as an administrative entity under a Governor-in-Chief, a role bestowed upon the governor of Sierra Leone in Freetown. Like other British African colonies, Sierra Leone was governed under colonial indirect rule, relying on local political hierarchies and 'adapted' precolonial institutions of power (such as chiefs and 'secret societies', which will be discussed in more depth in the next section) in order to spend as few resources as possible to govern the colony (Harris, 2013). However, in the case of Sierra Leone this indirect rule was twofold: Krios, who had initially mainly settled in Freetown, became part of the colonial hierarchy around Freetown and the Western Area (today's region

surrounding Sierra Leone's capital) and chiefs of other ethnic groups supported the administration of all other areas in the provinces (Harris, 2013; Kup, 1975; Reno, 1995).

In contrast to the British strategy of indirect rule, French West African colonies were administered under what had been conceived as 'direct rule', headed up by the Governor General of French West Africa in Senegal's capital Dakar. The concept of direct rule was characterised by a uniform and centralised administration, based on the French ideal of the centralised and unified government of the *metropole*, and by an assimilation policy, based on the 'universal' values of the French Revolution and aimed at turning colonial subjects into French people (Harris, 2013; Lee and Schultz, 2012).

In the course of French colonial rule, however, the French model of direct rule ended up in practice resembling the British model of indirect rule. Like the British, the French colonisers also used chiefs in their governance strategies, appointed rather for their loyalty to the colonial power than their rights to local power. Despite the conceptual differences between the two models, as originally conceived by the differing colonial ideologies and their administrators, many analysts have since highlighted that the conceived dichotomy between direct and indirect rule is problematic; especially as both forms of colonial governance ended up being a hybrid in reality (e.g., Lee and Schultz, 2012; Mamdani, 1996). African history and politics scholar Mahmood Mamdani (1996) also points out that both direct and indirect rule were following similar if not identical objectives of foreign rule and that the ideology of indirect rule was in fact sometimes used to disguise structures of actual direct rule.

To keep the French (who had colonised Guinea to the North) at bay, the British continued to extend their Sierra Leonean colony during the late 1800s, despite resistance from the North, until also the hinterland of present-day Sierra Leone was claimed as a Protectorate in 1896. By the early 20th century Sierra Leone 'thrived' as a colony, being the residence of the British regional governor and the educational centre of British West Africa. After a number of unsuccessful revolts against the British, the 1950s finally saw a movement towards decolonisation and Sierra Leone gained its full independence in 1961 (Kup, 1975).

Despite Sierra Leone's unique historical context due to the completely arbitrary resettlement of freed slaves on its land and the subsequent construction of the Krios as a new ethnic group, Sierra Leone's establishment as Britain's first settlement colony in Africa highlights common issues of colonisation and its inherent tensions and pathologies:

Colonization as a physical, cultural, economic, racialized and gendered project; complex relations not only between colonizers and colonized but also the formation of new political, diplomatic, and economic patterns beyond the colony's borders; and the ambiguous status and culture of settlers as colonizers and clients. (Land and Schocket, 2008, p. 2)

In many ways the making and unmaking of Sierra Leone and its political history are thus similar to other African postcolonies, affected by similar objectives of foreign rule. Sierra Leone, like other colonies across the continent, was economically exploited and at the receiving end of 'civilising missions'. Western-style education and Christianity were introduced by the European colonisers across the whole continent to undermine indigenous cultures and to create a new social order, independent of existing local hierarchies and structures and based on elites whose new status and 'Westernised' beliefs changed subsequent political, economic and cultural developments.

But Sierra Leone's trajectory exhibits three crucial differences in comparison to other British colonies in Africa (Harris, 2013). Firstly, as the British Empire's first settlement colony in Africa, Sierra Leone was colonised for longer than other British African colonies. Secondly, the influx of freed slaves and the subsequent creation of a Krio population, as described above, is a historical variation on settlement that is unique in the context of British colonialism and whose legacy is still visible in the country's political and cultural life today. Last but not least, the discovery of diamonds in the 1930s,³ the subsequent economic reliance on the diamond industry, the so-called resource curse, the move of especially young men from working in agriculture to working in mining and issues linked to all the above with regards to 'traditional' versus state rule have created a complex political, economic and social environment. Mismanagement, weak governmental structures and corruption never allowed the country to fully benefit from its wealth in natural resources. Especially the reliance on the diamond trade, but the difficulty to control it and manage it in a fair and sustainable way proved very detrimental (Reno, 1995).

Sierra Leone's history related to the transatlantic slave trade and British colonialism, briefly summarised above, is crucial as the backdrop to this research as it has conditioned the country's present. It has created the state of Sierra Leone, arbitrarily delimiting its borders, impacted its structural, political, economic, social and cultural set-up, and has also resulted in continuing close cultural, political and economic links with the UK and the Americas, especially the USA and the Caribbean, where so many enslaved Sierra Leoneans and their descendants came to stay. These links are reinforced by present-day emigrants who, as part of growing diasporas especially in the UK and the USA, act as cultural ambassadors and translators both to Sierra Leone and their country of residence. On a more institutional level the connections between Sierra Leone and the UK have become even closer again since the British military and governmental intervention during and after Sierra Leone's civil war (1991-2002). These international relations as well as interventions by development agencies and international

³ There are of course other West African countries (such as Guinea, Mali, Senegal, Mauritania, Nigeria and Ghana) that are also rich in natural resources (such as precious minerals, gold or oil), but these resources were discovered and exploited on a large scale later than in Sierra Leone (Harris, 2013).

NGOs more specifically have been further enhanced by the 'international community's'⁴ discursive and strategic shift with regards to international involvements such as in Sierra Leone, as African studies scholar David Harris explains:

The reasons behind [the] involvement, particularly the protracted stay of the UK and other European states, can be seen through the lens of shifts in global discourse over international intervention, liberal peace, state-building and post-conflict justice. Sierra Leone is then of global significance, in that it has been at the centre of the manifestation of this considerable discursive shift which has led to much larger interventions as in Afghanistan and Iraq and is in many ways one of the guinea pigs for such new ideologies. (Harris, 2013, p. 3)

From the perspective of now outdated linear centre-periphery models (which underestimate the complexity of global flows), Sierra Leone has always been marginalised, but the country's role in trans-Atlantic history (especially in the context of the slave trade, colonialism and their legacies) and its more recent history are of more than local interest. It was also the general international concern about failing states, 'blood diamonds', the resource curse, liberal peace, post-conflict reconstruction and state-building that moved Sierra Leone from its position at the 'global periphery' to the centre of global security policies and the agendas of international development agencies and other international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (Harris, 2013). In the context of this dialogical and dialectical history, the analysis of the relationship between increased global flows and Sierra Leone's reception of and response to them is therefore even more interesting and important.

The remainder of this first part of Chapter 3 dissects Sierra Leone's political history and political culture in more detail, from colonial governmentality and its legacies to conditions affecting the postcolonial state (such as extraversion, neo-patrimonialism, reciprocity and the complex notion of an 'African agency') and ends with Sierra Leone's civil war.

3.1.2 Colonial governmentality, the two publics and the bifurcation of the state

Many contemporary political, legal, administrative and other governance structures in Sierra Leone and other African countries are a legacy and an amalgamation of both precolonial and colonial power structures and hybrid governance strategies, which were carried over through independence and into the establishment of newly formed states, a legacy of colonialism themselves. Mamdani (1996) therefore argues that the postcolonial state and its

⁴ Although the term 'international community' has been criticised by political commentators and scholars for being a euphemism for 'the West', and for globalising and glorifying the latter, I will use the term in this thesis for lack of a better alternative to describe a diverse and extensive group of people across the world beyond the North/South and West/East dichotomies, including governments, NGOs, international development agencies and civil society groups. This use shall by no means glorify or universalise 'the West' and any potentially inherent ambiguities or hegemonies within this international group.

governmentality cannot be understood without a good understanding of the colonial state, its institutions and their governmentality. In the case of Sierra Leone, specific colonial forms of control and governmentality, reified societal and cultural structures, the joining of sixteen different ethnic groups (each with their own heritage and cultural and political loyalties) into one geopolitical entity and the establishment of a 'modern' state based on a hybrid form of governance have all conditioned the postcolonial state and are at the root of its complex and often problematic relationship between the state and civil society. This section dissects these historical and political developments in more detail. Before doing so, it is useful to briefly discuss the concept of governmentality itself.

Philosopher Michel Foucault's (e.g., 1979, 1980) well-known and much-discussed concept of governmentality refers not only to the conduct of states and governments (as networks of different institutions and structures) and their power through specific procedures and practices, but also to general activities, techniques and discursive frameworks that construct objects of control or guidance. Critics, such as political theorist Jonathan Joseph for example, however, argue that the concept is limited in its scope as 'a social theoretical explanation and also as an account of the international domain [...] [and] can [as the international domain is highly uneven] only usefully be applied to those areas that might be characterised as having an advanced form of liberalism' (Joseph, 2010, p. 223). But others argue, in response to this criticism and more convincingly to me, that despite the different social, economic and political settings, the concept of governmentality is useful for the analysis of African contexts, as it offers the possibility to theorise African agency and subjectivity, 'particularly in terms of the ways in which power is exercised and rationalised through practices of freedom' (Death, 2011, p. 3). This means that beyond governmental practices, dominant knowledge systems and the politics of power relations, governmentality can also uncover potentially hidden forms of freedom and consequential moments of counter-power. Without limiting itself to 'a mono-causal or ultimate explanation rooted in capitalism and relationships of production' (Death, 2011, p. 32), governmentality can thus also offer more nuanced and differentiated analyses. As such, and founded on nuanced empirical data, governmentality can 'map fragmented, uneven, heterogeneous, overlapping, fractured spaces of global politics; [...] to interrogate the constitutive foundations of African agency is an important part of this potential' (Death, 2011, p. 30).

Precolonial institutions in Sierra Leone, which governed through chiefs, elders and secret societies, focused their control on people rather than on territory (a consequence of the greater importance of people than land in a vast, under-populated area), establishing reciprocal but unequal relationships. Their structures and governance methods were not written down as laws, but rooted in 'the combination of reciprocal imperatives, decisions of a hereditary hierarchy, and religious and cultural mores' (Harris, 2013, p. 19).

Secret societies have been prominent in West African cultures since ancient times, but some scholars suggest that their influence on local religious, political, economic and cultural life increased with the arrival of European traders at the Upper Guinea Coast in the fifteenth century (D'Azevedo, 1962). The intersection of the already existing trans-Saharan trading networks with new trade routes to the coast offered not only new economic opportunities for local populations, but also increased population movements and the interaction across various social and cultural strata (Fanthorpe, 2007). As these social changes stimulated traditionalising processes, as a kind of counter-reaction as discussed in Chapter 2, and the need to consolidate a sense of belonging, it is quite possible that secret societies grew in importance and power in order to protect and control local interests and resources in the context of these global political and socio-economic changes. Some scholars, however, also suggest that local elites, which had grown wealthy and powerful through trade (especially the transatlantic slave trade), sought to maintain and extend their power over local populations through the normative properties of the secret societies (Rodney, 1970).

Secret societies are hierarchically organised and function as a way of drawing people of different kinship together into cross-cutting associations to 'socialise' them. As such, they are responsible for initiating girls and boys into society, regulating the sexual, social and political conduct of their members and mediating their relationship with the spirit world by channelling and controlling the powers of the spirit world (which are usually captured in masks and other special artefacts) through ritualistic performances. Society initiates must follow specific protocols and laws, the most fundamental one being that they must never talk about their society and its activities to non-initiates. In this context cultural practices and expressions not only represent human lives, but also shape and perform them and are instrumentalised to do so, using culture and its expressions as instruments of power.

Neither colonial rule nor independence and the formation of a 'modern' state altered the secret societies' powerful role in Sierra Leone and they thus still play an important role in maintaining law and order (especially in rural areas, far from the government institutions of the capital). Depending on the circumstances (for example in the context of local power struggles or unpopular national decisions) they can be found on either side of existing hegemonies, at times exercising hierarchical political control, at times supporting or providing resistance to such control. However, their exertion of influence always remains unspoken, secret.

Precolonial institutions of power had, however, little influence on the set-up of Sierra Leone as a colony and then as an independent state. It was the British (and later Krio) notions of governance and institutions that determined the development of the modern Sierra Leonean state and its governmentality. But Harris argues that in the wake of colonialism in Sierra Leone many precolonial political and social practices were not erased and some were even strengthened; that 'chieftaincy, "traditional" spiritual beliefs, judicial and land practices, and

social hierarchies were often changed *only* [my italics] in that they were re-organised, categorised and codified by the colonial state' (Harris, 2013, p. 166). However, it was exactly this re-organisation, categorisation and codification that attempted to fix and thus changed previously fluid categories. While notions such as authority and identity had been fluid during precolonial times, colonialism delimited local authority, codified laws, defined chiefdoms and their territories and implemented a 'modern' colonial state and capitalist governance structures, thus reconfiguring local hierarchies. At the root of the binary categorisations of authority, identity and territory was the dualist thinking, already mentioned in Chapter 2, whose classificatory systems also led to the conceptualisation of the dichotomous relationship between colonising and colonised cultures and of their differences as stable and fixed characteristics.

While there are certainly limits to the idea of constructivism and 'the notion that identity has little other substance than its instrumental use to gain advantage or resources' (Harris, 2013, p. 19), it must be highlighted that the fixing of previous fluid identities and the associated exaggeration, classification or simplification of cultural forms, representations and expressions did not just happen by accident. The categorisation of peoples and ethnic groups according to 'cultural traditions' was enforced by the colonial governmentality for various 'practical' reasons, such as simplifying colonial administration. But it also served as a base for a deculturalisation process to support the building and maintaining of hegemonic structures. In the context of colonialism culture as a place of social engineering and a tool of administrative, social and political power was used to define and mould the subjectivity and identity of not only individuals, but entire societies for political and hegemonic purposes (Abdi, 2010; Said, 1993; Wa Thiong'o, 1986).

As in many African colonies, a 'modern' system of authority and law was established in Sierra Leone in the wake of colonialism in parallel to the supposedly 'traditional' customary system of precolonial authorities. I say 'supposedly' as colonialism transformed customary hierarchies by creating new structures of local authority and by removing 'precolonial mechanisms of checks and balances and social control [...] for the sake of extraction and submission' (Meyer, 2007, p. 7). The often-random selection of local leaders to support the colonial governmentality, independent of existing hierarchies, and the creation of 'Westernised' elites also encouraged differences, competition and inequality between ethnic groups. Furthermore, the fact that colonisers tended to select local leaders with similar characteristics to their own (often cooperative elders) encouraged conservatism and elite politics.

For example, in Sierra Leone the Paramount Chieftaincy was established as highest 'traditional' authority in 1896 by the British, when they proclaimed the hinterland of their existing Sierra Leonean colony as Protectorate and divided the land into small chiefdoms (of

which there are still 149 in total in Sierra Leone). The Paramount Chiefs continue to exist to this day and are elected by the chiefdom's 'ruling houses', 'the elite created and given exclusive right to rule by the British at the initiation of the system in 1896' (Acemoglu, Reed and Robinson, 2013, p. 2). Any eligible contestant must also belong to one of the 'ruling houses'. As Paramount Chiefs rule for a lifetime, represent the third-level units of Sierra Leonean administration and hold legislative, judicative and executive powers, they can truly be called 'decentralised despots' (Mamdani, 1996, p. 37).

These Paramount Chiefs, and their sub-chiefs, were also the sole local government in Sierra Leone from 1896 until 2004, when generally elected local councils were created (at the request and with financial support from international donors). This has created a system of hyper-local support and protection, which, however, depends completely on patrimonial relationships and local citizenships. These hyperlocal 'chieftaincy citizenships' are crucial as it is only through such a citizenship, for example, that land can be attained, which is the most important resource especially in rural areas. Furthermore, it is within these structures 'that the social contract is formed rather than between the formal state and the population as a whole' (M'cleod and Ganson, 2018, p. 5). Chiefs are thus not only custodians of 'traditional' culture, but also holders of significant power.

This dual approach to colonial governance and its dual legal and administrative system led to the bifurcation of the state, 'organized differently in rural areas from urban ones [...] [and containing] two forms of power under a single hegemonic authority' (Mamdani, 1996, p. 18). The dual approach to colonial governance and the bifurcation of the state based on the differentiation between civil and customary power also created 'two publics', each representing a different public realm between the claims of 'modern', 'civil' forms of governance (which only controlled the capital and national affairs) and 'traditional', 'primordial' hierarchies (which ruled most of local rural life) (Ekeh, 1975; Mbembe, 2001) – and thereby also enhancing the boundaries and divisions between urban citizens and rural subjects and producing two kinds of communities and cultural identities. The notion of 'the public', 'a politico-theoretical [concept] of deeply European origin' (Featherstone and Venn, 2006, p. 2), is thus not applicable to the context of postcolonial African societies and has taken an epistemological turn as a result of colonial interference. It is instead the 'two publics' that form an important dimension in the analysis of governance structures, public institutions and political culture in postcolonial Sierra Leone, but also in terms of wider cultural dynamics and representations.

To understand the relationship and the still ongoing tensions between the two forms of power and the two publics, it is helpful to consider them separately (as the following quote does), but it is important to remember that they each represent one face of the same system of power.

The dividing line between [the two publics] is best captured in the common Mende words *puu hindae* (meaning Whiteman's [sic] business which approximates [to] the civil public) and *kondi hindae* (meaning our local affair which equates to [the] primordial public). The *puu hindae* [...] is seen by many people as corrupt and undeserving of support [...]. By contrast the *kondi hindae*, which consists mainly of secret societies, ethnic and hometown development associations, belongs to the community and is claimed by most ordinary people as their own. Thus members of the *kondi hindae* feel obliged to it and are fiercely protective of its interest[s], and conduct within this realm is governed by traditions of sanctions, self-help, self-government and a high degree of accountability. (Lavali, 2005, para. 5)

The latter's authority has never been truly challenged in Sierra Leone despite the contested nature of chieftaincy in Sierra Leone, based for example on the notion that the abuse of power by chiefs and the subsequent disaffection by younger people contributed to the civil war (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharpe, 2015; Fanthorpe, 2005; Richards, 2005), as well as recent attempts to strengthen other forms of local government, such as the local councils mentioned above. Furthermore, like their colonial predecessors, postcolonial politicians continue to use, for their own purposes, the power of the local and 'traditional'. It is even suggested that politicians today are still only able to succeed if they are initiated to the secret society of their specific locality (or the locality they wish to govern). While this dependency on the patronage of secret societies makes politicians 'fearful of the aesthetic intensity generated by their processions' (Nunley, 1988, p. 103), they can also use the secret societies and their aesthetic intensity for their own purposes, such as increasing and disciplining their supporters – an interesting illustration of the continuing hybridisation of the 'two publics' and its inherent tensions, but also of the links between aesthetics and politics.

'Traditional' authorities also still find particularly high importance and legitimacy in areas that the state cannot fully access, such as religious, policing and judiciary issues or the distribution of land. While this might be common in many countries across Africa, Sierra Leone's 'long history of politically conservative and pragmatic or even cynical elite politics' (Harris, 2013, p. 172), the particular legacy of both precolonial and colonial power structures and their hybridisation into neo-patrimonialism, as well as the favouring of Krios by the colonisers which led to distinct Krio paternalism, have fostered 'traditional' authorities and the power of the local to a higher degree.

As mentioned above, it is important, however, not to conceive of the two publics and the different governance structures in a simple dichotomy, as a seemingly logical consequence of the demarcation between 'traditional' and 'modern' made from the point of view of the discourse of modernity. To mark chieftaincy as solely 'traditional' and precolonial and thus oppose it to a 'modern' system of rule is intrinsically incorrect. The decentralised, 'traditional' authorities formed an important part of 'modern' colonial governmentality and are neither binarily opposed to postcolonial governance structures; especially as long as chiefs continue

to act as local representatives or lobbyists for 'big men' from the capital. The two publics and different political orders thus do not exist and function separately from each other, as they have over time become hybridised in a complex system of colonial and then postcolonial institutions, neo-patrimonialism and patron-clientelism in both urban and rural areas (Albrecht, 2017), which will be further explored in the next section.

The fact that 12 selected Paramount Chiefs continue to be members of Sierra Leone's National Parliament (one per provincial district, making up a tenth of the total seats in Parliament) is a good example of this hybridisation and the continued authority of the 'traditional' system and its agents of power within the 'modern' national governance system. The various levels of political influence exercised by chiefs and secret societies also suggest that 'modernity', and its (failing) institutions and governmentality, have sustained 'the secret societies as repositories of local culture and political identification' (Fanthorpe, 2007, p. 8) rather than replaced their purpose and function, as colonisers, proponents of modernisation theories and propagators of 'civilisation' were hoping for.

Hence, the two publics and its hybrid governance structures also represent an important aspect of the postcolony; in terms of its political economy and the relationship between the state and civil society, but also as a critique of this relationship as conventionally set out in political philosophy and social sciences. The hybridisation between the two publics, and the tensions inscribed in it, are also reflected and played out in the development of theatre in Sierra Leone, both in terms of aesthetic and structural aspects, which will be illustrated and analysed in more detail in the latter part of this chapter and Chapters 4 and 5.

To understand the political economy of culture in Sierra Leone therefore also requires an understanding of the postcolonial state, its structures, procedures and rationale as well as an understanding of the context it operates in, including global hegemonic systems but also the complex relationship between the state and civil society. The next section thus explores the development of the Sierra Leonean postcolonial state and its governmentality in more detail to provide the necessary historical and conceptual framework for my analysis in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.1.3 Sierra Leone's postcolonial state and its governmentality

The previous section highlighted that the genealogy of the Sierra Leonean postcolonial state and its governmentality is based on a complex combination of multiple cultural, political, historical, economic, religious and ideological factors, as is the case in many other African postcolonies. But political scientist Jean-Francois Bayart argues that the existing literature lacks nuanced analyses of these multiple factors shaping postcolonial African politics, which he seeks to address through his own research on the historicity of the African state (Bayart, 2000, 2009). Bayart's notion of 'historicity' refers to a history inferred from concrete historical

and social processes, which cannot be interpreted outside their historical and social context. As such it contradicts the notions of universalism and essentialism, which postulate that some things, such as normative institutions, are 'natural' or 'essential' and therefore exist universally. With Bayart's notion of historicity in mind and based on the discussion in the previous section, this section gives an overview (not in the sense though of a linear view of history-as-progress) of the historical, political and social processes that led to the set-up and development of the postcolonial state in Sierra Leone and that have formed its governmentality, including the claims of neo-patrimonialism.

Sierra Leone's movement towards independence was not dominated by proponents of nationalism, but more so by anti-colonialism and 'parochial matters, such as chieftaincy and elite divides which [...] led to ethnic politicisation' (Harris, 2013, p. 45). Whereas the European conception of a state had evolved from a history of external threats, whose averting required a strong centre, a unified people and the protection of its borders, many postcolonial African states such as Sierra Leone were not born from external threats, but from external ideas – which complicated the nation-building process, the relationship between the state and civil society and the system's general legitimacy.

It was the administrative, political and legal unification of the Colony and the Protectorate on the basis of a new constitution in 1951 that provided the framework for a more or less peaceful decolonisation process and final independence in 1961. Up until 1951 the Colony (the coastal area of Freetown and the Western Peninsula directly controlled by the British and their Krio administrators) and the Protectorate (the 'hinterland' controlled by chiefs and traditional authorities through the colonial system of 'indirect rule') had been governed by separate and constitutionally different political systems. But when negotiations for a new, unified political system were on their way across both entities, the elite of the Protectorate, under the leadership of Milton Margai (who was to become Sierra Leone's first Prime Minister), joined forces with the Paramount Chiefs to limit the political power of the Krios in the Colony and take over control themselves (Harris, 2013).

The unification of the two former separate entities thus offered the former Protectorate elite for the first time the opportunity to form nation-wide parties and take over crucial positions of power, backed by a larger population and higher voter numbers. This eventually allowed them to oust the Krios, who had up to then held key positions, and to replace elitist Krio politics (which had been based on Eurocentric notions of citizenship, liberal democracy, rule of law and state-building) with chiefly patronage politics. However, this fundamental change led to opposing sides no longer to be found between the Colony and the Protectorate, but within the former Protectorate itself, and ethno-regionalism and identities became politicised as a consequence (Kandeh, 1992). This is not uncommon anywhere in the world; however, in Sierra Leone this meant that the dual system established by colonial rule (which had both

reified ethnicity and governed through chiefs and a 'modern' state) continued into the postcolony. Hence, regional ethnicities and 'traditional' authorities became key stakeholders in the struggle for power after independence (Kup, 1975; Reno, 1995; Harris, 2013). Today's main parties, The Sierra Leone People's Party (the SLPP, with its strong-hold in the Mende South) and the All People's Congress (the APC, controlled by the Temnes in the North), both originated in the former Protectorate and were from their start characterised 'by politicians with strong rural powerbases' (Fanthorpe, 2007, p. 7), in contrast to the more urban Krios. SLPP and APC politicians still exhibit great loyalty to their local communities and strong links to their respective secret societies, as mentioned above.

As a consequence of the 1951 constitution Sierra Leone became a parliamentary system within the Commonwealth of Nations and was given local ministerial powers, with Milton Margai as Chief Minister of Sierra Leone. On finally gaining independence on 27 April 1961 the country maintained its Western-style parliamentary system, with Margai as its first Prime Minister, and remained a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. The first general election as an independent nation was held the following year, which the SLPP won again and re-elected Margai as Prime Minister. Following Margai's death a couple of years later the fragile new state, however, entered turbulent times. An election, which the APC won, and three military coups later it was eventually Siaka Stevens and his APC party who retook power in 1968, with Stevens becoming Prime Minister and – following the adoption of a new constitution – President in 1971. Stevens' rule grew more and more authoritarian over the years, eventually introducing a one-party state in 1978 (Ferme, 2001; Kup, 1975; Reno, 1995). It was also during Siaka Stevens' reign as Prime Minister from 1967 to 1971 and as president from 1971 to 1985 that the 'rhizome state' (Bayart, 2009)⁵ or 'shadow state' (Reno, 1995)⁶ increased significantly in Sierra Leone, as Stevens transferred much of his political mission and distribution of resources from the formal state to informal structures over which he held more personal control – as Harris highlights below:

[Stevens] endeavoured to ensure that those in positions of authority or with access to potential power bases owed their position in the network to him, and were not loyal to the nation, the region or the party, but personally to him. (Harris, 2013, p. 73)

The informalisation of many aspects of political, economic and social life, including the very profitable diamond trade (which was to a high degree controlled by local authorities, mainly chiefs), and the politicisation of resources led to a decline of the formal state, its

⁵ Bayart's (2009) notion of the 'rhizome state' refers to a state built by formal state institutions that are propped up by invisible familial and ethnic ties.

⁶ Reno's term 'shadow state' describes 'the near total decay of formal state institutions' in the context of informal markets and their role in supporting parallel political power (Reno, 1995, p. 1).

institutions and control. It has been argued that while colonialism had introduced the political platform and had contributed to the bifurcation of the state, it was the APC and Siaka Stevens' neo-patrimonialism that have enhanced the crisis of the Sierra Leonean state (Harris, 2013; Reno, 1995). The ensuing difficult economic and political times of the 1970s and 1980s, dominated by high corruption, mismanagement of public and natural resources, high inflation, decreasing agricultural production and very high unemployment, left the Sierra Leonean state and its governance structures and institutions extremely fragile.

The increased intervention of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) at the time (based on Structural Adjustment Programmes, which advocated neoliberal policies) did not prevent the failure of public institutions. This aggravated the course of the country's economic decline and eventually also undermined the legitimacy of the government in power, which is considered to have been one of the major causes of Sierra Leone's civil war of the 1990s (Kandeh, 2008). These Structural Adjustment Programmes also turned aid into an instrument of power and enhanced the inequality between international aid recipients and donor organisations.

It is debatable how much this has changed as a consequence of more recent forms of interventions, such as 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers' (introduced by the World Bank and IMF in 1999) and the African Union's 'New Partnership for Africa's Development' (adopted in 2001), which are supposed to increase local political empowerment and to inspire greater local 'ownership'. Some analysts describe current relationships between aid donors and recipients, as well as global governance structures in international development in general, still as neocolonial and donor-driven (e.g., Cammack, 2004; Langan, 2018). Others seem slightly more optimistic and see these relationships as characterised by a growing African independency and African 'ownership' and argue that 'the power of [these] partnerships does not lie primarily in relations of domination, but in techniques of cooperation and inclusion' (Abrahamsen, 2004, p. 1454). However, while these techniques of cooperation and inclusion certainly produce new forms of agency, they also create new, maybe more subtle forms of discipline.

But based on the notion, mentioned above, that the concept of governmentality has the potential to identify potentially hidden forms of freedom and moments of counter-power, Bayart also highlights the importance of conceiving of an active African agency within this 'without falling into a binary trap of labelling [it] either resistance or complicity [...] [and thus] refusing the dichotomy of dominators and dominated' (Death, 2011, p. 7). This is obviously a sensitive undertaking considering Africa's position within a global history of unequal distribution of power and wealth, especially in the context of colonialism and neoliberal globalisation. It, for example, begs the question of how much African agency can realistically be possible within the global economy and the global networks of hegemonic institutions. Bayart's notion of

African agency is, however, not singular and linear, but diverse, nuanced and fragmented, and it is also linked to his argument about many African states being characterised by the so-called 'politics of the belly'; an expression he uses to refer to issues around the reciprocal assimilation of elites, the rhizome state, political entrepreneurs, the struggle between different factions for patronage, the relationship to international donors and development partners, and extraversion (Bayart, 2009). Bayart's notion of 'extraversion' describes African elites who benefit from resources to which they only gain access through the national and global power system in which they evolve and who actively participate in the creation and fostering of this system. It has also been argued that these elites, who impact important decisions and policies in the postcolony, have bought into existing political, economic and administrative frameworks as a result of their education in Western academic disciplines and their membership in a bourgeoisie-turned-kleptocracy (Appiah, 1993).

Bayart (2009) also highlights that the borderlines between public and private and between governmental, business and private spheres are not as distinct in African postcolonies, especially for the elites as they occupy a space in each sphere; a phenomenon he termed 'straddling'. This also opens the door for neo-patrimonialism. A hybrid system of power which blends precolonial patrimonial hierarchies and the authorities of the modern state, it has its foundations in the colonial legacy of the dual approach to governance and in both precolonial and colonial legacies of relationships of reciprocity and patron-client networks, which serve to fill some of the disjunctures between the state and the local. It also enables 'patrons in the state [to] disburse state resources to clients [...] in exchange for vital political support' (Harris, 2013, p. 71).

Although both sides might benefit to a certain extent from this patron-client system, it is intrinsically unfair, unequal, non-transparent and economically inefficient, as it favours politically beneficial over economically productive distribution. The patron-client networks between the capital and the provinces, which were established during colonialism and have transcended into the postcolonial state, have also fostered a growing gap between urban and rural and elites and non-elites, not just in Sierra Leone. In this context patronage often beats policy and at their extreme the patrimonial networks dominate the governance structures and techniques of the state, forming the rhizome or shadow state mentioned above. Effacing the divide between the public and the private, neo-patrimonialism also opens the door for corruption and extraversion, personal enrichment by individuals through their positions of power. It seems logical therefore to interpret corruption as inherent and extremely beneficial to power within the context of neo-patrimonialism instead of solely as the consequence of weak states and institutional deficits.

This historical reading of the participation of local elites in a global hegemonic system and the refusal to label it either resistance or complicity complicates the notion of agency in the

African context – a notion that is generally ambiguous due to the fact that many of the concepts used to refer to political agents (be they states, institutions, classes, civil societies or individuals) are not rooted in African ontologies and thus not necessarily translatable, even if they are now globally used. Despite these theoretical complications, the general idea of an active African agency, which goes beyond the dichotomy of dominators and dominated, and the notion of governmentality's potential to identify hidden forms of freedom and moments of counter-power do constitute useful concepts for this research to uncover the frictions, inconsistencies and disjunctures that obscure simple models of power systems. In this sense, they are also useful concepts to interrogate the direction, reception and translation of cultural flows as well as the roles, responsibilities, decision-making processes and structures that shape the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone.

Furthermore, the concepts of an active African agency and specific local forms of governmentality endorse an analysis of the nature and dynamics of power relations at their point of adaption. This allows – beyond a narrow analysis of state power – to uncover any subtle power producing, transforming and controlling social and cultural norms and forms of social and cultural representation, such as 'traditional' institutions like chiefs and secret societies, hybrid governance structures, specific local cultural practices and cultural flows including the flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas. As governmentality also highlights how the state, government and civil society are linked through political administration, it is also a useful tool for this research to analyse how culture is configured as a field of power through its administration and governance. But the concept of governmentality can also provide a nuanced analysis of how postcolonial relations are established and maintained through the production of 'global' ideas, discourses and citizens; how the power of dominant discourses fosters the techniques of cooperation and inclusion mentioned above; and how ideals and ideas that have evolved within the context of the Global North are transmitted and translated. In terms of my research project, this will enable a more nuanced understanding of the local translation of the global discourse on culture and the CCIs (including 'thought papers' such as policies) and of the latter's impact on both cultural discourses and practices in Sierra Leone.

3.1.4 Sierra Leone's civil war (1991–2002) and its legacy

This last section of the first part of Chapter 3 is concerned with the most recent significant part of Sierra Leone's history whose understanding is crucial for the understanding of the aesthetic, social, political and economic groundings of contemporary theatre in Sierra Leone: the country's civil war between 1991 and 2002 and its legacy.

It has been argued that it was initially of little concern to the national government in Freetown when in March 1991 a group of Sierra Leoneans, Liberians and Burkinabe invaded

the remote Kailahun District in the East of Sierra Leone, not far from the Liberian border; a diamond-rich and heavily forested area that the national government did not really reach (Meyer, 2007). But the conflict escalated and eventually also reached the capital in May 1997 (despite a peace agreement signed the previous year), when large parts of Freetown were captured jointly by the AFRC (the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, made up by members of the armed forces who had staged a coup) and the main rebel army, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The government retook Freetown in early 1998 with the support of international forces, led by ECOMOG,⁷ but the capital was attacked again in January 1999 by AFRC and RUF forces. The ensuing two-week battle over Freetown is considered to have been one of the bloodiest moments of the war, with the rebel forces inflicting severe terror and human rights violations on the civilian population, including executions, rape, amputations and abductions (Harris, 2013; Meyer, 2007). This extreme violence in the crowded capital (to which many displaced people from rural areas had fled over the previous years of the war) brought Sierra Leone considerable global attention, which eventually led to another peace agreement, a UN peacekeeping mission, a disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration process, national elections in 2002 as well as the establishment of the Sierra Leone Special Court and a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Harris, 2013; Meyer, 2007).

Whereas the exact origins of and motivations for Sierra Leone's civil war of the 1990s are still a source of debate among scholars and local experts, it seems to be common ground that the major factors leading to the war were all a consequence of precolonial and colonial legacies and related to the following: the weakness of the formal state and its institutions (including the armed forces); the difficulty of building democratic governments; and injustice, abuse of power and corruption at both local and national level as a result of the neo-patrimonial system, which led to societal rifts, a great urban-rural divide and the marginalisation and subsequent brutalisation of especially the youth and itinerant workers⁸ (Harris, 2013; Meyer, 2007; Reno, 1995; Richards, 1996). The war itself and both its internal and external context – such as the well-documented involvement by former Liberian President Charles Taylor, logistic and financial support of the RUF by Libya and the post-Cold War changes to international aid – created further reasons to fight, including the highly profitable diamond trade, which soon side-lined previous political motivations and added another, more economic, dimension to the war (Meyer, 2007).

⁷ The armed force ECOMOG, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group, was first set up in 1990 by ECOWAS, the Economic Community of West African States, to intervene in the Liberian civil war and was later also deployed in Sierra Leone.

⁸ Itinerant workers often do not belong to a certain chieftaincy and are thus excluded from local 'chieftaincy citizenship', which denies them access to customary land and property rights as well as local networks of support and protection.

Unlike in other African conflicts, religion, secessionism or political ideology (there was no official 'rebel ideology') did not represent motives in the Sierra Leonean civil war and it has been argued that even ethnicity did not play a key role; it was just one factor among many (Harris, 2013). Consequently, with no clear opposing sides and numerous different fighting factions (including local and regional self-defence militias fighting each other), the ensuing chaos further enhanced the conflict and its extreme violence, which mainly affected civilians. During the eleven years of war, Sierra Leone became the definition of failed statehood and the eventual interventions by the 'international community' thus focused on so-called whole-of-government approaches, integrating diplomatic, military and development operations, to help end the war (Meyer, 2007).

Although the civil war changed the political, economic and social context fundamentally, political life remains somewhat conservative in Sierra Leone. And although daily life is thought to be very mixed in terms of ethnic and religious groups, especially since the civil war and the internal displacement of about 50 percent of the total population, and Sierra Leoneans, for example, marry across presumed religious and ethnic borders (especially in urban areas), political alliances remain largely divided alongside ethno-regional lines. Voter behaviour is thus very much guided by local communities and concerns, prioritising communal and parochial over national issues. It is therefore the local dynamics of change and the localisation of national or global directives and policies that are thought to determine Sierra Leone's future. Harris (2013) also argues that the political beyond policy, especially the relationship between the state and civil society, will become more important, as liberal reforms on economic, political and judicial levels did not have the desired impact (like socialist and capitalist attempts before) and as ideology plays a smaller role in a post-Cold War world than identity and commodities.

Although the Sierra Leonean state was externally imposed, as outlined in the previous sections, with little input of those who would be 'the Sierra Leoneans', the latter have since created, and continue to redefine (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013), their own national narrative, which hybridises precolonial, colonial and postcolonial elements. They have also created clear manifestations of nationhood, such as their anthem, flag, several celebrated 'national heroes' throughout history and other cultural symbols. It is such cultural symbols which seem to join the different ethnic groups together, alongside the country's lingua franca Krio. Furthermore, a multiculturalist doctrine of 'unity in diversity' is widely promoted in Sierra Leone (Basu, 2013), but it is not always clear what apart from that exactly characterises the country's national identity, which tends to run in parallel to local and regional identities that also stretch beyond the national borders of Sierra Leone.

Some African studies scholars and historians have argued that the country's most recent history, and especially the civil war, added to the notion of a Sierra Leonean nation (Harris, 2013; Meyer, 2007). Paradoxically as this may sound, there seems to be some value in this

proposition. As everybody was somehow involved in or affected by the war and there were no clear-cut opposing sides along ethnic or religious lines, Sierra Leoneans, tired of war and difficult economic and political circumstances, seem now keen to celebrate their unitedness rather than their differences. This obviously does not only affect the country's political and social, but also its cultural life and the space for alternative and diverse discourses and practices. Furthermore, as a result of the multi-layered consequences of the war, competing financial priorities and the influx of international aid money since the end of the civil war, culture, and theatre in particular, has become more easily recruited by the development industry and its development goals, agendas and strategies, as Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrate.

3.2 History and development of theatre in Sierra Leone

As mentioned above, an analysis of contemporary theatre and its forms, themes and content, but also of its structural context, requires an understanding of its aesthetic and socio-historical groundings. The following section therefore outlines the origins, history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone, which set the foundations for contemporary Krio theatre, the analysis of which is at the core of Chapter 4. A history of theatre in Sierra Leone needs to start with indigenous theatre, as contemporary theatre in Sierra Leone is very much grounded in indigenous performances and their societal functions. Before drawing up this brief history of theatre in Sierra Leone, however, it is necessary to first discuss a few fundamental and general aspects of indigenous theatre in Africa.

3.2.1 Characteristics of indigenous African theatre

Indigenous African performance is often referred to as 'traditional' and equated with 'authentic' performances that have evolved within the context of rituals and other socio-cultural functions within society that give structure to life, such as performing the transition from one phase in life to the next. However, the notions of 'tradition' and 'authenticity' are, as discussed in Chapter 2, theoretically ambiguous and particularly problematic within African contexts, as they are concepts that have evolved within Eurocentric ideologies of universal development and modernisation theories and the dualist thinking reinforced by Enlightenment, modernity and colonialism. Furthermore, the notion of 'the traditional' is at the root of ideas about static, unchanging and fixed aspects of cultures and their expressions, which separate them from 'other' cultures and their expressions.

However, as noted in Chapter 2 as well, concepts such as 'tradition' and 'authenticity' are also highly politically charged and illustrate the duplicity of essentialism. Within hegemonic systems they thus have the potential to be used as legitimisation for marginalisation and

exclusion (while also inspiring a desire for 'the other') as well as a tool for people to assert their own cultural history, identity and authority. In the latter context, performances, and arts more generally, marked as 'traditional' thus celebrate and capitalise on the 'authentic', 'uncorrupted' and 'pure'. But theatre is also part of intangible cultural heritage, which is 'alive' and thus constantly being recreated and reinterpreted, and theatre can therefore not be classified as 'authentic' in the same way as 'dead' historical cultural artefacts could be. This chapter, as well as the following chapters on the development and status quo of theatre in Sierra Leone, shall be read with these ambiguities and tensions in mind.

When researching theatre, and especially theatre in Africa, one is also bound to interrogate the term 'theatre' and its imposition and transposition as a Eurocentric concept onto different performing arts heritages. Although 'everywhere theatre is culture [in the sense that] theatre is performing your culture, performing yourself, performing your identity and performing who you are' (Adeyemi, 2017b), many African theatre scholars (Banham, Hill and Woodyard, 1994; Banham, 2004; Breitingner, 2003; Etherton, 1982; Kerr, 1995; Omotoso, 2004; Rubin, 1997; Utudjian Saint-André, 2007) have highlighted that the category 'theatre' presents a hermeneutic problem in African contexts and is somewhat elusive for the following three main reasons:

Firstly, African theatre comprises and synthesises a great variety of forms of performance, from dance, storytelling, mime, music, spoken word, puppet theatre and masquerade to religious or spiritual rituals – all of which are categorised in separate artistic genres within the European tradition. Secondly, African theatre varies greatly; not only obviously across the whole continent, but also in each single country due to the often-high number of different ethnic groups, with each their own heritage and performance 'traditions'. Thirdly, 'theatre', and its artistic expressions as understood within the European tradition and its culture-specific ontology, history and terminology, conventionally refers to literary theatre, which is based on drama, the literary genre that provides the written text (the script) for a play. 'Theatre' in this sense thus refers to the realisation, the embodiment of drama. However, this literary theatre is a more recent phenomenon in Africa, where historically oral cultures have predominated and contemporary cultures and their representations are still very much influenced by orality.

But the distinction between the written and the oral text has led to the often-misleading taxonomy and implicit hierarchies between 'literary' and 'popular theatre' within the scholarship on African theatre. Furthermore, postcolonial economic, social and political conditions have also intensified the rise of this so-called popular theatre in many African countries in the form of developmental and educational theatre. Yet, this taxonomy is misleading insofar as 'literary' and 'popular' theatre do not exist in an atemporal, static dichotomy and have become very much mixed, if not hybridised in African theatre. Chapter 4 will analyse this complexity in more detail within the specific context of Sierra Leone.

Hence, there is a robust theatrical tradition in Africa that may not correspond to the classical European notion of theatre, but that is equally representative of 'theatre' in the sense that it uses immediate physicality, thus live performance, to present a story or create an event before a live audience. Hence, following the postcolonial agenda to widen classical genres and their aesthetics, technical terminology, themes and plot elements, it is essential to my research – not only on a conceptual, but also on a political level – to employ the term 'theatre' in support of the extension of its spectrum.

Although there are obviously countless aesthetic and socio-historical varieties within African theatre, the following generalised characteristics of indigenous African theatre serve as a useful starting point to the understanding of African theatre's historical development and help to grasp the magnitude of the encounter between non-mimetic indigenous African performance styles and mimetic European theatre in the wake of European colonialism (Banham, Hill and Woodyard, 1994; Banham, 2004; Conteh-Morgan, 2004; Kerr, 1995; Okagbue 2007, 2009; Worman, 2006).

Firstly, as mentioned above, indigenous African theatre embraces various forms of performances, from dance, storytelling, mime, music, spoken word, puppet theatre and masquerade to religious and spiritual rituals – making it more of a 'théâtre total' (Utudjian Saint-André, 2007, p. 807), a 'total theatre' (Traore, 1972), or a multi-generic *Gesamtkunstwerk* compared to the separating genres of the Eurocentric performing arts tradition. Secondly, especially in sacred contexts, performers do not imitate characters or events, but perform an act of *methexis*, of partaking the form of the involved characters and events. Indigenous African theatre thus does not attempt to represent reality mimetically but seeks to interpret it creatively to mark the difference between a play and real life. This also leads to actors not playing a role in a realistic or even naturalistic sense but playing *with* their character on a formal and aesthetic level. Thirdly, as opposed to classical European theatre and its codes of conduct, African theatre audiences assume a much more active role within a performance, for example by loudly voicing their appreciation or opinions and by singing, clapping and dancing along. It has been argued that African theatre audiences thus find themselves both literally, that is physically, and ideologically on a more equal level with the actors, as they are not isolated from them by a large gap as the one created by the juxtaposition of a conventional European elevated stage and a seated auditorium.

3.2.2 A brief history of theatre in Sierra Leone

The development of theatre in Sierra Leone is discussed in the existing literature along three main chronological stages (Palmer and De'Souza George, 1997; Sheriff, 2004; Utudjian Saint-André, 2007): The first stage refers to precolonial times during which indigenous forms, aesthetics and stories evolved in the geographical area of what was to become Sierra Leone.

The second stage is defined by the advancement of colonisation and its cultural, social, economic and political implications. The third stage marks the postcolonial era with its strife to recover an African identity, characterised, for example, by using Krio instead of English in playwriting and a renewed interest in precolonial forms, which led to inherently hybrid forms, such as the so-called Krio theatre.

While this diachronic summary obviously does and cannot account for all the ruptures and disjunctures in between and across the main three stages identified in Sierra Leonean theatre history or the simultaneous existence of both indigenous and colonial / postcolonial forms, this trajectory is useful for understanding and sketching out the general development and political economy of theatre in Sierra Leone over time. The following sections dissect each stage in more detail.

3.2.2.1 Precolonial indigenous theatre

Due to its oral heritage, there are not many records of precolonial theatre in Sierra Leone. However, as a result of performance being a crucial part of local culture and daily life, both theatre practices and knowledge about them have been passed on over the generations, which offers some crucial insights into their historical development.

Indigenous theatre in Sierra Leone, just like in other African countries, differs both in form and purpose from European and Euro-African theatre as well as from hybrid forms that developed later as a consequence of colonialism and postcolonialism. As performances played an important role in both everyday and sacred life, they were essentially non-commercial; although performers did expect some financial or material reward (Musa, 1998). The most obvious formal difference, as mentioned above, relates to the fact that indigenous theatre embraces different forms of performances, from dance, storytelling, music and masquerade to religious rituals. The term masquerade can refer to both a performance given by masked performers and the masked performer him- or herself, whose face or whole body may be covered by a mask, with the mask-carrying performer '[representing] the embodied spirit (Harding 1997: 4) and [being] accorded the same respect as the ancestors' (Adeyemi, 2017a, p. 17). Masquerades can have many different functions – including entertainment and social commentary, but also social control (Adeyemi, 2017a; Nunley, 1985, 1988; Phillips, 1978, 1995) – and they often also form important parts of ritual performances. As the latter are considered to have played a particularly important role in the development of African theatre, they deserve a more detailed discussion.

While it is agreed that rituals were significant for the development of African theatre, it is debated whether the actual roots of African performance and theatre lie in sacred and religious rituals and how the relationship between the two can be accurately described. Theatre scholars like Richard Schechner and Victor Turner, for example, have postulated that all ritual

exhibits theatrical qualities, and that all theatre comprises ritual (Schechner, 1973, 1976, 1985, 1993; Turner, 1982), but this has been questioned by a number of African theatre scholars (e.g., Echeruo, 1973; Ogunbiyi, 1981; Owomoyela, 1985). Although this debate is ongoing (especially in terms of the role, importance and efficacy of rituals in contemporary theatre), it seems to be agreed that there are crucial links between theatre / performance and ritual (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996). Important questions within this context thus relate to the kind of ritualistic elements that are found in contemporary theatre (and vice-versa), their overall purpose and function (not only within the actual performance, but also for society more broadly) and how they change a play's aesthetics.

Rituals have long been interpreted as the most conservative and fixed form of performance, especially in African contexts, and ritual liminality, in particular, has been considered as protecting and maintaining an existing social order. Building on anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep's notion of the liminal as the middle phase of initiation rites and rites of passage, Turner developed the concept further in the 1970s to describe socially and culturally transitional and transformative 'betwixt-and-between' practices and situations within 'a neither-this-nor-that domain' (Turner, 1974, p. 71) in what he called archaic, tribal, and early agrarian cultures (Turner, 1974). To distinguish these practices and situations from similar ones in 'modern' industrial or post-industrial societies, where they, however, according to Turner do not carry the same function, prominence and importance, he introduced the concept of 'the liminoid' to describe the latter (Turner, 1974). Since then, other scholars have, however, argued that this simplistic dichotomy must at least be replaced 'by an understanding of the liminal and the liminoid as opposite ends of a continuum' (Spiegel, 2011, p. 19).

Turner also argued that with the rise of individualism, novelty and increasing changes in the wake of intensified globalisation and capitalism rituals would slowly disappear (Turner, 1968, 1982). This suggests that rituals can only keep fulfilling their purpose and function in 'stable' societies which are, for example, not impacted by technological change (of which there are not many left in the world in the 21st century). However, given that a growing number of anthropologists, but also performance historians have since shown that increasing levels and speeds of change and globalisation do also enhance tendencies towards traditionalising, essentialism and localisation (Thompson Drewal, 1988; Meyer and Geschiere, 1999; Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001; Geschiere, 2009), Turner's fear that rituals and their purpose will disappear is unfounded. But they may keep changing and being reconstructed, in a continuum of local and global flows.

Rituals are forms of representation and performativity and as such performing them involves playing with their symbols and signifiers and investing them with new meaning. Far from being fixed and static, African rituals (as any other 'tradition') thus respond to their environment in a dialogic and dynamic way, in 'a process of competition, negotiation, and

argumentation, never simply [in] a matter of repeating correct' (Thompson Drewal, 1988, p. 25). This continuous revitalisation and reinvention of rituals is also described in art historian John Nunley's (1985, 1988) research on performances by urban masking societies in Freetown. While he links their origin to the settlement of Yoruba ex-slaves in Freetown and the subsequent emergence of the Krios as an elite, he describes their contemporary development and morphology as influenced by new 'pop versions' created by urban youth (Nunley, 1988) – who are potentially more impacted by cultural, social and technological change. The contemporary urban masking societies in Sierra Leone and their performances thus also rebut Turner's fear that rituals and ritualistic performances would disappear as a result of increasing changes in the wake of intensified globalisation and capitalism.

The discussion of the relationship between masquerade performances, so-called masked devils and secret societies in Sierra Leone in the existing literature (e.g., Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015; Hart, 1988; Nunley, 1985, 1988; Phillips, 1978, 1995) highlights that masquerade figures often embody the spirit world and control their power. As such, 'their cooperation is required in various society rituals, including initiation, [and] for non-initiates, such "devils" are especially dangerous and laying eyes on them is often proscribed' (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 110). But existing research on the origins of theatre in Sierra Leone also describes the fluid metamorphosis of secret ritualistic performances, or at least elements thereof (often accompanied by music, drumming and dancing), into profane representations. Common examples of this metamorphosis include the *Soko* performers and their healing powers (who are members of the Poro, a male secret society), the witch-finding cult *Ariogbo*, which involves a witch doctor possessed by a powerful spirit that guides him until he completes his task, and performances of secret society masquerades such as the *Bundo*, *Falui*, *Egugu*, *Oje* and *Gelede* (Sheriff, 2004, pp. 173-174). Over time, and because of their entertaining nature, these ritualistic performances, which historically were only allowed to be performed as part of specific secret rituals or within the context of secret societies, were permitted to shed their original rigid functionality and to be performed in public for entertainment as well as educational purposes. These secularised performances then took on other important socio-cultural functions, such as making sense of life, carrying and transmitting cultural memory as well as re-enacting and strengthening people's sense of identity and belonging. Other forms, which did not develop out of secret rituals and religious performances – such as storytelling, puppet theatre or the *Yamama*, *Gongoli* and *Kakadebul* masquerades – eventually took on similarly important roles in daily life (Sheriff, 2004; Kerr, 1995; Maddy, 2008).

While sacred religious performances are to this day staged in an enclosed and secretive environment (often within the context of secret societies) their secular versions are frequently performed publicly in the street, at festivals and parades that promote Sierra Leone's cultural

heritage, or even at political rallies. Masquerades in particular have become commodified and also serve as tourist attractions, and certain masks can be bought at local markets. Images of 'masked devils' (such as in Figure 1 below) also often appear in tourism brochures and murals (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015). These blurred lines between sacred and secular indigenous performances are another interesting illustration of the hybridisation of the two publics and its implications for cultural life in Sierra Leone.



Figure 1: Mask in storage at the Cultural Village in Aberdeen, West Freetown in 2016 (photo by the author)

The fact that in precolonial African societies performances formed such an important part of both everyday and sacred life, that, more generally, culture was very evenly distributed and that there was no distinction between 'high' and 'low culture' meant that historically performances were not considered as 'arts' or artistic creations in the classical European sense (Okagbue, 2007). The concept of art for art's sake was thus alien to diverse precolonial African epistemologies, and the roles of artists and performers were not considered as a paid profession, but as a particular function within society. To this day, performances and theatrical elements still form, one way or another, an important part of daily life in Sierra Leone; to the extent that they are often taken for granted, as theatre practitioner and writer Mohamed Sheriff emphasises:

In festivals and celebrations, religious and cultic rites, in storytelling sessions and even in day-to-day interactions, the elements of being in a state of possession, of role-playing and impersonation and various little functional dramas are so evident that their theatricality is often taken for granted. (Sheriff, 2004, p. 172)

It is probable that this heritage contributes to the difficulty for contemporary theatre practitioners to be accepted as 'professionals' and for the CCIs as a whole to be taken seriously, especially as a driver for economic development.

3.2.2.2 Theatre in the wake of colonisation (1787–1961)

The introduction of 'modernity', secularisation and occidentalisation through imperialism and colonialism marked a fundamental rupture not only in Africans' everyday lives but also their cultural lives. In the case of Sierra Leone, colonial times introduced not only the English language, Christianity and British culture to the country, but also African American and Caribbean cultural elements – which catapulted Sierra Leone into the cultural field of the 'Black Atlantic' (Gilroy, 1993).

The British, however, did not only introduce their own culture through educational and religious institutions, but also followed a strategic deculturalisation process through the multidimensional undermining of local cultural and religious heritages and, more generally, the construction of the cultural and human inferiority of the indigenous (Abdi, 2010; Fanon, 1963; Said, 1993; Wa Thiong'o, 1986). The taxonomy produced by colonial powers to legitimate colonisation, discussed in Chapter 2, relied on this construction of inferiority and the binary opposition of barbarism and civilisation. Following the ban of specific cultural and religious practices that were considered 'savage', the colonised were forced to abandon (or at least strongly question) their world views and beliefs that had until then provided a sense of life and a source of identity. Culture and the deculturalisation of local customs thus served to gain control over individuals and entire societies.

In addition to these well-documented common changes that colonialism enforced, Sierra Leone also saw very early African American and Caribbean influences as a result of the transatlantic slave trade and the subsequent resettlement of freed slaves after the abolition of slavery. This close contact between three black cultures across the Atlantic (especially those of the Southern United States, the Caribbean and West Africa) enhanced additional, non-Western cultural flows, which were significant for the country's but also for theatre's development.

Through his research on the impact of African American performance on West Africa, African music scholar and musician John Collins (2004) has found that Jamaican Maroons, for example, are associated with having introduced to Sierra Leone the *Goombay* (also spelt *Gumbe*, *Gumbay* or *Gumbia*), a Jamaican drum-dance of myalism, which is a form of witchcraft and healing cult associated with the Caribbean. Despite having scandalised both colonisers and the Krio elite, so that the 'local Church Mission Society published a newspaper article warning people that "Gumbay is the cause of many vices"' (Collins, 2004, p. 4), *Goombay* is still used in Sierra Leone today to accompany masked dancers. A variation of it

called *Asiko* (or *Ashiko*) was further exported to Ghana and Nigeria. The introduction of Afro-Brazilian performing arts across West Africa in the mid-to-late 19th century by freed Brazilian and Cuban slaves is another example of the impact of the Black Atlantic. *Carata* fancy dress, *calunga* masquerades, the *bonfin* festival, the *samba de roda* dance and the *samba* frame-drum, which was later used in the famous West African palmwine music, all stem from this Afro-Brazilian influence (Collins, 2004).

According to Collins (2004), the development of popular performance styles in Anglophone West Africa during the 19th century was also impacted by West Indian soldiers (mainly from Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados), who were stationed in the region, and their music. In 1819, for example, five companies of the West Indian Regiment (and their brass bands) were sent to Sierra Leone to fight a rebellion of freed slaves. Their public Sunday concerts of European songs in Freetown and the Afro-Caribbean music they played outside the regiment not only influenced local musicians, but also inspired Caribbean-style masquerades and parades.

By the 1930s, a lantern parade, which is thought to have also been inspired by similar celebrations in Banjul (The Gambia), was established to celebrate Eid ul-Fitr, the end of Ramadan (Nunley, 1985; Oram, 1998). Since then, this annual lantern parade has become an important part of cultural life in Freetown, but over time such parades have also taken place for other significant events, such as the celebration in 1993 of the first anniversary of the military coup that had overturned the previous APC government (Oram, 1998). These parades are made up by large and elaborate floats, which are built by lantern clubs, illuminated from the inside by lanterns (or now more often by electric bulbs) and carried on bamboo structures or pulled by some kind of vehicle. The lantern art itself is often characterised by the hybridity of contemporary Sierra Leonean culture, combining indigenous, Islamic and secular elements. The floats are accompanied by members of the lantern clubs, dancers, drummers and musicians in a carnivalesque procession (Nunley, 1985; Oram, 1998). Following the decline of the lantern parade during the civil war, it was decided to revive it in 2004 by secularising it and broadening its appeal, which 'involved shifting the date of the parade to the eve of Sierra Leone's Independence Day, such that it de facto became a national cultural festival' (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 118).

All the varied artistic and cultural influences described above, the bans of cultural and religious practices considered barbaric by the British and the influx of European drama and theatre performances (supported by dominant British education, Christian churches and the establishment of a European-style theatre building in Freetown) led to a reduction of indigenous performances and the domination of European-style literary theatre and music performances, especially in Freetown. While indigenous culture and theatre managed to survive in the Protectorate, mainly due to their physical distance to the centralised colonial

governmentality even though biblical stories and other Christian plays were also regularly staged in the provinces to spread Christianity, it was the evolving Krio culture and theatre of the Colony, and Freetown in particular, which not only informed notions of community, citizenship and nation, but also determined future theatrical developments (Sheriff, 2004; Utudjian Saint-André, 2007).

Beside religious plays, secular plays, usually drawn from European classics and always performed in English, characterised especially the cultural life of Freetown from the 1930s, reinforced through school performances and social clubs whose members were mainly Europeans and a few of the educated Krio elite. This eventually also led to the formation of the British Council Dramatic Society in 1948, which 'was to set the pace for theatrical development in Freetown, producing only British plays and inspiring the formation of similar British-oriented groups' (Sheriff, 2004, p. 176); such as the Brunswick Cultural Circle, the Cascader Circle, the Drama Circle and the Fourah Bay College Dramatic Society (Palmer and De'Souza George, 1997). While some plays were written and performed by Sierra Leoneans (always in English though as well), theatre, for both actors and audiences, became a way to prove their literacy of British culture and their belonging to the local elite. Only from the late 1950s, inspired by a growing independence movement and the first Sierra Leone Festival of the Arts, more Sierra Leonean plays, which were European-inspired and still written in English but increasingly incorporated local themes and forms, emerged. Surviving examples of these 'Euro-African plays' (Okagbue, 2009) are John Akar's *Valley Without Echo* (1954) and *Cry Tamba* (1961) and Raymond Sarif Easmon's *Dear Parent and Ogre* (1961).⁹

All the European, African American and Caribbean cultural elements described above led to a hybridisation of both indigenous non-mimetic and classical European mimetic theatres and determined the morphology of a newly developing 'Krio theatre' around Sierra Leone's independence, which will be explored further in the following section.

3.2.2.3 Theatre developments in the postcolonial era until the civil war (1961-1991)

As noted in Chapter 2, culture plays a crucial role in the making and unmaking of nations, their citizens and identities. It is through cultural expressions and practices that human beings define themselves (and are conducted to define themselves) as ethnic or national subjects and create a national narrative 'which remakes the past, populating it with national epics, national consciousness, national heroes before the nation is even thought of' (Holden, 2005, p. 89). As a performative cultural practice, theatre is considered to be a powerful medium to support the development of such a national narrative, the building of 'imagined communities' and the creation of a sense of belonging and citizenship (Anderson, 2006; Edmondson, 2007).

⁹ When referring to specific plays in this and the next chapters, I always use their original title in italics. For Krio titles, I provide an English translation in quotation marks.

While theatre can thus be used as a vital hegemonic tool for the production of citizenship and identity as dictated by the nation-state (or other hegemonic structures), it can also (especially in its form of 'popular' theatre as a mode of democratisation) offer the potential to subvert and reinterpret power relations, such as the ones that typically characterised the African colony and continue to characterise the postcolony (Appiah, 1993; Barber et al., 1997; Fabian, 1990; Werbner, 2002).

All these various and complex dynamics were at play at the advent of independence from British rule in 1961 when Sierra Leone finally became a sovereign nation. This section focuses on the key developments of that era that are useful for understanding the evolution of theatre in Sierra Leone in the context of independence and the early days of the postcolony. Given that contemporary Krio theatre is particularly rooted in this very productive phase of theatre in Sierra Leone and that the developments in aesthetic, structural and policy terms of the 1960s to the 1990s have greatly affected the Sierra Leonean theatre landscape as we find it today, the beginning of Chapter 4 will dissect this period and its impact in more detail. This will then serve as a starting point to discuss the politics of contemporary Krio theatre's aesthetics, forms and themes within the continuum of local and global flows and particular cultural, historical, political, social and economic dynamics.

An increasingly stronger national consciousness among Sierra Leoneans around independence led to the need to create a national narrative and to find answers to questions about a shared identity and a common cultural heritage among the sixteen different ethnic groups living within the arbitrarily delimited borders of their new state, which was complicated by the fact that one of them, the Krios, was rather artificially made-up and a result of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism. Searching for an identity as Africans and Sierra Leoneans during the early postcolonial era, the focus of theatre thus returned to local themes and stories.

Oladipo Robin Mason, and his Western Dramatic Society, for example, had a policy of performing only Sierra Leonean plays (albeit still in English), such as Mason's own *His Father's Will* (1963), *Country Boy* (1964), *Dr. Margai* (1965) and *Love and Crime* (1966) (Sheriff, 2004). In the 1960s, and as a result of general decolonising processes and a wider folklorisation of national culture, aesthetic interests also turned more and more to precolonial 'traditions' and folklore (Palmer and De'Souza George, 1997; Sheriff, 2004). This inspired a renewed urban African-style theatre, the emergence of plays written in Krio (which had grown into the country's lingua franca) instead of English, and the development of a new 'Krio theatre' in the late 1960s, which hybridised indigenous African non-mimetic and classical European mimetic theatre heritages. The shift from the European-style text-based theatre that had dominated the colonial times to again a more performance-based theatre also enhanced the importance of the playwright-director (Utudjian Saint-André, 2007). However, some of these

plays, even if they can be classified as 'Krio theatre' on an aesthetic level, continued to be written in English. The main reasons for this included the ambition to attract and speak to international audiences and the fact that some of the playwrights had grown up with English as their first language instead of Krio and thus felt more at ease writing in English (Spencer, J., theatre and media professional, 2016, personal communication).

From the late 1960s onwards the theatre scene in Freetown was thus characterised by plays in both English and Krio. Using Krio instead of English was, however, to a certain degree a political statement and a form of resistance and gave playwrights the opportunity to talk about current issues that were of interest to local citizens in a way that everybody could understand and to avoid the system of social, economic and political values as transmitted by the English language and culture. Krio drama thus became an important literary form, embodying and carrying crucial cultural signifiers for a young nation that was trying to uncover and recover its roots. Krio drama was also significant as the principal published form of Krio literature available to the general public (Worman, 2006). As not many of these early Krio texts have survived time (and especially the civil war of the 1990s) one needs to again rely on oral sources and embodied memories of these developments to reconstruct their content and the conditions for their production and reception. Although the focus of my research is not on this early postcolonial period, the interviews I conducted as part of my empirical research also provided some of this historical context not available otherwise and elsewhere, which has been useful for understanding the development of Krio theatre and its relationship to cultural flows.

As part of the attempts around independence to create and strengthen a national narrative and to encourage Sierra Leoneans to identify with and have pride in their diverse cultural heritage, a National Dance Troupe was formed in 1964, on the request of the national government, gathering the best indigenous dancers and masked performers from the country's diverse ethnic groups. The aim of its founder John Joseph Akar, a Sierra Leonean diplomat, writer and entertainer (who also composed the music of Sierra Leone's national anthem), was 'to present a flawlessly authentic indigenous show... everything was to be authentic, an inseparable part of our rich folklore' (Sheriff, 2004, p. 176). But 'divorced from their powerful ritual roles, the "spirits" went through a process of national patrimonialization' (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 110).

The political motive behind the formation and instrumentalisation of an 'authentic' indigenous performing arts group seems quite obvious. Resorting to the essentialist notions of 'authenticity' and 'folklore' to perform a new nation on the basis of its diverse indigenous heritage provided agency for the Sierra Leonean state to assert the country's cultural history, identity and authority. The sign of 'the authentic' was thus instrumentalised by the state for identity-founding purposes and eventually also turned into a commodity, sold in-country for

the local elite at representational state functions and to expatriates and tourists, and internationally at festivals. This raises a number of issues, as discussed in Chapter 2, in terms of constructing, essentialising, fetishizing and fixing a past that has never existed as such and instrumentalising culture for a nationalist agenda. But it also reminds us of the ambiguities inherent in the concept of a 'national culture' in the context of the postcolony, as highlighted by political philosopher Frantz Fanon (1963). These ambiguities are linked to the fact that while the postcolonial nation is a result of colonialism – which classified originally fluid indigenous groups and unified them in an arbitrarily delimited geographic space – the notion of a 'national culture' also offers a sense of identity and unity and the potential for agency in terms of ascertaining and asserting precolonial cultural history and heritage. There are further ambiguities related to the search for this precolonial 'authentic' culture, which may end up seeming like 'a banal search for exoticism' (Fanon, 1963, p. 220) instead of '[using] the past with the intention of opening up the future' (Fanon, 1963, p. 231) in the struggle for freedom.

In the specific context of Sierra Leone, the formation of an 'authentic' indigenous performing arts group also raises questions of representativity, especially considering the difficulty that postcolonial Sierra Leone experienced in forming a national identity that would overarch sixteen ethnic groups. Furthermore, this instrumentalisation and commodification also changed the aesthetics of the staged indigenous dances and masked performances, with 'the spectacular and technical aspects of the dances – movement patterns, athletic and acrobatic turns – [taking] precedence over cultural meaning, ancient or recent' (Conteh-Morgan, 2004, p. 104).

Representing Sierra Leone internationally with their songs, dances, acrobatics and drum-playing from different parts and ethnic groups of the country, the National Dance Troupe toured widely in the 1960s and 1970s and performed at the New York World Fair, the Negro Arts Festival in Senegal and at various festivals in Europe, to great acclaim. The political and economic situation of the 1980s and especially the 1990s with the start of the civil war, however, put an end to this, and the National Dance Troupe declined to some extent. The Troupe, however, continues to exist to this day and is still one of the national institutions directly funded by the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. Chapter 5 will explore their status and relationship to the government in more depth.

The 'cultural renaissance' around independence also led to the establishment of a National Theatre League (joining together most theatre groups of the time) and the rise of 'popular' theatre, a theatre of social commentary for, about and by the people. From the 1960s until the late 1980s playwrights like Sarif Easmon, Yulisa Amadu Maddy and Raymond Caleb Ayodele 'Dele' Charley put Sierra Leone on the global theatre map and the number of amateur and semi-professional theatre groups, performances and plays written both in the vernacular and in English peaked.

But as the one-party state was introduced in 1978 by Siaka Stevens' APC and playwrights increasingly criticised the government for corruption and political injustice, a censorship on plays was introduced in 1979, some playwrights were imprisoned or forced into exile (Christensen, 2019; Skelt, 2014) and the City Hall in Freetown (where most performances were held) was closed. Despite this precarious situation many theatre groups continued to perform, by choosing less controversial topics to avoid the censorship and finding alternative ways to perform (such as performances on the street and in other public spaces or people's homes). The increase of 'popular' and community theatre and the more general global movement in the 1970s and early 1980s to democratise theatre also led to the use of theatre for educational purposes and the dissemination of information as well as to the introduction of Theatre for Development (TfD) in Sierra Leone, which will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter (in Section 4.2.2).

3.3 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted historical, political, cultural and social developments and dynamics relevant to this research and whose understanding is necessary to be able to analyse contemporary theatre production in Sierra Leone as historically, politically, culturally and socially situated. Furthermore, the appreciation of these developments, in particular of the development and governmentality of the Sierra Leonean postcolonial state, builds the foundations for a rich, thorough and nuanced analysis in Chapters 4 and 5 of the relationships between individuals, institutions, governments and public policies that constitute the production, distribution, consumption and regulation of cultural production in Sierra Leone.

The first part of this chapter therefore developed a genealogy of the Sierra Leonean present, giving a brief account of the country's modern history focusing on the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism, and discussing the historical, political, economic and cultural developments that have shaped Sierra Leone, the postcolonial state, its institutions and their governmentality. Many contemporary political, legal, administrative and other governance structures in Sierra Leone are a legacy and an amalgamation of both precolonial and colonial power structures and hybrid governance strategies, which were carried over through independence and into the establishment of the postcolonial state. Therefore, to be able to understand the postcolonial state and its governmentality, it was necessary to first dissect the set-up of the colonial state and its governmentality, which led to the bifurcation of the state and the emergence of two forms of power and its 'two publics'. The concept of the two publics is important for this research insofar as their hybridisation in a complex system of institutions, neo-patrimonialism and patron-clientelism, and the tensions inscribed in this hybridisation, are also reflected and played out in the general conception of 'culture' in Sierra Leone and the

development of Sierra Leonean theatre, both in terms of aesthetic and structural aspects (which Chapters 4 and 5 demonstrate).

As a grounded analysis of contemporary theatre and its underlying structures requires an understanding of its aesthetic, cultural, social and political foundations, the second part of this chapter focused on dissecting the origins, history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone, which set the foundations for contemporary Krio theatre. Contemporary theatre in Sierra Leone is very much rooted in indigenous performances and their societal functions and it has therefore been useful to examine the general characteristics of indigenous African theatre, such as its inclusion of various forms of performance, making it more of a 'total theatre'. Furthermore, an understanding of indigenous theatre forms and their functions also helped to grasp the magnitude of the encounter between non-mimetic indigenous African performance styles and mimetic European theatre in the wake of European colonisation.

Based on the discussion in the existing literature, the history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone was presented along three main chronological stages: from precolonial indigenous theatre to theatre developments in the context of colonialism and ensuing European, African American and Caribbean influences (between 1787 and 1961) to the postcolonial era up until Sierra Leone's civil war (between 1961 and 1991), which was characterised initially by the strife to discover and recover a Sierra Leonean identity and by the ensuing hybridisation of both indigenous African non-mimetic and classical European mimetic theatre features, which led to the development of 'Krio theatre'.

Building on this chapter's outline of Sierra Leonean theatre history and development, the next chapter is centred around an empirical engagement with current theatre production in Sierra Leone, focusing on contemporary Krio theatre and the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes.

4. Glocal flows and local aesthetics: Contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone

Building on the previous chapter's outline of Sierra Leone's history, and especially of Sierra Leonean theatre's history and development, this chapter focuses on contemporary Krio theatre and the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes. As such it focuses on the first part of my main research question, namely on the impact of the continuum of local and global flows, in particular within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems, on theatre aesthetics in Sierra Leone.

As urban centres tend to set the pace for cultural exchange and change and as nearly all of contemporary Krio theatre is produced by theatre groups and playwrights based in Sierra Leone's capital Freetown, this chapter focuses on them. However, this does not by any means negate the existence of many other types and forms of performances across Sierra Leone or the fact that the flows of cultural forms and productions between rural and urban areas are always two-way.

Using contemporary Krio theatre as a case study to analyse cultural production in the postcolony (and in particular in a state up until recently classified by 'the international community' as post-conflict),¹⁰ this chapter identifies especially the relationship between contemporary Krio theatre and the development industry (the current primary funder of Krio theatre activities) and develops a wider critical argument regarding the transformation of local arts practices in the wake of 'culture and development' initiatives and broader phenomena of cultural globalisation and commodification. To appreciate the localisation of global flows and the impact of globalisation – in its widest sense – on local cultural production, it is crucial to analyse these dynamics from below and to look for the global in specific local sites, while still acknowledging the complexities, tensions and contradictions of the local / global dialectics dissected in Chapter 2.

This chapter thus offers an empirical engagement with current theatre production in Sierra Leone, based on its historicity (as outlined in Chapter 3) and a political economy perspective, and serves as a platform for the views and experiences of local theatre practitioners and experts, which enables a micro-level and bottom-up analysis of theatre as a historically, politically and socially situated cultural production. In this sense, the following argument is also based on Rancière's notion of aesthetics as 'a specific regime for identifying and reflecting on the arts: a mode of articulation between ways of doing and making, their corresponding forms

¹⁰ For example, a research paper on defining conflict-affected countries from 2010 (Strand and Dahl, 2010) lists Sierra Leone as a post-conflict country. Even a more recent article (Sesay, 2019) on informal institutional change and the place of traditional justice in Sierra Leone's post-war reconstruction, based on research in 2014, still refers to the Sierra Leonean context as post-conflict.

of visibility, and possible ways of thinking about their relationships' (Rancière, 2013, p. 4). Rancière's work is useful for this thesis insofar as he focuses particularly on the relationships between aesthetics, history and politics, highlighting that 'a battle fought yesterday over the promises of emancipation and the illusions and disillusion of history continues today on aesthetic terrain' (Rancière, 2013, p. 3) and that 'there is a metapolitics of aesthetics which frames the possibilities of art' (Rancière, 2010, p. 133). His research on 'defining the connections within the aesthetic regime of the arts, the possibilities that they determine, and their modes of transformation' (Rancière, 2013, p. 4) is thus also linked to the questions that I am asking about the connections between aesthetics and the flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas, their determinative power *and* their 'vulnerability' to translation and transformation.

4.1 Foundations of contemporary Krio theatre

There are only a limited amount of published Sierra Leonean plays available to date, which, however, misrepresents Sierra Leone's theatre scene, its historical and present productivity and its impact on wider society. While there are some plays available from the very productive phase of theatre in Sierra Leone in the late 1960s to the 1980s (some of which were mentioned in Chapter 3), the weak publication record since then reflects the economic and political challenges of the 1980s and the 1990s and the turmoil (and obviously diverging priorities) of the ensuing civil war. The current lack of theatre publications in Sierra Leone is a result of a number of additional reasons: Firstly, so-called 'popular' African theatre, very much tied to its oral heritage and indigenous improvisational acting styles, is often not scripted and thus seldom published. Secondly, there are only a few publishers in Sierra Leone, most of whom run only very small operations. Thirdly, due to the country's high illiteracy rate some playwrights seem to feel that publishing is not worth the effort and resources (Osagie, 2009). Finally, the lack of resources among many theatre practitioners, who cannot pay for a publication themselves, and the lack of potential sponsors who would be interested in supporting such a publication, adds to the large absence of theatre publications in Sierra Leone.

The few existing publications have been mostly published outside Sierra Leone and are often difficult to access in Sierra Leone; such as English literature scholar Iyunolu Osagie's (2009) anthology of five Sierra Leonean plays – Dele Charley's *The Blood of a Stranger* (1975), John Kargbo's *Let Me Die Alone* (1976), Julius Spencer's *The Patriot* (1988), Tonie French's *The Pool* (1994) and Mohamed Sheriff's *Not You Too* (1996) – or literature and cultural studies scholar Matthew Christensen's recent *Staging the Amistad* (2019), a collection of three plays about the Amistad slave revolt in 1839 by captured Mende people from Sierra

Leone who were to be sold as slaves in the Americas – including Charlie Haffner’s *Amistad Kata-Kata*¹¹ (1988), Pat Maddy’s *The Amistad Revolt* (1993) and Raymond De’Souza George’s *The Broken Handcuff* (1994).

Despite the small number of available publications, most of the existing – even if limited – research on theatre in Sierra Leone has concentrated on the analysis of the published plays as literary works (e.g., Christensen, 2005, 2019; Osagie, 2009), rather than analysing actual performances thereof or performances of other, unpublished plays and their production context. Furthermore, there is no research that explores the structural conditions and wider political economy of theatre in the country.

Before examining the foundations of contemporary Krio theatre in more detail, it is necessary to briefly discuss my choice of terminology. Among the interviewees for this research there was some debate whether contemporary urban theatre in Sierra Leone can still be called Krio theatre for the following two main reasons: The prevalence of developmental theatre; and the fact that theatre is not anymore, and has not been for a long time, dominated by ethnic Krios (as it was the case in the wake of colonisation and the early days of decolonisation), even though Krio language is still used in many plays. But as Charlie Haffner put it, ‘Krio as our lingua franca is a gift of tolerance; it is Salone [the Krio word for ‘Sierra Leone’] talk and doesn’t only belong to ethnic Krios... and Krio theatre cuts across ethnic groups’ (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2016, personal communication). Based on this notion, but also to recognise the historicity of contemporary theatre in Sierra Leone and highlight its fundamental hybridity and synthetic approach, which illustrates the evolution of theatre in Sierra Leone as well as the cultural, social, historical, economic and political context it evolved in, I have decided to describe current urban theatre production in Sierra Leone as ‘contemporary Krio theatre’ rather than using a more generic terminology, such as ‘contemporary Sierra Leonean theatre’ for example.

Contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone is mainly to be found in the capital Freetown, but it borrows from and hybridises all the elements described in Chapter 3, from ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ performance elements as well as indigenous African and European theatre heritages, as a theatre professional in Freetown described:

There is a balance [between indigenous traditions and conventional European theatre] because of our colonial experience. And me being born in Freetown, [...] I was more of a product of that colonial experience [than others born in the provinces]. Because of formal education and all that, our cultural practices were completely different from what you would see in [the provincial capitals] Bo or Kenema or Makeni storytelling. (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #6, 2016, personal communication)

¹¹ Kata-Kata means ‘revolt’ or ‘trouble’. Although the title suggests otherwise, the play was written in English.

Integrating instrumental music, singing, choreographies, gestures, masquerades, rituals, storytelling, dance, chants, sound, light and visual effects, contemporary Krio theatre takes on the form of 'total theatre' and thrives from its hybridity, transcending the binary oppositions often raised to separate African indigenous performance from European-style theatre (such as 'traditional' versus 'modern', 'conservative' versus 'experimental' or 'liminal' versus 'liminoid'). As such, it also illustrates the fact that the notions of 'traditional' and 'modern' are not chronological but synchronous attributes of cultural expressions.

Contemporary Krio theatre is especially rooted in the very productive phase of theatre in Sierra Leone between the late 1960s to the 1980s. This period represents 'a major development in Sierra Leone's modern cultural history' (Palmer and De'Souza George, 1997, p. 259) and a 'viable entertainment enterprise reaching all strata of the Sierra Leone community [...] [and] a compelling historic period because theatre transformed itself from its very amateur status into a quasi-professional powerhouse' (Osagie, 2009, p. 3). Hence, this period, its revolutionary and radical playwrights and theatre practitioners and the contributions they sought to make to the ecology of theatre and society as a whole are still an inspiration, but also an important reference point for the current generation of playwrights and performers. Many of them started practicing theatre during this 'golden time' of theatre in Sierra Leone and were trained by those influential personalities. Therefore, it is useful to initially dissect this period in a bit more detail and delineate the most influential playwrights and their plays during this time.

Moving on and away from the more elitist and Euro-African style theatre during the colonial period (represented by playwrights such as Raymond Sarif Easmon), Yulisa Amadu Maddy is quoted as the first Sierra Leonean playwright to write in Krio, to use 'drop-outs', street boys and criminals instead of members of the elite as main characters and to integrate indigenous and ritualistic performance elements (such as singing, dancing and drumming) into his narratives. Most of his plays depict the disillusionment in the postcolony and critique in particular Krio elitism and ethnic inequality after independence. Yulisa Amadu Maddy, who had been trained in theatre in the UK and was, among other positions, Head of Drama on Radio Sierra Leone, also founded his own theatre company, *Gbakanda Afrikan Tiata*. The success of Maddy's early plays, *Alla Gbah* ('The Big Man', 1967), *Yon-Kon* ('Clever Thief', 1968), *Obasai* ('Over Yonder', 1971) and *Gbana-Bendu* ('Tough Guy', 1971), but also the success of a few other plays in Krio by Juliana John (*Na Mami Bohn Am*, 'It's his mother who gave birth to him', 1967; *I Dey I Noh Du*, 'It's there, but not enough', 1968; and *I Dohn Rich Tem*, 'The time has arrived', 1969) and of translations of Shakespearean plays into Krio (such as Thomas Decker's *Juliohs Siza* in 1964) opened up the possibilities for theatre in the vernacular immensely.

Around the same time Raymond Caleb Ayodele 'Dele' Charley, another celebrated playwright,¹² formed the influential *Tabule Experimental Theatre* (together with Adeyemi Meheux and later joined by Raymond De'Souza George), which became the training ground for a number of today's playwrights, directors and theatre companies (including Charlie Haffner and Mohamed Sheriff, who feature more prominently later in this chapter). Dele Charley was also significant for the development of Krio theatre insofar as, being a secondary school teacher and later also lecturer in performing arts at the Milton Margai Teacher Training College, he also lobbied for the introduction of arts into Sierra Leone's educational curriculum, which supported a more formal recognition of performing arts in Sierra Leone.

Many other playwrights, directors and theatre companies followed, transforming the Sierra Leonean theatre ecology and its dramaturgy by creating 'a theatre for the people' and thus reaching new and more diverse theatre audiences. Plays were written in the context of a heightened cultural and political awareness, and indigenous cultural forms and performance elements (including indigenous languages, especially well-known idioms and proverbs) thus played an increasing role in their aesthetic choices. Other well-known theatre companies that emerged during this time are *Songhai Theatre*, formerly known as *Shegureh Players* (founded by John Kolosa Kargbo and Clifford Garber), *Balangi Dramatic Group*, *Ronko Theatre* (headed by Akmid Bakarr and Bobson Kamara), *Cotton Tree Tiata*, *African Heritage Workshop*, *Bai Bureh Theatre*, *Kailondo Theatre*, *Kongoma Theatre*, *Goombay Theatre*, *Wara Dramatic Company*, *Nomoli Theatre* and *Freetong Players* (founded by Charlie and Fatie Haffner) and *Spencer Productions* (founded by Julius Spencer).

Estimates about the number of theatre companies during this productive phase of theatre in Sierra Leone vary between fifty and eighty in the Western (more affluent) part of Freetown alone. These theatre companies, or 'clubs' as they were often called then, were open to people from all parts of society, attracting especially younger people and people without any specific theatre or higher education. The groups thus did not operate full-time and most of the influential directors and playwrights of this generation also had other jobs (many of them were teachers, for example). This often, however, did not affect their passion for and commitment to theatre, as the following quote illustrates.

It was still part-time, although some of the 'part-time' we spent more time than in the professional jobs we had, because straight from school at 2 o'clock, you will be doing something theatrical 'til 10, 11, 12 at night. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #9, 2016, personal communication)

¹² Dele Charley was Sierra Leone's representative at the famous Festac'77 (Festival of African Arts and Culture) in Lagos, where *Tabule Experimental Theatre* performed his *The Blood of a Stranger* (1975) and won the award for best play.

All of this blurred the lines between what would elsewhere be considered amateur and professional theatre, a dichotomy that might not be as clear-cut in the Sierra Leonean context, both past and present. It does illustrate, however, the challenge to survive as a full-time artist in Sierra Leone.

Many plays of this early post-independence era were increasingly politicised and centred around the following themes: A critique of both 'traditional' culture (including the internal corruption of 'tradition' by those who pretend to protect it) and colonial hegemony; the situation of women in Sierra Leone (including forced marriage and FGM); and general social, ethnic, economic and political inequalities and challenges in the post-independence society. It has been argued that as a result of this social and political commentary, theatre developed into an important factor in encouraging identification among people with the new nation's destiny (Osagie, 2009; Palmer and De'Souza George, 1997).

The following examples illustrate this politicisation of post-independence theatre, but also the concurrent professionalisation and growth of the Sierra Leonean theatre scene and its key players. Dele Charley's *Blood of a Stranger* (1975) critiques both the uncritical obedience to cultural 'traditions' and the colonial legacy of decadence, and his play *Ashoebi* ('Sameness', 1977) scrutinises traditional society and its handling of radical thinkers, who challenge existing uniformity of thought. Akmid Bakarr's *The Great Betrayal* (1980) is about betrayal, greed and patriotism. John Kargbo's *Let Me Die Alone* (1976) tells the story of Madam Yoko, Sierra Leone's first female Paramount Chief, and her struggles as a female leader. Julius Spencer's *The Patriot* (1988) focuses on the story of Bai Bureh, one of Sierra Leone's national heroes whose resistance against the British 'hut tax' has become a symbol of resistance against European imperialism. In *Poyo Togn Wahala* ('Trouble in Palm Wine Town', 1979) John Kargbo criticises Siaka Stevens' increasingly autocratic government and the abuse of human rights, which led to his dismissal from government service and his addition to the government's blacklist.

These often challenging and controversial plays of the late 1960s to the early 1980s were eventually more or less suppressed by the censorship on plays introduced in 1979 by Siaka Stevens and his one-party system of government. Any play, whether Sierra Leonean or not, had to be approved and receive clearance by the Censorship Board before it could be advertised and performed, as the following quote describes:

[We had to send every script to] an officer in the Ministry of Education who had a hard time to look at it because the theatre was so vibrant; there were piles of scripts you know [which were later destroyed] and [...] we couldn't even book dates [before we got clearance]... until we got to a point in time when we just sent it and started rehearsing... and later on some people started bribing until [the censorship] eventually faded away. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #9, 2016, personal communication)

Any scene that did not 'appeal' to the censorship officer, whether for political, linguistic or other reasons, was cut, which obviously not only affected the artistic freedom of the playwrights but also the aesthetics of the whole play, as one of my interviewees explains:

That was the sad part of it. He would not even understand the creativity of it. There is something in language we call register. If I am talking about a street man like a muffin, you are not expecting me to put the Queen's language in his mouth [...] [but] he [the censorship officer] determined what was vulgar and what was not vulgar. He would just cut it and say you cannot do it... or you cannot write about this, it is alluding to a minister. [...] Failing to realise that if you take that off, you have destroyed the storyline. But they were completely ignorant about those things. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #9, 2016, personal communication)

Dele Charley, Yulisa Amadu Maddy and John Kargbo were even imprisoned for the content of their plays and Maddy and Dele Charley eventually left Sierra Leone to go into political exile (Christensen, 2019; Skelt, 2014). These political circumstances made playwriting and theatre production in Sierra Leone even more precarious and potentially dangerous. While many theatre companies continued to perform, some of them ignoring or avoiding the censorship, many playwrights started using metaphors to deal with the political or moved to less confrontational topics. This obviously impacted not only the plays, their themes and performance style, but eventually the theatre scene as a whole. The 1980s, however, were still characterised by a vibrant theatre scene in Freetown and countless plays were written and performed in Krio, from romantic and family stories to fantastic plots, about wealth, luxury and upward class mobility with 'definite climatic endings [...] after as many as four three-to-four-hour nightly instalments' (Christensen, 2005, p. 17).

Cultural festivals including theatrical performances were also a regular feature, such as the annual Schools and Colleges Art Festival, which introduced young people to theatre and encouraged them to perform (Alle, 1990). Hence, until the late 1980s, and especially until the closure in 1987 of City Hall (which had served as the main performance space for many groups every week from Thursday to Sunday), Freetown had a thriving theatre and music scene and was known internationally not only for exclusive tourism and its beautiful beaches, but also for its artistic representations and performances. Unfortunately, because of the weak publication history in Sierra Leone, only a few of the plays of this era have been preserved and engaged with by scholarship internationally (Christensen, 2005, 2019; Jones, 1976; Osagie, 2009; Worman, 2006).

But after this very productive phase and even though plays were still written (e.g., Toni French's *The Pool* in 1994 and Mohamed Sheriff's *Not You Too* in 1996, which were only later, in 2009, published in Osagie's anthology), Sierra Leone's theatre scene experienced a steady decline due to the country's political and economic instability, mass emigration, the lack of

performing spaces and, of course, especially due to the civil war of the 1990s as the following quote highlights:

The war had a huge effect. Most of our heritage was lost during that period. Most of the things that were going on ceased. And after the war, they never recovered again. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

As a result, existing theatre productions since the civil war have been dominated by developmental theatre and at the time of researching and writing this thesis there is still less interest in live theatre. This, however, seems to be less a consequence of a lack of interest per se but more linked to socio-economic and other systemic factors, as the following quote suggests; factors such as the multi-layered consequences of the war, the influx of international aid money, a generally low disposable income, competing financial priorities, insufficient support for the sector and the social segmentation of cultural consumption (which will be analysed in more depth in Chapter 5).

I don't think [theatre] is being encouraged. I don't think the support that the players need is there. Maybe because they are competing with [other] priorities and it is not seen as important even though it is very, very important. And [...] it might as well be the years of conflict... especially when [the war] got to Freetown it really disrupted a lot of things and there are industries and institutions, some never recovered from that because maybe they were not strong enough in the first place. So that disruption killed some... I'm sure there were some [...] groups [where] people just left the country around that time and [...] people don't have a lot of disposable income. (Producer, Interviewee #21, 2016, personal communication)

In summary, Krio theatre's history and development, but also its relationship to external agents, can be diachronically traced along three main stages: Firstly, around independence in 1961 the emerging Krio theatre tended to focus on supporting decolonisation and the defining of a new nation and identity (by celebrating national heroes and adding to a shared historical narrative to create a collective memory and instil national pride), thereby also enhancing the 'postcolonial project' and national governmentality. Hence, theatre was mainly used for political motives and to register historical events. Secondly, during the early post-independence era Krio theatre disconnected itself from this national governmentality and increasingly criticised the political regime and existing social, ethnic, economic and political inequalities (using theatre again for albeit different political motives, as a form of political commentary and activism). As a consequence, the relationship between national governmentality and theatre changed, with the government trying to use its position of power to control artistic outputs (which resulted in the censorship). Thirdly, the main use of Krio theatre after the end of Sierra Leone's civil war and throughout its post-conflict era can be characterised by a focus on developmental and educational purposes, often instrumentalised by NGOs, the 'international community' and their development agenda (thus by a more global

governmentality). Developmental theatre still dominates the current theatre scene in Sierra Leone and, as such, the development industry occupies a complicated and dualist role vis-à-vis theatre by both circumscribing and endorsing it (which will be discussed further below, in Section 4.2.2).

While this diachronic summary obviously does and cannot account for all the disjunctures and overlaps in between and across the main three stages dissected above, this trajectory is useful for sketching out the general structural conditions and political economy of Krio theatre over time, up until its most contemporary form at the juncture between the local status quo (especially considering existing economic challenges), neoliberal globalisation, commodification and the development industry. This context does not only influence the type of theatre that is fundable and saleable, but also impacts its aesthetic choices both in terms of form and content, which will be discussed in more detail throughout the remainder of this chapter.

4.2 Overview of theatre since the end of the civil war (2002–2020)

4.2.1 Introduction

Despite constant progress since the end of the war in 2002, Sierra Leone remains one of the most fragile and poorest countries in the world, with many competing demands on public and personal resources. In 2019, for example, Sierra Leone's GDP per capita was USD 527.5 (World Bank, 2021a), compared to the Sub-Saharan average of USD 1596.2 (World Bank, 2021b). Also, Sierra Leone had an 18.3 percent youth unemployment rate¹³ and a 66.2 percent youth labour underutilisation rate in 2015 (International Labour Organization, 2017) and a life expectancy of 54 years in 2018¹⁴ (World Bank, 2021c). The satisfaction of basic needs is thus still a priority for many Sierra Leoneans, and cultural products and services are therefore often considered a luxury, which obviously also affects the ecology of theatre.

The Ebola epidemic between 2014 and 2016¹⁵ and the 2020 / 2021 Covid-19 pandemic have added another layer of strain on the country's infrastructure and resources and also put a halt to much of Sierra Leone's social and cultural life. As in most countries, large gatherings were banned in Sierra Leone as a result of Covid-19, but some cultural activities moved online,

¹³ Following a broad definition of unemployment, the youth unemployment rate was 18.3 percent in 2015. Applying a strict definition, it was only 10.3 percent in 2015. The 'strict' definition of unemployment refers to people without work, available to work and actively engaged in a job search. The 'broad' definition excludes the job search criteria (International Labour Organization, 2017).

¹⁴ However, apart from a dip in the 1990s due to the civil war, the life expectancy has been steadily rising in Sierra Leone since the 1960s.

¹⁵ Despite the devastating impact of Ebola on Sierra Leone and the wider region – with 14,124 total cases and 3,956 confirmed deaths in Sierra Leone (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019) – it is important to mention that Ebola was 'only' the 13th biggest cause of death in Sierra Leone in 2014, thus just the tip of the iceberg of much larger health sector and wider governance issues.

for example there have been a few online music concerts since the beginning of the pandemic. The Covid-19 pandemic is likely to considerably affect the CCIs in Sierra Leone, as everywhere around the world; enhancing already precarious conditions of cultural and creative work due to the large number of freelancers and sub-contractors working in the CCIs, insufficient support from governments, many companies being very small and not having access to alternative resources, the prevalence of short-term contracts and part-time jobs as well as the significant extent of the informal sector, especially in Africa (Comunian and England, 2020; Joffe, 2020; Nzeza Bunketi Buse, 2020). Furthermore, the development and implementation of long-term, sustainable strategies to support and grow a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector will remain secondary, especially while the country undergoes a post-Covid-19 recession recovery.

Hence, Sierra Leonean artists and creative entrepreneurs have to, and had to for a long time, adapt to what is available to them and to what is in demand in order to be able to find paid work. Globally, it is not uncommon for individuals and organisations in the CCIs to work across several disciplines or to have additional part-time or full-time jobs (often in other sectors) to make a living. However, in the case of Sierra Leonean theatre, this tendency is more pronounced due to the struggles and challenges mentioned above. The current theatre scene in Freetown is thus largely characterised by ‘amateur’ and part-time groups, many of whom focus on developmental theatre or ‘theatre for social change’, as this is the main type of theatre that can currently attract funding. Section 4.2.2 below will discuss this in more depth.

Practitioners and experts interviewed for this research cite in particular the ongoing lack of dedicated performing spaces, new technologies, the low priority of arts and creativity in the school curriculum and ‘modernisation’ as current key challenges for Sierra Leonean theatre production. Furthermore, the quality of many current live performances is considered low, which is highlighted as another key factor that impacts the viability of theatre since the civil war:

There are people who study [music theatre] but the bulk of the people who are involved in it [now], they are those people who have not even completed formal basic education. We normally say these are drop out people. So, because of that, the stories that they started to write and perform... People who were really interested in theatre began to forget about going to those theatre places to look at those plays. [...] Maybe they have a good story, [but] the performance is very poor. They don't make use of sound effects, or you know the things that you put together to have a good performance. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

But not only the questionable quality of some current live performances, also the growing popularity of other art forms and media, such as film and music, is considered to have significantly contributed to the decreasing interest in theatre, both by practitioners and audiences.

You find that [film] is more glamorous, attractive and these film groups, that used to [be] drama¹⁶ groups before, and other young people would rather go for music because again that is more attractive [...]. You hold a concert maybe at the stadium and that's a lot of money. You cannot hold a theatre performance at the stadium, it won't work. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

The economics of theatre production thus also play an important role in determining the status quo of theatre in Sierra Leone and economic factors also direct the type and form of theatre that is mainly produced currently, as the next section (4.2.2) illustrates.

New technologies and media have also significantly impacted the more recent developments in the CCIs of Sierra Leone. As outlined in Chapter 2, the rise of communication and information technologies and new media from the 1990s have accelerated and intensified dynamics of cultural globalisation, commodification, change and hybridity. Furthermore, some writers (e.g., Barrowclough and Kozul-Wright, 2008b) have identified a cultural metamorphosis related to the digitisation, easier circulation and ensuing omnipresence of both animate and inanimate cultural objects, encouraging new forms of cultural production at the juncture between culture, technology and economy. But a number of critics argue that these new production and promotion technologies reproduce social inequalities as a consequence of unequal access to and use of technology, depending mainly on an individual's and a society's buying power (e.g., Hesmondhalgh, 2019).

While the average buying power in Sierra Leone is certainly much lower and the access to technology less common compared to OECD countries or even many other African countries, this is changing. For example, the uptake of mobile services by Sierra Leoneans continues to grow, according to research by BBC Media Action, with 83 percent of people having access to a mobile phone in 2015 (BBC Media Action, 2016) and 65 percent of men and 45 percent of women owning their own mobile phone in 2017 (BBC Media Action, 2018). However, more than half of the mobile phone owners (52 percent) have a basic phone without access to internet or apps (BBC Media Action, 2016). But the number of internet users grew rapidly over the last two decades (from only 5000 internet users in December 2000 to 1,043,725 users in December 2019). However, in 2019 the overall internet penetration rate was still relatively low at 13.1 percent of the total population (Internet World Stats, 2020). This is probably linked to the fact that the average cost of connecting – at around £4 for 2GB of mobile data – is relatively high compared to the annual income level of 64 percent of Sierra Leonean households, which lies below 10,000,000 Leones (£775) (Statistics Sierra Leone,

¹⁶ Many interviewees used the terms 'drama' and 'theatre' interchangeably to describe a live performance, although 'drama' usually denotes the literary genre that provides the written text (the script) for a play.

2019, p. 190). Given this context, young male urban respondents are most likely to have access to the internet (BBC Media Action, 2016).

The increased uptake of mobile and internet services and new technologies and media play an important role within the more recent developments in the CCIs of Sierra Leone, as many artists take advantage of the increasingly easier access to different methods of cultural production and distribution. This may also be one of the reasons why music, video and film are growing in significance. Furthermore, the lack of cultural venues has further enhanced the rapid digitalisation across the CCIs. All of this has created considerable challenges for Sierra Leonean theatre, as already mentioned above and as the quote below summarises.

Obviously, technology has impacted us and the fact that we have moved from basic theatre and now to the screen. I think that has definitely impacted us... whether it's in a positive way or negative way, that's dependent on who you are talking to. I would say it has impacted us in a negative way because it has moved us away from traditional forms of performances as it were. Like I said, the immediacy of the performance has disappeared. Because we have gone towards the screen. But if the structures had been there, if [we had something] like the National Theatre in Ghana [...] we may have upped our game in terms of technology in the theatre as we would have dimmer boards, light switches, beautiful lights, nice flyers, backdrops and stuff. Things that will enhance the production and will have a higher quality [...]. Maybe it's not just globalisation itself that has moved us away from traditional forms of theatre, maybe it's us ourselves who have refused to create the enabling environment for our crafts and arts to survive. Because if those who had the money and the governments as it were had invested in some of the structures, the basic structures, whatever impact globalisation may have had, maybe it would have been on our stories [...] Globalisation definitely has impacted live theatre in Sierra Leone, in the sense that we are all running now towards what we believe is the fame and glory of the silver screen and away from the dark holes of our stages. (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #5, 2016, personal communication)

However, new information and communications technologies (ICTs) and media have not only impacted Sierra Leonean artists' engagement with global cultural flows, but also made their cultural productions more visible and exportable. Although the opportunities for CCIs related to digital technologies and networks have been questioned by some critics, as discussed in Chapter 2, I do believe – based on many conversations I had with artists and creative entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone – that these new technologies and networks represent at least an opportunity for creating connections beyond Sierra Leone and increasing access to the global market. An opportunity that is otherwise even more circumscribed by financial limitations and limits to physical mobility for many Sierra Leonean (and other African) artists and creatives.

Theatre obviously represents a special, and maybe complicated, case within this context, as it works with immediate productions of images and symbols whose live character used to make it difficult to transcend the present, both in terms of time and geography. While the

potential of media like radio and TV or other digital technologies have also enhanced theatre's possibilities of transmission and export and thus the potential for change and hybridisation, digitalisation also fixes and preserves an otherwise ephemeral cultural experience.

New technologies and media have also complicated the taxonomy of 'theatre'. While 'theatre' is historically defined by using immediate physicality, in the sense of a live performance, to present a story or an event before a live audience, some scholars and practitioners describe plays distributed via radio or TV also as 'theatre' (e.g., Musa, 1998). The lines are further blurred by the broader notion of 'theatricality' (which questions the theatrical medium and its processes, identity and place, e.g., Weber, 2004) and theatrical forms such as radio theatre, which usually 'refers to a production that employs techniques and constraints similar to stage theatre production [...] [and whose] production elements (e.g., voice, mechanical sound effects, recorded sound effect, music) are performed in one take and instantly combined, usually before a studio audience' (West, 2007, p. 5).

The type of plays that are found on the radio in Sierra Leone, however, are usually 'radio dramas' (as opposed to 'radio theatre'), which are not live, but pre-recorded productions in a film or TV production style. The following quote explains the production style of radio dramas in more detail:

Production elements are produced separately, allowing for multiple takes. These elements are combined during a post-production process. Voice tracks are produced first, with sound effects and music created around this final edited version. Productions are longer than commonly found in live performances, allowing for more complicated sound effects and sound processing. (West, 2007, pp. 5-6)

Radio dramas are very popular in Sierra Leone, but most of them are now commissioned by NGOs to inform, educate and empower communities, in particular illiterate segments of the population. The longest running and certainly one of the most popular radio dramas in Sierra Leone is called *Atunda Ayenda*, which means 'lost and found' in Mandingo (one of the major indigenous languages in Sierra Leone). It was created by Talking Drum Studios, a programme set up by the international NGO Search for Common Ground just after the civil war to produce media content in order to address problems experienced after the war and promote peace and reconciliation. *Atunda Ayenda* was developed as a way of attracting combating factions to join the disarmament process and thus started with topics and experiences relating to the civil war, but its story-arcs now address many different issues (such as HIV/AIDS, domestic violence and equitable land rights). *Atunda Ayenda* is broadcast on 27 stations in Sierra Leone as well as online, and as of February 2021 already aired over 4300 episodes.

Since the civil war and as a result of the challenges mentioned above, many former theatre practitioners and companies have turned to other art forms and media, such as video, film, publishing or radio.

The number of people who were interested in drama are now interested in the movie business. And they almost try to run the movie like they've been running the drama clubs. [They] have a large cast of people who will meet regularly and then write a movie with a script like a drama group. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

A key example for the move to other media among theatre practitioners is Dr. Julius Spencer, one of the most prominent theatre figures in the country. He holds a PhD in Theatre Studies, was a member of the influential and popular *Tabule Experimental Theatre* in the 1970s and then founded his own theatre group *Spence Production*. Spencer became particularly well-known across the country during the occupation of Freetown in 1997 by the AFRC and the RUF for his broadcasts through ECOMOG's anti-junta radio network, which was set up to provide to the civilian population information and news that were not controlled by the AFRC and the RUF and to boost the morale of the ECOMOG forces (Spencer, J., theatre and media professional, 2016, personal communication). Towards and after the end of the civil war, he also served as Minister of Information, Communication, Tourism and Culture. After leaving government, he set up Premier Media, taking over Spence Production, to focus on mass media production (the company owns a newspaper), marketing and event management. Although theatre is still his great passion (he is planning to retire into theatre) and although he regularly produces radio dramas, he has not produced much stage theatre in recent times, 'largely because of the absence of facilities' (Spencer, J., theatre and media professional, 2016, personal communication).

Another example is Oumar Farouk Sesay. He was one of the disciples of Dele Charley (who significantly impacted the development of Krio theatre as mentioned above) and was the resident playwright for the Bai Bureh Theatre Group in the 1980s. After eventually moving into journalism, he also started exploring other forms of writing, such as poetry and novels. While he is still dedicated to his writing (mainly to poetry these days) and while his work has also been published in the Sierra Leonean Writers Series and has been translated to German and Spanish, his day job is now that of a partner in an engineering company – as 'it is hard to live from writing in Africa' (Sesay, O. F., writer and businessman, 2016, personal communication).

However, a small number of theatre groups struggle on to survive in the current political and economic context, following different strategies to do so. Pampana Communications, for example, founded by Mohamed Sheriff to provide media production and communication services (including developmental theatre, radio drama and film for social change), uses a loose structure of freelancers who are called upon when there is work. There are also benefits to this approach, as he admits in the following quote:

If you have a fixed group, then they look up to you all the time to sustain them and sometimes you don't have projects to do. And secondly, you rely on their talent to do what you want to do. But when you leave it open, you can get the best people,

you just call for audition and you choose your team. (Sheriff, M., theatre and media professional, 2016, personal communication)

Sheriff, also the Head of PEN Sierra Leone, started out his work in theatre at Ronko Theatre, as a critic and then as a playwright; initially while still studying English literature at university and later while working as a schoolteacher. When one of his plays was seen by a UN member of staff in the mid-1990s, he was asked to write a play on poverty, which marked the start of his career in writing for social change and his focus on developmental theatre. For other organisations, such as Search for Common Ground, an international NGO mentioned above, participatory theatre is just one of their strategies to reach communities (besides TV or radio dramas, mediation, training youth leaders, football matches or shared farming projects).

At the time of writing, only one professional full-time theatre group remains in Sierra Leone, the Freetong Players International. When Freetown's City Hall was shut down for performances at the end of the 1980s and when there was thus no more large and suitable performance venue in town, the Freetong Players changed their performance format and became well known for their audience- and community-centred approach, performing in the street, in people's back garden or a village green – often in a round circle as opposed to the conventional European-style juxtaposed setting of a stage and an auditorium. This approach subsequently also influenced other theatre groups in their approaches, as Charlie Haffner emphasises:

There was nowhere for us to perform, there was nowhere for people to come out and meet us, so [we thought] let us go and meet them. So that was how the whole phenomenon changed. So, this is the trend today. The theatre groups of today are following the footsteps of Freetong Players by taking the theatre to the doorsteps of the people around the country. (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2016, personal communication)

However, even the Freetong Players International currently mainly focus on developmental theatre and work a lot with different media, especially radio drama.

This tendency to interdisciplinary work and the use of mixed media may seem very postmodern, blurring the lines between creative practices and art forms. But this interdisciplinarity is rather a result of practicalities and necessities in the current Sierra Leonean context as well as a continuation of the aesthetic legacy of precolonial cultural expressions. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 2, the categorisation of separate artistic genres is *a priori* a result of occidental ontology and the rigid systems of classification of modern Eurocentric dualist thinking and is as such problematic in the African context. African theatre has always incorporated and synthesised various forms of performance and media, from dance, storytelling, music, spoken word, puppet theatre and masquerade to religious rituals.

Another interesting characteristic of the current theatre scene is the poriferous, yet existing division between practitioners and groups operating in the poorer, more densely populated and sprawling East of Freetown and the more affluent West.¹⁷ The playwrights and theatre companies mentioned so far all belong to an educated and intellectual class and are based in the West of the city, just as the celebrated theatre personalities of the past did. This obviously does not mean that they do not perform outside this part of the city and many of them also perform outside Freetown, especially as part of their developmental theatre productions. Although there are many groups in the East, they seem to be more transient and fluid in their existence and output and are considered 'more amateur' and 'less professional' in comparison to the Western practitioners who are thought of as more elitist, as one of my interviewees highlights in this quote:

One thing about the Western guys, they are very focused. [...] In terms of money making, in terms of glorification, you go to the West. (Theatre professional and teacher, Interviewee #18, 2016, personal communication)

While many of the current theatre activities operated from the West focus on developmental theatre and many of the companies mentioned above have links to large NGOs or development agencies paying them to produce work for them, groups in the East focus more on entertainment (both live and on video), especially on entertainment through what they call 'melodrama', a kind of musical theatre. The contents of these plays usually focus on local issues and the lives of Sierra Leoneans, such as family stories or marital issues. Furthermore, the notion of 'theatre' seems to be conceived in a wider sense among practitioners and audiences in the East and includes, for example, live performances to launch a film or a music album.

Eastern groups are also limited in their access to the already limited number of performance spaces and mainly use the run down Starco Hall in the East of the city (depicted in Figures 3 to 5 below) for their performances, while Western groups tend to have relatively easier access to large hotels or the British Council's auditorium (shown in Figure 8 further below) situated in the West of Freetown. The map of Freetown in Figure 2 below shows the location of Starco Hall, the British Council and other important venues and spaces for the CCIs mentioned in this and the next chapter.

¹⁷ The map of Freetown in Figure 2 below provides an overview of the city, while also indicating spaces used by theatre companies and other CCI organisations which are mentioned in this and the next chapter.

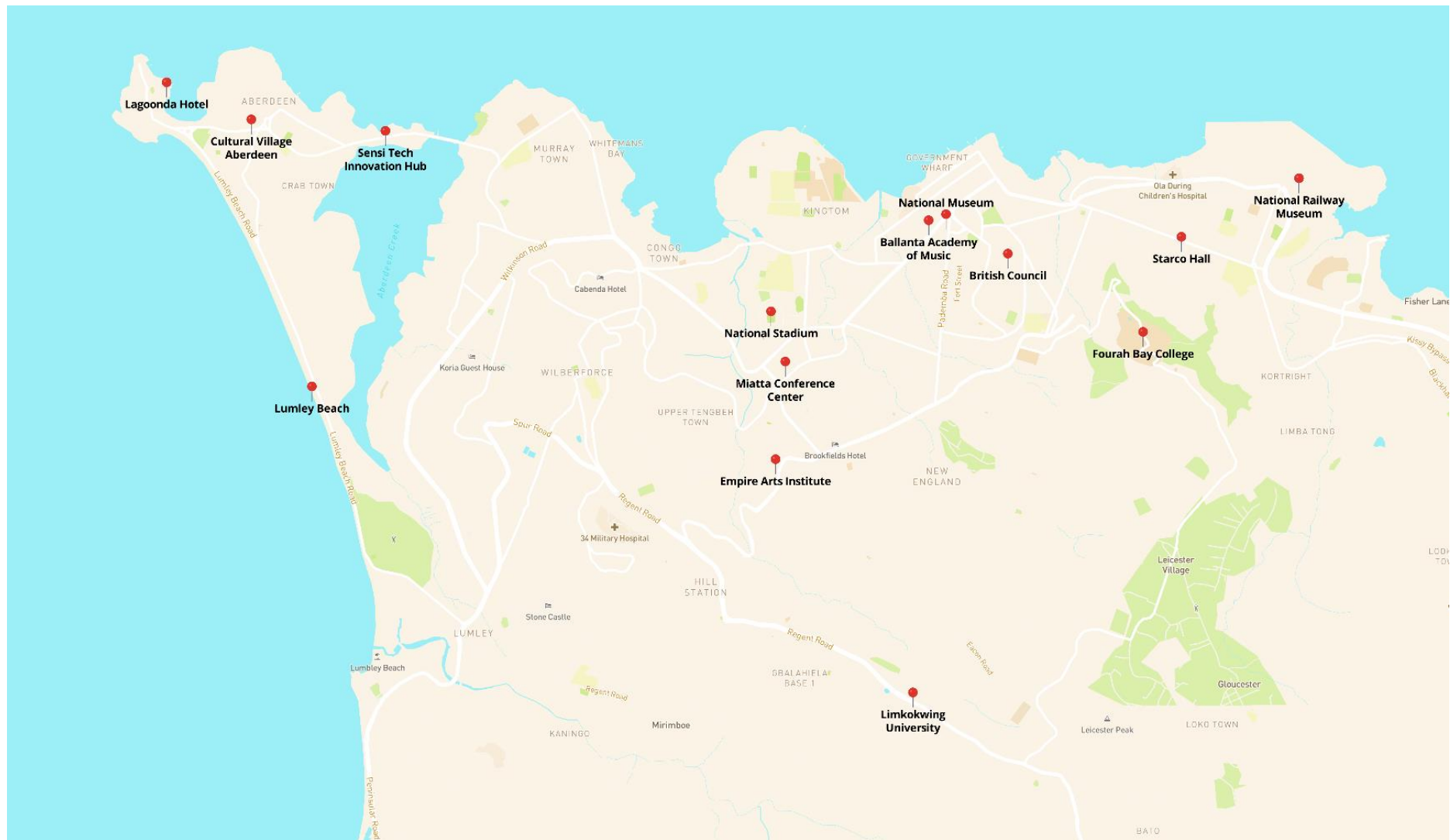


Figure 2: Map of spaces used by the CCLs in Freetown (created with Mapbox Studio)



Figure 3: Starco Hall, East Freetown, outside in 2016 (photo by the author)



Figure 4: Starco Hall, East Freetown, inside in 2016 (photo by the author)

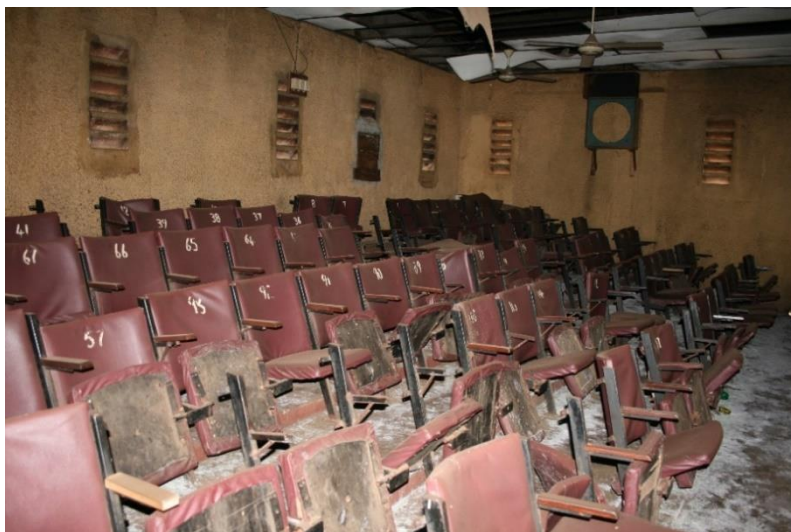


Figure 5: Starco Hall, East Freetown, run-down VIP Lounge on the balcony in 2016 (photo by the author)

Because of this context, but also because of the socio-economic differences between the two parts of the city, their main audiences also tend to differ, as the following quote illustrates.

The eastern part of Freetown is a whole new country on their own. For example, when you go to perform [...] when you are on stage, you know that this is a whole new level, and this is a [...] different crowd. [...] They are rough. [...] For example, if you are supposed to perform [...] five songs and went there [...] to do two... hell no, you are doing five for us... they will start throwing things. [...] And you cannot get them to actually sit down and say, let's watch the theatre for example. (Musician, Interviewee #1, 2016, personal communication)

At the time of writing one of the more prolific groups in the East is Pan African Productions, who have around 30 part-time members and produce both live performances and videos, which are often not just advertised via banners and flyers, but also murals (as in Figure 6 below).



Figure 6: Advertisement for a Pan African Production in East Freetown (photo by the author)

Pan African Productions have access to a free rehearsal space in a local school, which helps them to continue producing work. None of the group members have any formal arts training, but one of their directors has been trained by Mohamed Sheriff of Pampana Productions and he continues to work with Sheriff on various projects – an example that relationships and networks do exist across the different parts of the city.

4.2.2 Developmental theatre

As discussed throughout the previous chapters, theatre as a form of cultural expression and representation is grounded in its wider cultural, social, political and economic context, which the historical development of theatre in Sierra Leone demonstrates as well. Hence, and as illustrated above, the different aspects of and stages in Sierra Leone's social, political and economic trajectory as a postcolony have influenced the forms and contents of the theatre that was created at specific points in time. Sierra Leone's post-conflict setting after the end of the civil war in 2002 represents, however, a distinct rupture within its postcolonial context and has changed the environment for artistic production significantly; an environment that is quite different to the one the early post-independence theatre practitioners operated in.

With very few opportunities since the end of the war to present their art and receive an income from it, many Sierra Leonean playwrights and theatre practitioners struggle to make a living as artists, as already mentioned above. This struggle to live off their art is not necessarily new and unique, but the crucial difference since the end of the civil war lies in the narrow kind of currently existing opportunities that allow them to earn a (small) living: Current interventions that support theatre productions and performances, beside the occasional engagement at government or society events (such as Independence Day or annual festivals), tend to be limited to 'sensitisation' campaigns (as they are often called), which use theatre as a tool of communication for educational purposes, the dissemination of information and the promotion of development goals and thus focus on topics such as health, women's and children's rights, non-formal education, hygiene and free elections. While these topics are clearly driven by global political, social and economic agendas, such as global development goals, the actual contents of these performances are mainly anchored in the local daily life, drawing from local experiences and using culture-specific symbols.

These campaigns or projects are usually run by both national and international NGOs and development agencies, sometimes by the government, who have recognised the potential of theatre to be a much more effective medium than other forms of communication, due to its live, direct and more dialogical engagement with its audiences and especially in places with a low literacy rate such as in Sierra Leone – which in 2018 was only 43.2 percent (World Bank, 2020a).¹⁸ As a result, such projects are based on educational and development agendas and targets, rather than on artistic and aesthetic priorities or strategies to support the long-term strengthening of the ecology of theatre. Artists are generally only paid on output of these commissioned plays and no long-term independent support or core funds are available for the general development of their artistic practice and business. Hence, with NGOs and

¹⁸ Sierra Leone's literacy rate, however, has been growing over recent years. In 2004, for example, the literacy rate was only 34.8 percent, nearly 10 percent less than in 2018 (World Bank, 2020a).

development agents representing the great majority of paying customers and thus commissioning nearly all of the current work, the focus of contemporary theatre in Sierra Leone has shifted from national identity building and independent political criticism and activism since independence to educational and developmental topics.

While this obviously circumscribes what type of theatre is currently possible, or saleable, it also at the same time endorses theatre, even if it is mainly for its social and transformative values. The impact of the development industry on Sierra Leonean theatre is thus somewhat contradictory and full of tensions and nuances, and one could argue it is both detrimental and beneficial to the development of theatre. On the one hand, funding by the development industry allows artists to focus on their art, which results in greater productivity and arguably also higher quality. On the other hand, however, the funding impacts and alters theatre's purpose and outputs and thereby – to extend Roy's (2014) criticism of NGOs and their dictation of local agendas to their impact on the ecology of culture – also affects the potential for alternative types of and platforms for theatre, including political and activist theatre. Furthermore, with the notion of the creative economy being presented as the logical continuation of the discourse on culture and development (De Beukelaer, 2015) and given the tensions and frictions this creates (as discussed in Chapter 2), it is also crucial to interrogate the wider global political and policy context within which the funding of developmental and educational theatre is situated and what the creative economy discourse, its origins in the ontologies of the Global North, its past and current politicisation and its neoliberal undertones mean for theatre in the Global South and in particular activist theatre (cf. Da Costa, 2016).

However, and especially if one considers the subversive potential of cultural production and the active and nuanced agency that lies within this, the complicated relationship between theatre and the development industry can also have – beside narrow target project outcomes – benefits for practitioners beyond the opportunity to generate personal income as well as revenue for their theatre companies, such as increased professional experience and networks, development of non-creative skills and wider audiences. Furthermore, with postcolonial and cultural studies scholar Graham Huggan one can also argue that even if there is no real choice in terms of 'succumbing' to market forces, there can be choice and agency in terms of how to use '[these forces] judiciously to suit one's own, and other people's ends' (Huggan, 2001, p. 11) – and many theatre practitioners in Sierra Leone seem to do precisely this by making the best of the growing NGOisation of culture since the end of the civil war. But such benefits are obviously less quantifiable and often not within the project plan of NGOs and development agencies, so they seem more accidental and less intended, as international development scholar Polly Stupples and anthropologist Katerina Teaiwa confirm:

Artistic processes (as part of broader cultural processes) outlast the standard development project cycle, and the vital processes that are part of creative practice

may be less visible than the finished object that can be measured as an 'outcome'.
(Stupples and Teaiwa, 2017, p. 20)

The taxonomy of this type of theatre is not always very precise, neither in academia nor in practice, and a number of different definitions and terminologies often refer to the same actuality – such as educational theatre, developmental theatre, theatre for development, theatre for social change, community theatre, community sensitisation theatre, infotainment and sometimes even popular theatre (although the latter is clearly a much broader term, as discussed in more detail below). The interviewees for this research also used various terminologies to describe their work.

It would go beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the nuances between these various notions of theatre, so for the purposes of clarity and consistency I will use the term 'developmental theatre' (following Rustom Bharucha's choice of terminology) for this type of theatre – unless a more specific terminology is required in a specific case, for example in the case of 'true' Theatre for Development (TfD) projects.

What constitutes 'true' Theatre for Development has already been debated widely across existing literature (e.g., Breitinger, 1994; Byam, 1999; Kerr, 1995; Mda, 1993; Musa, 1998; Salhi, 1998) and the definitions and language around TfD thus also vary, but the existing literature cites two major sources for TfD: the colonial tradition of theatre as propaganda, and the more radical tradition of community theatre. Furthermore, there seems to be agreement (to some degree at least) across the existing literature that TfD's development has been significantly influenced by educator and philosopher Paulo Freire's concept of critical pedagogy and his seminal work *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) as well as theatre practitioner and theorist Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (1974), seeking to replace the top-down approach to development and communication with a more participatory bottom-up approach. The main principles of TfD thus relate to the fact that it is a more interactive form of community theatre, where theatre is practised with and not just for audiences, making them active participants in the process and thus seeking to promote critical awareness and civic dialogue and engagement, as theatre scholar Oga Abah describes:

Within the TfD discourse, theatre functions on several levels and in different dimensions. It provides a forum for a community to discuss the issues and problems of concern in their lives. It is also an occasion in which the village may come together for communal entertainment. It is a medium through which individuals and the community can recreate themselves. In performing these multiple roles, theatre is both agency of change and, is itself a changed entity. The change occurs in a creative environment through participation in which both the participants and the medium emerge differently from the starting point. (Abah, 2002, p. 160)

A play's content and the community's involvement throughout the whole project are thus not pre-set and the community is empowered from the early stages of researching important local issues to the final theatrical realisation (which often includes songs, dance, drumming and role-play), post-performance discussions and other follow-up activities (Abah, 2002; Kerr, 1995; Kidd, 1980; Malamah-Thomas, 1987; Mda 1993). This means that TfD does not have an audience as in the Eurocentric notion of theatre, but everybody is a participant or a 'spectator' (Boal, 2008). Following these principles, the Freetong Players, for example, usually do not perform by themselves when they work on projects in rural areas outside Freetown.

Either we train people in those villages [to perform] with their languages [...] or we blend together and do a production. So, they see us and them together. [...] But it's very important to do it with their language, through their language. Because we are passing on information, very important information. (Haffner, T., theatre professional and musician, 2016, personal communication)

As a result of the community's involvement 'the former "objects" of an externally controlled [...] process in a top-down (monological or one-way) communication become "subjects" in a dialogical participatory [...] process' (Malamah-Thomas, 1987, p. 82). As such, participants in TfD ideally become agents in an interactive and democratic bottom-up model of communication and can impact the information and development process. This also affects the aesthetics of the plays and is at the root of TfD's hybridity, as Abah explains:

It is also the ordinary people who have a better semiological grasp of the autochthonous forms which TfD leans towards and always borrows from. Therefore, in its development from indigenous art forms and in its present hybrid existence, TfD has an organic affinity to, and is perhaps to be seen as integral to the sacral life systems of rural Africa. The affinities exist and can be perceived in songs, music and dances. The issue is how these have transmigrated from their original setting, form and functions to service the quest for societal transformation in today's world. They have simply responded to the changing circumstances of the lives of the people who have given shape and meaning to the forms. (Abah, 2002, p. 159)

The emphasis of TfD thus lies in the process, facilitating learning throughout the different stages of the project (Okagbue, 1998), and not in the final product (the play), which can be in the form of Forum Theatre (based on Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*), or in a more classical staging or somewhere between. This also means that 'the needs of the local audience should take precedence over the needs of the global market' (Musa, 1998, p. 152).

However, there are a number of challenges for both developmental theatre in general and TfD in particular in order to enable learning, such as socio-economic differences, issues of class and implicit power relations between performers and communities, the often-short lifecycle of development projects and thus issues of sustainability and long-term change. Another key issue is funding, its logic and agenda as well as its inherent power relations,

especially when it is funding by government and development institutions, as African theatre scholar David Kerr writes on this matter:

Even in favourable conditions there are severe limits to the amount of support which catalyst groups attached to government or other official institutions (such as universities) can give to people's movements, struggling against traders, corrupt bureaucrats, comprador capitalists and political manipulators. The ideological links which exist between institutions in post-independence Africa tend to blunt the sharpness of class-conscious theatre. These links are made even stronger when backed up by overseas aid. [...] One of the follies arising from aided projects is that, in the glossy brochures which are usually produced after the theatre projects, there has been a tendency to paint a glowingly optimistic picture of the projects, so that the donors would continue to give funds in the future. This kind of developmental jingoism not only masks the real problems facing the rural poor, but also works against the self-reliant attitude which the projects are intended to encourage. (Kerr, 1995, pp. 170-171)

The funding logic of NGOs often also leads to a product-oriented approach and its inherent danger of adhocism, 'born out of a consumerist and capitalist ethics – an ethics in which there is always the necessity to differentiate between the producer and the consumer, the have and the have-not, and by extension in the context of Theatre for Development, the performer and the spectator' (Okagbue, 1998, p. 38). This capitalist dualism and its one-way communication model also support the appropriation of theatre by development agencies or governments for ideological purposes, propaganda or development goals set by the 'international community'.

TfD, in principle, should, however, not be an advertisement for any programme or government. But many NGOs, development agencies or governmental institutions in Sierra Leone currently do not strictly adhere to these ethics, and their projects and forms of 'community sensitisation' are also often very message driven. Furthermore, many theatre practitioners who work on such projects in Sierra Leone are not fully trained in TfD techniques or critical pedagogy (in Freire's sense), so their theatre is often not truly dialogical and participatory. All of the above infers that this kind of theatre is more accurately described by the more generic term of developmental theatre.

While developmental theatre also existed in Sierra Leone before the civil war, the specific demand for it has been intensified and funded by the influx of international aid money and international NGOs to the country since the end of the war.¹⁹ It is further directed by a more holistic approach to development since the 1990s as a result of development's cultural turn, the ensuing growing global paradigm of 'culture-sensitive development' and a focus on micro- and actor-oriented approaches (Clammer, 2015; Nederveen Pieterse, 2010; Radcliffe, 2006).

¹⁹ In 2008-09, for example, Sierra Leone was the biggest per capita recipient of aid from the British government, which spent £48.3m on projects to promote prosperity, improve governance, support stability and reduce poverty and health issues (Lakhani, 2010).

As outlined in Chapter 2, 'culture-sensitive' development programmes responded to the inadequacy of previous universal approaches and development policies, which did not take into account the cultural and local context of a programme's location. 'Culture-sensitive' strategies thus aim to be rooted in local cultures, knowledge and needs, to promote national and local ownership and offer more diversified, transversal and locally relevant approaches, which are thought to be more effective and to empower local communities in the face of globalisation. Consequently, the use of indigenous cultural elements, local languages and a dialogical communication process were considered as more effective educational and developmental tools. However, this notion of development is still mainly focused on materialism and the idea of 'development' and 'advancement' with regards to material aspects (which are obviously easier to influence, manage and measure).

A number of postcolonial and post-development critics argue that the arts are, or at least can be, an oppositional force to this type and understanding of development,

a space for the articulation of an alternative cultural imagining that lies well beyond the tropes of crisis and deficiency associated with the development discourse. Thus, support for the arts echoes the complexities and paradoxes long associated with development's cultural turn, which Nederveen Pieterse has aptly described as both 'a renegade notion at odds with established practices and a new brick in the wall of clichés' (2010, p. 64). (Stupples and Teaiwa, 2017, p. 2)

But the immediate post-conflict context of Sierra Leone, with its need to rebuild the country physically and psychologically after a civil war that devastated many lives as well as a significant proportion of its infrastructure and both material and immaterial foundations, added another layer and further complexities to the notion of 'development'. After the end of the war the political culture in Sierra Leone was focused on reconciliation and working together at all levels of society to improve the nation's prospects. Consequently, and although there were obviously differences and tensions between the two main parties (SLPP and APC), there did not seem to be much alternative space for political criticism and a more 'radical' political opposition – which also affected the space for alternative arts. This is now slowly changing,²⁰ but neoliberal capitalist globalisation and everything that comes with it, including globally determined notions of development and the value of culture, still reduce the space for alternative cultural expressions, including independent theatre.

As a result of this reduced space, but of course also as a result of pressing financial needs, lacking government support (which will be discussed further in Chapter 5) and the struggle to make a living as described above, theatre becomes more easily recruited within cultural and wider development policies. NGOs, being part of a wider system of hegemonic

²⁰ For example, during the last general election in 2018, the National Grand Coalition, a new party created to challenge the political status quo, instantly ranked third and received 7 percent of the vote in the first round (Election Guide, 2020).

structures as discussed in Chapter 2, add to these dynamics as they have the social and economic power to influence public opinion, information, knowledge and local agendas, set topics, mobilise people and thus create effects. International NGOs, in particular, play a very powerful role as they now offer more aid than ever before, with the budgets of some large INGOs exceeding those of some donor countries (Hammad and Morton, 2011). Furthermore, INGOs are often the main international presence in some areas, especially in areas that are more remote, affected by conflict or less important economically or politically (Morton, 2013) – which reinforces their cultural, social and economic power even further. Therefore, INGOs occupy a particularly conflicted and dualist role, as they represent and are driven by global structures and agendas but can only be truly democratic if they are accountable to local civil society (in its multiplicities), whom they are supposed to work with and for. Accountability, and by extension true effectiveness and impact of both local and international NGOs, remain, however, often a question mark, especially due to the fact that the assessment of impact is still frequently based on perceptions, anecdotal evidence and non-scientific analysis (Ahmed and Potter, 2006), rather than long-term and / or in-depth evidence-based evaluation.

Shortly after the end of the Sierra Leonean civil war NGOs, and the ‘international community’ more widely, supported more or less exclusively arts initiatives with a focus on the promotion of peace, stability, reconciliation and rehabilitation as well as projects employing drama therapy (as a form of expressive arts therapy aiming to channel and deal with traumatic experiences through alternative forms of communication such as theatre, dance and ritual). The following examples illustrate this initial recruitment of the arts for post-war reconciliation.

The Truth and Reconciliation Working Group, a network of civil society organisations linked to the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), trained local storytellers to tour the country in order to spread the key findings of the TRC. The TRC was established as a condition of the Lomé Peace Accord at the end of the civil war ‘to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law [...]; to address impunity, to respond to the needs of the victims, to promote healing and reconciliation and to prevent a repetition of the violations and abuses suffered’ (Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act, 2000, Section 6). The TRC, however, has since been widely criticised for not having been initiated by victims nor having considered local cultural preferences for and practices of reconciliation (Kennedy, 2018; Shaw, 2005; Young, 2013), and for having instead imposed a Eurocentric concept of ‘forgiveness by truth-telling’, ‘based on problematic assumptions about the [...] universal benefits of verbally remembering violence’ (Shaw, 2005). Furthermore, the TRC was accused of being politically biased (Meyer, 2007). Also, the fact that Sierra Leone had two different transitional justice mechanisms (the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court for Sierra Leone) added to the ambiguity and tensions surrounding the TRC and the messages it sought to convey.

Another international NGO, War Child, initiated projects using performing arts to address post-conflict social issues (such as the reintegration of former child soldiers or the displacement of many young people) and to provide vulnerable and war-affected children with livelihood training and skills support. The Centre for Victims of Torture used theatre to raise awareness about torture and war trauma and the Freetown-based Ballanta Academy of Music and Performing Arts developed performances with adolescents and young adults to promote peace and reconciliation (Stepakoff, 2008).

Since then, the development industry's focus has shifted from primarily responding to a post-war humanitarian crisis to wider development topics (such as health, gender, democracy, 'good' governance, transparency, anti-corruption, anti-violence and attitudinal and behavioural change), and projects using theatre to inform and educate communities now seek to address such issues and encourage general development and change. These projects are usually implemented with the same few relatively privileged, educated urban professional and semi-professional theatre practitioners and their theatre companies, some of whom were already mentioned above. But depending on the project's scope, they also incorporate community members in the creation and performance of their productions; in the 'true' sense of TfD or other forms of participatory community theatre.

In summary, as a result of Sierra Leone's recent past as a post-conflict state and continuing status as a 'developing country', developmental theatre and related forms of community, educational and transformative theatre currently dominate the scene in Freetown. As a consequence, the few theatre companies that survived the censorship of the 1980s and the civil war of the 1990s now only survive by selling an educational function of theatre, responding to the current local demand for developmental theatre projects and activities. The post-conflict and current demands of the development industry have also led to the emergence of a few new theatre groups that were created especially for the purpose of developmental theatre.

Needless to say, that theatre practice, and generally artistic freedom, are circumscribed by the imposition of this present didactic and developmental agenda and by funders who prescribe narratives in relation to their own programmes and strategies (and who are usually based in the Global North), selling theatre as 'infotainment' (Bharucha, 2009) – a dilemma the quote below brings to the point acutely.

I like to be very independent and now I am not independent because the NGO gives me money to perform for them. I have to perform what they want. We have to audition to make sure they see what they want, which I don't like. I want to be a free man. (Theatre professional, Interviewee #3, 2016, personal communication)

Sierra Leone's current political economy, its insufficient and ineffective policy and legislative framework, its challenging business environment and, more specifically, the limited

infrastructure, educational opportunities and access to finance available to the CCIs in Sierra Leone further contribute to this circumscription of artistic freedom, as Chapter 5 demonstrates.

However, the recruitment of local art forms by the 'international community' for global goals and the dissemination of their messages does not only affect alternative local spaces for the arts and artistic freedom, but also local complexities and agencies as Bharucha points out:

While there is a place for critical learning in the process of doing developmental theatre, this learning is most vibrant when it is reflexive. In other words, it's not just a matter of communicating the 'right' messages; it is also a matter of questioning the content of these messages in ways which make them more layered and complex. Complexity, for me, enhances activist energy and developmental concerns. It is politically correct simplification that reiterates the dominant dichotomies and fake solutions of our times. (Bharucha, 2009, p. 1)

The development industry bears a unilateral and biased impact on the contemporary development of Krio theatre, not only in terms of its aesthetics, forms and overall functionality, but also on structural, institutional and policy levels. As the difficult economic and political situation of the 1970s and 1980s and the ensuing civil war had left the Sierra Leonean state and its governance structures extremely fragile, many post-conflict development initiatives focus now, since humanitarian aid organisations and their initial programmes to relieve the population from the direct consequences of the war have left, on 'strengthening the state' and its institutions. This produces new forms of governance and governmentality and affects the relationship between the two publics and political orders, all of which also impacts and informs not only the aesthetics, but also the structures, infrastructure and governance of cultural production. Chapter 5 offers a more detailed analysis of the latter.

4.2.3 Recent activities beyond developmental theatre

Existing scholarship on African theatre tends to highlight entertainment, education and socialisation as the main 'traditional' functions of African theatre (Byam, 1999; Jeyifo 1985, 2000; Mlama, 1991; Musa, 1998). However, considering the social, political and economic history and context of many African theatres as well as the challenges and opportunities for the postcolony that are linked to 21st-century globalisation and commodification, this can no longer be a given. Theatre has an infinite number of functions – as many as there are plays, as many as there are audience members (Becker, 1966) – which depend on the play's and each audience member's past, present and future context. Audiences, for example, do not only seek to be entertained or educated, they also seek to be inspired, to be healed or to escape. Plays can be written for social or political mobilisation and change or to celebrate the status quo.

Despite the current focus on developmental and educational theatre in Sierra Leone, there are a number of efforts to move beyond this circumscription of theatre, both by theatre practitioners and philanthropists, who fight for the development of a more independent, diverse and professional and a less instrumentalised cultural and creative sector as a whole. This section illustrates these efforts by providing an overview of key players, organisations and interventions in this space.

As mentioned above, the Freetong Players International are currently the only full-time professional theatre group in Sierra Leone and beside their more recent community and developmental theatre work for NGOs and development agencies (which mainly allows them to survive), they frequently also perform in schools, both to entertain and educate. Figure 7 below shows one of their school performances in 2011.



Figure 7: The Freetong Players International performing in a school in 2011 (photo by the author)

But the Freetong Players have also created a few plays about important historical and political events, such as the cultural connections between the Gullah people of South Carolina and Sierra Leone or the Amistad revolt, already mentioned above. These plays, written by the Freetong Players' Artistic Director Charlie Haffner, depict how fundamentally intertwined local and global hegemonies are in a postcolonial African state like Sierra Leone. *Amistad Kata-Kata*, for example, couples the story of the historical slave revolt with a critique of the complex interrelatedness between global capitalism and the excessive accumulation by the postcolonial elite and its effects on the subaltern, which Christensen describes as follows:

Haffner's choice of subject matter also reflects Achille Mbembe's argument that subaltern classes in the postcolony lack an alternative set of tools to the master's to dismantle the master's house. [...] [This suggests] that the rulers and ruled are inscribed in the same epistemological field, lacking recourse to autonomous spaces of agency and thus sharing the same semiotic tools. (Christensen, 2005, p. 8)

One could, however, also argue – especially with postcolonial and cultural studies scholar Graham Huggan (2001), performance scholars Jacqueline Lo and Helen Gilbert (2002) and postcolonial theorist Robert Young (1995) – that this lacking recourse to alternative spaces of agency and alternative epistemologies can be targeted by shaping and re-politicising the markers of the shared semiotic tools and thus creating potential for agency.

It is in particular through the analogy of cannibalism that Haffner's *Amistad Kata-Kata* describes issues of hegemonic powers and exploitation at the core of the global economy, which is an interesting reconfiguration and transposition given that cannibalism was one of the main indigenous 'traditions' used by the colonisers to prove the 'savagery' of the colonised, and thus explain and justify colonialism and its 'civilising' and 'modernising' mission. The trope of cannibalism also alludes to Bayart's 'politics of the belly' (Bayart, 2009) and the reciprocal assimilation of elites, political entrepreneurs, the patron-client system, extraversion and the relationship to international donors and development partners. Furthermore, the trope refers to the prominence of food metaphors in the descriptions and critique of postcolonial political culture; 'because the postcolony is characterized, above all, by scarcity, [food metaphors lend themselves] to the wide-angle lens of both imagery and efficacy' (Mbembe, 2001, p. 131). This imagery has also entered popular culture. For example, one of the top music hits in 2011 in Sierra Leone (played non-stop on the radio, in bars and clubs) and Anglophone West Africa generally was a song by the Nigerian R&B duo P-Square called *Chop My Money*, which means 'Eat My Money'.

In November 2019, *Amistad Kata-Kata* was performed again for the first time in a long time in Freetown at the British Council's auditorium (pictured below in Figure 8) as part of a week-long celebration of the publication of Christensen's edited book, *Staging the Amistad* (2019), mentioned above, which for the first time brought together in print three Sierra Leonean plays about the Amistad slave revolt, including Charlie Haffner's *Amistad Kata-Kata*. Following the performance at the British Council, the play was supposed to go on a small tour of the institutions involved in this production (Empire Arts Institute, Services Secondary School and Lebanese International School), but the performances were cancelled due to Covid-19 (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2020, personal communication).



Figure 8: Performance of *Amistad Kata-Kata* in 2019 at the British Council's auditorium in Freetown (photo by Charlie Haffner)

One of Charlie Haffner's other recent large projects is a substantial theatre and documentary film project (*Sing, Freetown*) with the producer Sorious Samura (whose Emmy-winning documentary *Cry Freetown* captured the horrors of the Sierra Leonean civil war). *Sing, Freetown*, due to be released in June 2021, follows Charlie Haffner as he prepares and stages an ambitious new play, looking in depth into the country's history and its implications for a way forward for the nation; an epic about Sierra Leone to tell a different story and counter the stereotypical images and narratives about the country from without, especially after the civil war and Ebola.

Two university programmes at Fourah Bay College in Freetown teach theatre production and the development of plays as part of their curriculum, which culminates in performances every year and, occasionally, the forming of a new theatre group. The English Department offers a practical theatre course over three years as part of its degree courses, and theatre also forms part of the Cultural Studies Diploma at The Institute of African Studies, an interdisciplinary research institute that focuses on African culture and history. Unsurprisingly, their approaches to teaching theatre and thus the content and style of the students' performances are influenced by the focus of the respective course. Theatre in the English department is more influenced by Anglophone literature and Eurocentric notions of theatre, whereas theatre at The Institute of African Studies is more shaped by oral traditions and improvisation and less by existing texts.

Occasionally, there are also theatre performances and stand-up comedy at festivals (like the Tangains Festival), conferences, hotels, bars or as part of the British Council's arts programme. A recent highlight was the Shakespeare's Globe tour of *Hamlet*, which over two years brought the production to nearly every country world-wide and to Sierra Leone in March

2016.²¹ As part of this two-day event, many of Sierra Leone's renowned playwrights and practitioners came together to celebrate Shakespeare's work 'Salone-style' during a day of performances staging extracts in Krio of Shakespeare's *Soliloquies*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, and *Wan Pawn Flesh* (an adaptation of *The Merchant of Venice*). However, some of my interviewees felt that this type of theatre has now become more elitist, and not as democratic and accessible as it used to be due to the type of venues that are used and the high ticket prices. For example, ticket prices for the Salone-style performances on the first day of the Shakespeare's Globe tour event were 10000 Leones (equivalent to about £0.8), but non-student tickets for the Globe's performance on the second day ranged from 50000 to 200000 Leones (equivalent to about £3.6 and £14.5 respectively). Chapter 5 will further expand on this issue, linked to the economics of theatre and the relatively low average buying power across Sierra Leonean society.

There are also a number of Islamic religious groups who regularly produce religious plays, as they 'have a ready audience among their congregation so they can afford to spend time [and money] preparing their plays' (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication). The Ma Dengn Association, a group of returning members of the diaspora who seek to change the country's image and revive the Sierra Leonean cultural and creative sector by celebrating and promoting Sierra Leonean culture in all its facets (from music, arts and craft, literature and fashion to cuisine), also offers platforms for performances. In 2009 they launched the Ma Dengn Festival, an annual multi-arts festival²² in Freetown, mixing contemporary and indigenous performances (such as masquerades), contemporary literature in the form of short skits and dramatic poetry as well as displays of arts and crafts. More recently, they also created the Taste of Salone Festival, bringing together Freetown's finest eateries and arts and crafts, targeted at a more middle-class and older audience.

[We] just highlight what people are doing to promote Sierra Leonean culture, so people understand that there is value in local you know, and there is value in what Sierra Leoneans are producing. (Carroll, A., Producer, 2016, personal communication)

It is young urbanites, such as the members of the Ma Dengn Association, who have most access to international popular cultures and new technologies, and who thus become cultural couriers and ambassadors, creating new and hybrid artistic forms 'in a dialectic that also suggests an end to the domination of the cultural space by the state and the emergence of a

²¹ Coincidentally, the first recorded overseas performance of a Shakespeare play was a touring production of *Hamlet* performed in 1607 on a deck of a British merchant ship, which was anchored off the West African coast just where Freetown was later founded (Lukowski, 2016).

²² The Ma Dengn Festival had to be put on hold, however, for 2 years during Ebola and was also cancelled in 2020 due to the Covid-19 Pandemic.

new context of cultural pluralism complete with its asymmetries and power relations' (Mudimbe, 2012, p. xiiv).

Besides the lobbyist / activist artists and creative entrepreneurs mentioned above, new digital media and technologies, as mentioned above, also play a significant role in the efforts to support a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector. However, there are also some tendencies that see 'authentic' Sierra Leonean culture and imagination threatened, or at least compromised, by technology as well as the increased exposure to global flows, the heightened fluidity of the concept of culture in general and the consequences of its commodification in particular. They thus criticise the influence of 'foreign' images, sounds, texts and symbols on Sierra Leone's society and therefore call for a return to their cultural 'traditions'.

Instead of us using the media as a way of selling these things [traditional performances], we have allowed the medium to overtake us, to influence what it came with. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

Although there is no such point of departure to go back to from which these 'traditions' originated (as discussed in detail in Chapter 2), the latter is a rather common reaction to increasing levels and speeds of change as well as to globalisation's ambiguous role in the relationship between flux and stability (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001; Geschiere, 2009; Meyer and Geschiere, 1999; Thompson Drewal, 1988).

This fear of 'cultural loss', generally, and the loss of spiritual and sacred values of performances, more specifically, as well as subsequent traditionalising, essentialising and localising efforts are enhanced by a number of other factors in Sierra Leone: As part of the attempts since independence, mentioned in Chapter 3, to create and strengthen a national narrative, to encourage Sierra Leoneans to have pride in their mixed cultural heritage while also identifying with a shared identity as Sierra Leoneans and to increase cultural tourism, the government tends to only support displays of 'traditional' culture and folklore, such as the National Dance Troupe (which is one of five subvented agencies of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and will be discussed further in Chapter 5) or indigenous performances on occasions of nation-wide celebrations like the country's Independence Day. The bifurcated state, the continued authority of the 'traditional' system and its agents of power, such as the Paramount Chiefs, and the two publics' different conceptions of culture also play an important role within these dynamics (which will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 5). Another factor that contributed to the fear of 'cultural loss' was the civil war. As one of its consequences, many 'traditional' performers emigrated or died and the few that are now left in the country are of considerable age, hence their knowledge will disappear soon if it is not recorded or passed on. Furthermore, many young people who could have taken on these elders' legacy were

displaced during the civil war or fled from rural to urban areas in the hope to escape the atrocities of the war or find employment.

Responding to this sense of 'cultural loss' but also the fact that very little 'traditional' performance, music and dance is passed on through formal education, the Ballanta Academy of Music and Performing Arts in Freetown seeks to document and promote Sierra Leone's 'traditional' performances, music and dance and encourages the transmission, but also reinvigoration of indigenous values, knowledge and skills through non-formal cultural education. Another proponent of safeguarding and reinvigorating her cultural heritage is the folk artist and activist Fanta Kamara, or Fantacee Wiz as she is known to her fans, who uses her native Koranko, one of the 25 languages in Sierra Leone, in many of her songs.

We have lots and lots of songs here that are typical Sierra Leonean songs. I won't just limit it to my tribe. There are typical Sierra Leonean songs [...] that we used to sing when we were kids. But now [...] when kids are playing... because there is so much technology around in everything, they don't even play like [we used to] or they don't get to sing those songs anymore. So, we can't lose these songs. Why don't we bring them back and let our kids or younger ones know we actually have sounds like these? I try to remix those. I will use a particular tune or a few words and try to make it into another version, [...] for you to identify that this is a typical Sierra Leonean song. (Kamara, F., Musician, 2016, personal communication)

This duplicity and concurrent existence of homogenising and heterogenising tendencies is not surprising. It is not surprising generally, following the theory that globalisation does not only have either homogenising or heterogenising consequences (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001; Cowen, 2002), and not surprising specifically in a country, such as Sierra Leone, that is characterised by the two publics and ongoing disjunctures between the claims of the 'modern' and the 'traditional', which not only have implications for the state, its institutions and policies, and civil society, but also for cultural productions and their relationship to translation, transformation and transgression.

However, as mentioned in Chapter 2, this duplicity is not to be seen as a rigid dichotomy as cultural homogenisation and heterogenisation do not exist in a simple dualism. Just as there are myriad interdependencies between cultural, political and economic dynamics there are also multiple interdependencies between 'traditional' and 'modern' urban cultural production. Contemporary Krio theatre exemplifies this, as it remains rooted in indigenous performance elements, and theatre groups such as the Freetong Players remain very committed to the transmission, but also renewal of historical forms and stories.

4.3 Contemporary Krio theatre and its aesthetic choices in a continuum of flows

Based on the previous sections, which set the scene of contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone, the following section is concerned with the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes and develops a critical argument about strategies, reactions and compromises of local theatre practices as a consequence of current flows and structures reinforced by neoliberal globalisation, commodification and 'culture and development' initiatives.

4.3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 2, 'the local' and 'the global' are grounded in one another and in their relationship (Strathern, 1995); hence, local and global cultural forms exist at the same time and in the same space. To speak of *the* global and *the* local is thus not only theoretically, but also empirically incorrect; not only because both concepts do not represent fixed realities and always exist in the plural, but also because they do not mutually exclude each other and thus do not exist in a rigid, impermeable dichotomy. The notion of the hybridity of 'the local' and 'the global' is crucial for this research as it underpins the argument that artistic production happens in a continuum of cultural flows, transformation and translation across localities, regions and national borders.

Many Sierra Leonean artists draw on both, transforming and translating global forms into something meaningful for the local while still maintaining global traces. These strategies of 'glocalisation' (Robertson, 1992) can be identified, for example, in the way plays are created and performed:

These days the performance that is common is where you don't have a backstage. [...] Several years ago, a group came from Nigeria and performed [without the backstage] in Sierra Leone and after that groups have been trying it out. And many times now, when we do community performances that's the style we use. We also had a training from the Black Mime Theatre Group the British Council brought to Sierra Leone. They also use that technique. (Arts manager, Interviewee #10, 2016, personal communication)

Glocalisation also has an impact on the type of stories that are told and the topics that are processed through theatrical expression, as one of my interviewees points out:

Our stories themselves, particularly in my improvisational classes – because [the students] have a freedom to develop based on what's happening around them – they have definitely been impacted by what's happening globally. What's happening in the world at a time like this. (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #5, 2016, personal communication)

Despite the agency of 'the local' in this process of producing new meaning and thus adding new value, it is important to remember that global flows are 'deeply perspectival constructs' (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33), and are not entirely equal and free but also directed by

existing hegemonies, which also influence cultural preferences and taste as the following quote illustrates.

Globalisation plays a huge part in what influences young people, what they listen to, what they aspire to. [...] who would have said 20 years ago that Hip Hop culture was going to become the aspirational or the global aspirational culture that sells everything from [...] champagne in New York to caps to the people on the streets of Sierra Leone. (Producer, Interviewee #25, 2016, personal communication)

As already mentioned above, ICTs and new media play a significant role within these dynamics, reinforcing global flows and steering their directionality. This is also noticeable in Sierra Leone, as several of my interviewees highlighted.

You know the way some of us dress now, the way we speak now, it's all been influenced by what we see on TV. What we see on the news and what we read on the internet. Subconsciously, these things are being infused into our consciousness and in whatever [cultural] products we eventually churn out. (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #5, 2016, personal communication)

Although Sierra Leone entertains a very close relationship with the UK and the USA due to its history, colonialism and extensive diasporas overseas (as mentioned in Chapter 2) and although, for example, African American music (in particular Hip Hop and Reggae) and Hollywood films are certainly popular in Sierra Leone, they seem to dominate the cultural landscape less than theories on the 'Westernisation' or 'Americanisation' of the world suggest – as emphasised by the quote below. But it is possible that this is also just less the case now than it was in the 1990s and early 2000s and linked to the increasing cultural effervescence in Africa, as identified by scholars such as Mudimbe (2012).

People actually wanted to sound all American. [Some] people still do though. But we've reached a point where Sierra Leoneans don't actually listen to that kind of music anymore. [...] We've got people that actually have tried that. It's not working, it's not working for them. I think if they really want to listen to Kanye, they will [...] listen to Kanye, but they don't want to listen to a Sierra Leonean Kanye, for example. (Musician, Interviewee #1, 2016, personal communication)

According to my interviewees, cultural flows are more prominent along the lines of regionally shared languages or a common lingua franca (meaning that Anglophone artists are better known in Anglophone Africa) and linked regional affinities. These flows are, however, not always two-way but rather directed by regional hegemonies. Nigerian musicians, for example, such as Davido, Tiwa Savage or Wizkid, also top the charts and sales outside of Nigeria and incite the dreams of many aspiring musicians across the whole region. The global flows that seem most pertinent and influential in Sierra Leone at the time of writing thus come from other Anglophone countries in West Africa, in particular Nigeria, Ghana and The Gambia, reinforced not only by linguistic commonalities but also closer educational and business links.

I went to Nigeria to study, and I came back with a lot more awareness of Sierra Leonean culture and history because I had seen what the Nigerians were doing with their culture and their history. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2016, personal communication)

Although the exposure and exchange between Anglophone and Francophone West African artists thus seems generally more limited, there are cultural, social and economic links through ethnic groups that are spread across the region (as the quote below points out), beyond the national borders of Anglophone and Francophone countries which were arbitrarily drawn by the colonial powers.

In terms of theatre, I can't remember any festivals that have been organised with [both] French-speaking and English-speaking artists. [...] There is some form of contact either through the Fula [one of the largest ethnic groups in the Sahel and West Africa inhabiting a number of different countries] or the Susu [an ethnic group living primarily in Guinea and North-Western Sierra Leone]. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #9, 2016, personal communication)

Hence, not just the flows emanating from 'far away cultures', that may be more 'other' than one's own, but also regional and more local flows play an important and visible role in the constant change and hybridisation of cultures and their forms and expressions, as one of my interviewees emphasises:

We have some drumming similar to Guinea. Like the Mandingo [a large ethnic group in Sierra Leone, who is part of the Mandinka people of West Africa], the Susu, the Fula, all of these drummers are similar to the Guinea style of performance. So, at times, we get their plates [CDs] or watch over YouTube, or [social] media. So, we look at them, we say ok, this is similar to ours, so let us do something a little bit different because if we play this at a competition, and they too play it, they can say it's the same. So, we do some changes. (Civil servant, Interviewee #11, 2016, personal communication)

But a number of interviewees also highlighted that Nigerian or Ghanaian films or music, due to their popularity, do not just influence Sierra Leonean films or music in the sense of inspiring a reinterpretation, transformation or translation of their content or form to the Sierra Leonean context. Their popularity sometimes inspires just a plain copy, whose cultural references do not make sense in the context of Sierra Leone.

The Sierra Leonean films, when you look at them, they are all similar to the Nigerian and Ghanaian films. The language, the settings... [For example] we do not have kingdoms here, we have chiefdoms. [...] You cannot do a film and then you refer to the chief [...] as a king. You refer to the house of the chief as a palace... we do not have palaces, we do not have kings, we do not have kingdoms. (Civil servant, Interviewee #8, 2016, personal communication)

Sometimes these copies even completely ignore cultural identifiers that would locate the story more convincingly in Sierra Leone, as a filmmaker in Freetown points out:

I watched a movie, and they were trying to portray a Limba [the third largest ethnic group in Sierra Leone] man dancing in the traditional clothes. And when you saw it you would definitely know that this is exactly copied from a Nigerian film. From

what we see, the dress, the beads, the paintings... The Limba man doesn't paint when he wants to dance or perform traditional rituals. No, they don't paint. But when you see that, you can tell it's straight from Nigeria. (Filmmaker, Interviewee #2, 2016, personal communication)

However, one could also consider this perceived lack of 'authenticity' as just another response to existing demands by audiences and consumers, thus an aesthetic response to the current marketplace, as the following quote suggests.

In Nigeria they have many, many movies with ghosts, those fetish kinds of things. So, you start to see them in the stories that even our own people try to develop. And we have a lot of people who will say: 'Come on, this is Nigeria, this is not Sierra Leone.' But because these guys know people buy those movies, they also do the same. Not because they want to really perform for performing but just to make money out of it. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

But beside these 'simple' copies as well as tendencies of glocalisation and the translation and localisation of global symbols and their materialisation in the form of cultural expressions and products, a returned focus on 'the traditional' and 'the local' (to support, for example, identity and nation-building) can also be discerned in Sierra Leonean cultural and creative production, responding to a fear of cultural loss, as discussed above.

We have our stories to tell. And if we want to market ourselves, we have to start telling our own stories in our films, in our theatre. (Civil servant, Interviewee #8, 2016, personal communication)

In summary, the importance and impact of the cultural flows from countries such as Nigeria, Ghana and The Gambia are certainly a result of the closer geographical proximity to West African Anglophone countries (in comparison to other Anglophone countries across Africa or the world), English as a shared language (in contrast to other West African countries who are Francophone), similarities between Krio and Nigerian or Ghanaian Pidgin English, close cultural, social and economic ties through ethnic groups spread across the region and easier access to cultural production from countries such as Nigeria and Ghana due to readily available pirated CDs and DVDs. But I would argue as well that it is also due to Sierra Leoneans identifying more with other Anglophone West Africans as a result of the shared history of colonialism, a similar experience of postcolonialism and the returned focus on 'home' and things 'made in Africa'.

Just one of my interviewees, a member of the returning diaspora (who, however, rejects the term 'diaspora' due to its tendency to divide), felt that the 'Western' influence in Sierra Leone was greater than other regional or wider African influences. It is obviously not very scientific to extrapolate one individual view to the views of a whole group, but the global flows and their relative importance may indeed be different for the Sierra Leonean diaspora (who have returned in larger and larger numbers in the last decade), as they inhabit different

economic, political, social and cultural spaces, their cultural identities are potentially hybridised in different ways and their cultural consumption patterns may differ as well. This in turn also influences and politicises the aesthetics of their cultural productions and expressions, as the West Indian political economist Keith Nurse postulates as well:

[Keith Nurse] argues that diasporic cultures in general, often embodied in popular cultures, employ an 'aesthetic of resistance' that confronts and subverts hegemonic modes of representation and thus acts as a counter-hegemonic tradition to the geo-cultural constructions embodied in notions of empire, nation, class, 'race', gender, sexuality, and ethnicity. [...] Nurse concludes that diasporic cultural expressions and practices facilitate aesthetic innovation as well as socio-political change in both receiving and sending countries. (Isar and Anheier, 2010, p. 10)

The relationship between the diaspora and the nation is thus a reminder of the instability of the concept of 'the nation', especially in terms of identity-founding factors and providing a sense of belonging (Okagbue, 2016). It is also a reminder of the oversimplification of the idea, enhanced by nationalist efforts, that national identity is based on uniformity, on the equation of nation with one culture, one language, one people and one territory, and thus a reminder that the nation is an 'imagined community' (Anderson, 2006).

The juncture between culture, Pan-African politics and the notion of 'global Blackness' is not a new phenomenon. African diasporic cultural expressions, especially African American popular culture, have for a long time played a significant role in many African cultural scenes as a consequence of their linkages through global Pan-Africanism. But new technologies and easier forms of content distribution have given this a paradigmatic shift. The development of Ghanaian Hiplife from Hip Hop is a good example of the translation and transformation of cultural flows through Africa's historical and present position in the world, especially within the context of the Black Atlantic (Shiple, 2009). Young urban Africans, with their access to different cultural spaces, accelerate the hybridisation between African and 'other' (especially African diasporic) aesthetics, which has shaped urban African life over the past few decades.

The impact of these and other flows discussed in this section may seem more evident in Sierra Leone in the above examples of film and music, as they currently dominate the Sierra Leonean cultural landscape. Glocal influences may therefore not be as obvious in current theatre productions as most of them are developmental theatre productions, which follow certain prescribed patterns, as discussed above. However, contemporary global and local flows certainly do also influence contemporary Krio theatre, its aesthetics, forms and themes, as illustrated by the examples given above, such as the removal of the backstage, the approach to developing storylines or the choice of content, and as will be discussed further in Section 4.3.3 further below.

As long as educational and developmental theatre continues to be the main source of income for theatre practitioners in Sierra Leone due to the factors discussed above,

contemporary Krio theatre is forced to make compromises and navigate within what is being circumscribed as possible, or saleable, forms of theatre by the government, NGOs and the wider development industry. The remaining sections of this chapter discuss the relationship between theatre and the development industry in more detail, analysing particularly how 'culture and development' initiatives impact and transform local theatre forms and practices and their approach to developing and presenting plays, including their aesthetics, structure and content.

4.3.2 Literary and popular theatre

As mentioned in Chapter 3 in the section on the history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone, the distinction between the written and the oral text that make up a theatre performance has led to the often-misleading taxonomy and implicit dichotomy and hierarchy between 'literary' and 'popular theatre' in African theatre. Distinctions based on the production and consumption process further enhance this dualism and a perceived rift between these forms of theatre. Some existing literature defines 'literary theatre' as the product of a professional playwright, with a detailed script and performed by professional actors for a passive audience, in contrast to 'popular theatre' as the product of local people, based on improvisation using local languages and performed with the audience as participants (e.g., Mda, 1993). Some writers also define 'literary theatre' as 'Western-style theatre' and 'popular theatre' as a hybrid between 'traditional' and 'modern' theatre (e.g., Musa, 1998). Sometimes, 'popular theatre' is even equated with developmental theatre, seeking

to make the people not only aware of but also active participants in the development process by expressing their viewpoints and acting to better their conditions. Popular theatre is intended to empower the common man [and woman] with a critical consciousness crucial to the struggle against the forces responsible for his poverty. (Mluma, 1991, p. 67)

Very generally, popular theatre is thus understood as 'of', 'for' and sometimes 'with' the people, so a theatre that is accessible to anyone and speaks to not only the middle or upper classes, and is as such also 'associated with democratic, proletarian, and politically progressive theatre' (Schechter, 2003, p. 3). In popular theatre, artists are also considered to be free to say what they want, 'without having to conform to externally imposed standards or depend on institutional approval' (Schechter, 2003, p. 6). Popular theatre performances are typically 'highly visual and physical, portable [and] orally transmitted' (Schechter, 2003, p. 4) but are not necessarily 'text-free or wholly non-literary' (Schechter, 2003, p. 4).

Extrapolating this understanding of popular theatre to the African context, African popular theatre would thus be defined as including non-literary forms of performance such as dance, storytelling, mime, music, drumming and masquerade as well as religious or spiritual rituals.

However, all African theatre is considered to comprise a variety of these forms, as discussed above. Furthermore, literary and popular theatre have influenced each other and their aesthetics, and they have thus become increasingly mixed across Africa, if not even hybridised in some cases. As such, 'literary' and 'popular' theatre as theatrical forms do not exist in an atemporal, static dichotomy – at least not in the African context – and their perceived dichotomy is outdated, as the following quote by one of my interviewees confirms:

In other parts in West Africa, Nigeria for example, there's the popular theatre, there's the literary theatre which grows out of the universities and theatre schools. I think the lines are being blurred a bit. I don't think [the distinction] is as sharp as it used to be. Partly because I think those who have been in the literary theatre have come to realise that they need the popular audience as well and that the issues that they are dealing with also need to be addressed to the popular audience. I think there is a blurring of the lines. Even in terms of the use of language and so on and so forth. The Soyinka-esque²³ type of theatre, I don't think is the dominant form, even in Nigeria, anymore. Somebody like Òsófisan²⁴ is a lot more accessible to ordinary people, that's why at some point one found that his plays were more widely performed than Soyinka. [...] Soyinka was performed once in a while because to do a Soyinka play, you needed to do a lot of literary analysis and iconography, whereas Òsófisan was a lot more down to earth and easier to understand. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2016, personal communication)

In Sierra Leone, the translation and adaptation of Shakespearean plays, which also enhanced the development of Krio theatre as mentioned above, has been particularly credited for reinforcing the hybridisation of literary and popular theatre.

The mix has come through the adaptations of the Shakespeare texts. That has brought [the plays] a little bit closer to home, you know. And that is why you will not have that clear distinction... like you have no groups that are more professional, elitist theatre... and groups that would do local performances. [...] That's the same sort of people who hit the drums and dance and summersault all over and [...] [then] would be acting Makuba [Dele Charley's adaptation of Shakespeare's Macbeth] down the line. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #9, 2016, personal communication)

This does not mean, however, that there are not existing hegemonic structures and performing conditions that can and do reinforce the perceived dichotomy between 'literary' and 'popular' theatre and the binary notion of their respective functions, types of audiences and specific characteristics (for example elitist versus popular); hegemonic structures and

²³ Wole Soyinka is arguably one of the best-known African playwrights. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature, as the first sub-Saharan African, in 1986.

²⁴ The playwright, director, writer and critic Femi Òsófisan is well known for critiquing repressive governments, highlighting societal problems, fighting for artistic freedom and using Yorùbá myths and performance aesthetics in his hybrid and intertextual plays. His work also 'critically examines Africa's heritage as a dynamic process that needs to be re-appropriated and foregrounded for the benefit of Africans' (Adeyemi, 2007, p. 27). In a lecture given at the University of Ibadan in 2006, Harvard Prof. Biodun Jeyifo thus called Òsófisan 'the most African playwright of the post-colonial era' (Rubin, 2016).

performing conditions such as class, social and financial capital, education, general exposure, language or access to performance spaces and funding – as the following quote illustrates:

Up till around the 70s we had a very elitist theatre. It was the [time] of the Oscar Wildes and so on and so forth. Then the younger generation coming in and starting theatre in Krio. [...] Those [plays] became quite popular. [...] That was the start of the popular theatre because the theatre now became accessible to people other than the elite who had studied in England and had been going to theatre there and had read Oscar Wilde and those kinds of productions. The issues also that were being dealt with were more down to earth, more Sierra Leonean issues. As we moved to the 80s and getting to the 90s, I think one began to see two types of theatre developing. Dele Charley & Co, who in fact were part of the original movement to the popular theatre, began moving more towards the literary type of theatre because they got more exposure and got more training and began to experiment. [...] But the majority [of plays] were more popular because of the transition from English to Krio and even those that were still writing in English, the kind of English that they were using was English that was accessible to the ordinary man. For those of us who had been through formal theatre training, I guess in a way we sort of aspired to a more literary type of theatre and the audiences that were drawn to our productions, I don't think one could call it the popular audience. In the first place, the venue was elitist in a way. The plays, at least mine, were a bit ... difficult is not the right word. To be able to understand what was being said, you had to be at a certain level. It was not the pure entertainment kind of theatre. In those days, the audience I would have would be doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, university students, those kinds of people, diplomats et cetera, NGO workers and so on. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2016, personal communication)

In the case of Sierra Leone today, this is still illustrated by the division between practitioners and groups from the East and the West of Freetown, which is mainly based on the different socio-economic spaces they operate in, as described above.

Furthermore, postcolonial economic, social and political conditions, and in particular local and global agents of the development industry, have intensified the rise of the notion of 'popular theatre' through their focus on developmental theatre, and enhance as such not only the dichotomy and hierarchy between 'literary' and 'popular' theatre, but also undermine at least some of the original core principles of 'popular theatre'. When 'popular theatre' in the form of developmental theatre is circumscribed by the development industry, then artists usually are not allowed to say what they want 'without having to conform to externally imposed standards or depend on institutional approval' – which contradicts Schechter's definition of 'popular theatre' (Schechter, 2003, p. 6) introduced above. On the contrary, artists are required to conform to the standards and messages set by the entity funding the performance and usually do need institutional approval (if funded by an NGO, for example) before the performance can go ahead, as one of my interviewees explains in the quote below. Unless, of course, it is a 'true' TfD project, where even participants become agents in an interactive and democratic bottom-up model of communication, as described above.

If you are doing theatre for communities, it should be short and precise, right to the point. [The funders] will send us the information that they want us to pass on and then [we] put them in the characters and set the information to a story [so] that the people [the communities] will see themselves [in the stories]. [...] And we have auditions. [The funders] will come and watch what we've done and if it's okay for them, we go ahead. [...] Most times they are very particular with their information. So, they check their information and [...] then we correct it to what they want and then we go out to the field and do what should be [done]. (Theatre professional, Interviewee #13, 2016, personal communication)

As a result of the developments discussed above, many of the people interviewed for this research thought that there is no 'literary theatre' left in Sierra Leone now, that it has been eclipsed by developmental theatre. Some interviewees also seemed to consider 'popular theatre', at least in the form of developmental and educational theatre, as not 'proper' or 'serious' theatre, or at least as a lesser form of it.

4.3.3 Aesthetics

The following section analyses in more detail the impact of the continuum of local and global flows and of the current political economy in Sierra Leone on local theatre practice from an aesthetic point of view, such as techniques for the development of plays, structural principles, choices in terms of the introduction of autochthonous and allochthonous material and linguistic manipulations.

One rather obvious impact of the current focus on developmental theatre is the growing focus on improvisation and the decreasing importance of developing well-polished scripts – which also gives actors more agency to contribute to the story, as the following quote highlights:

When we write the stories, we do not write the actual scripts, we do the outlines and then leave it to the cast. And [...] because they are also trained, they know where they should draw their lines. But at times when you leave it to them also, they bring ideas that you alone would not have thought of. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

The strategy to develop plays from rough scenarios and improvisation is certainly partly related to the nature and demands of developmental theatre and its target audiences (especially in the more participatory versions of it), but it also seems to be a consequence of the often-short turn-around of these types of commissions, especially if it is not a longer-term project with a community in the 'true' sense of TfD, as one of my interviewees suggests:

Most times we do the scenarios. From there we go on to rehearsals and insert the improvisation. Take what we want from the improvisation, leave what we don't want [...]. And at times we have a very short time, so we don't write. And it is during these workshop rehearsals that we will then do the songs. My husband was a song writer, and we would insert the songs in between the scenarios. (Arts manager, Interviewee #10, 2016, personal communication)

Although Charlie Haffner, for example, developed a script for the play he worked on as part of the above-mentioned theatre and film project with Sorious Samura on Sierra Leone's cultural history, he has also mostly moved away from pre-written, well-polished scripts. Instead, he uses improvisation and collaboration with communities to develop his plays, especially for his developmental theatre – which he considers a more effective strategy in terms of developing audiences and passing on information.

I manufacture plays. I manufacture, I don't have time to sit and write, I move [around] all the time. [...] Because I moved [away] from the orthodox type of script-based theatre, I am forced to change my methods. So, I manufacture, I improvise. [...] The plays now, we take it to the people to own it, so they own the dramas, not us writing scripts and giving [them] to them, but we go to them, we meet with them, we ask about their issues, about their concerns, about their stories and we make dramas together with them about them and we get them to take part in the drama themselves. So, [...] our theatre is a theatre for the people, by the people, with the people and of the people, if you like. That's our method because the people we work with are massively illiterate, illiterate in English, illiterate in education, so I want to tell their stories and we have to tell it in their own language, tell it in their own cultural setting, in their own cultural background. So that's what I mean by manufacturing plays. We go to them, we live with them and we make plays about them, with them, for them and we do it together, so it's theirs, ownership is theirs now. We are using all the cultural tools available for them to own the play, and of course, they are liking it, they are owning the play and they are responding. (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2016, personal communication)

Julius Spencer is following a similar trajectory. While his older plays were all scripted and the dialogue was written in English (with songs, however, in Krio and other indigenous languages), he now sees an advantage in improvisation, both for his current radio dramas and the stage-based theatre he plans to create when he retires.

I think that I'll probably do more work on improvised plays, creating a production through improvisation. I think that one can get a lot more out of actors and actresses in this country if they are involved in creating the drama. Everybody has a story to tell. They can bring different perspectives onto a subject matter than me just sitting by myself and writing. I have a feeling that when I get back into theatre, I'm going to do a lot more work on improvisation than scripted plays. (Spencer, J., theatre and media professional, 2016, personal communication)

Despite the tendency of developmental theatre to favour improvisation and a more organic development of plays, some developmental theatre is scripted in much detail, especially if the content is very technical and requires careful wording, as a theatre and media professional in Freetown explains:

Depending on the donor... if they are very particular about specific messages, then scenarios and improvisations might not quite work effectively, so I have to [...] think quite carefully. Often our style [...] involves song, dance and mime so I have to sit down and write it out. So, every line, every word is written out and then we rehearse with the group before they perform. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

The development of detailed scripts and their careful wording was particularly important during the Ebola epidemic, as it was crucial to pass on information as accurately as possible.

Another key factor impacting the aesthetics of current theatre productions are the limited facilities in terms of stages, lighting and sound systems. Playwrights are thus forced to creatively adapt to what is available to them and to develop the plays and their mise-en-scène accordingly; for example by building the story around one setting, using a storyteller to explain shifts in settings or playing a drum when transitioning from one scene to another.

Often the technique is to have a one set play. For us here we don't have the luxury of revolving stages and things like that, so you build a story around one setting. [...] If it requires too many settings then what I do is I resort to the bare stage storytelling type of drama where the line should indicate [what is happening] rather than the physical. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

Current developmental theatre in Sierra Leone often uses the storytelling technique to develop and deliver performances. Storytelling is widely recognised as a performance art in itself, and storytellers tend to encourage and sometimes even expect audiences to react and join in the development or at least the unfolding of the story. But in the case of Sierra Leone, storytelling is not simply a narrative art form; it also includes songs, dance, mime, mimicry and hand gestures to tell stories – it is 'essentially a traditional form of theatre' (Spencer, 1990, p. 189). Storytelling is thus very much part of general Sierra Leonean culture, but it is slowly being lost due to a decline in transmission from one generation to the next and due to its ephemerality, which Paul Brickhill describes as follows.

From an African viewpoint, the oral literary craft formally called 'story-telling' [...] is [...] embedded in everyday life. Its impermanence, improvisation, and as oral literature, its absence of authorship and copyright (in the Western sense), infused with the idioms and proverbs of local language, by definition imply that no one on the outside can fully comprehend its aesthetic transcendence, its beauty in terms of technique. It is a cultural expression that can only take place within a group of people, and it is lost – in a material sense – as soon as the group disperses, from the bus, the market, the house, the bar, or some kind of performance space. It then becomes memory, which is integral to all African art. (Brickhill, 2010, p. 117)

Storytelling theatre has a long tradition in Sierra Leone, from more prescribed and fixed narratives that are based on stories of origin, historical events and experiences of ancestors (called 'living spoken documents', Ngaboh-Smart, 1986, p. 9) to more fictitious narratives for entertainment (Spencer, 1990). This tradition, which is based on techniques of repetition, the principle of participation and other recurring aspects such as asking for permission to perform, has also impacted contemporary Sierra Leonean playwrights and practitioners in their specific aesthetic choices, even before the more recent focus on developmental theatre – building on, but adapting this heritage that they are rooted in, as one of them clarifies:

My techniques are purely rooted in the storytelling tradition that I saw when I was growing up. Participation. You know, asking about permission for me to perform my stories. [...] Techniques of repetition. [These techniques] are very important. So, I employ all of these. [...] There is a core way of storytelling, but I have adopted my own style. And that is what very many storytellers would do, they would always adapt their own style. And that style has to reflect me, it has to reflect who I am, what I believe in, it has to reflect that. Regardless of the many people that I have seen and learnt from. [...] Otherwise, I would not be true. Because to be a storyteller, you have to be true to be able to know your own story and tell your own story. So, everything that I am performing [...] comes from me genuinely, even though I have very many other teachings and influences from other people. But I have now carved out what is uniquely me. (Theatre professional, Interviewee #27, 2016, personal communication)

Storytelling thus also represents an important 'strategy for revisioning history in postcolonial theatre' (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996, p. 126) and '[revising] history in/through every performance by making the past 'speak' to the present (Gilbert and Tompkins, 1996, p. 127). In terms of the *mise-en-scène* of contemporary Krio theatre, using storytelling as the guiding technique can mean giving the storyteller several roles to play or choosing to employ storytelling in a Brechtian style to demystify the performance and focus the audience's attention on the message of the play. In some cases, the storytelling approach does not only guide the *mise-en-scène* but even the actual technique to develop plays, as the following quote outlines:

Generally, we use the storytelling technique. We put the issue on the table and sometimes just ask people [involved in the development of a play] to create a story out of it. I would have my own ideas, but just to keep them moving, I would give them 'You talk for a minute', and the next continues and the next... So, it is like one person telling a story using different mouths and different minds. We tended to unify our thinking because you listened to the first person and the story just progressed. (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #6, 2016, personal communication)

Julius Spencer was particularly impacted by Lele Gbomba, a renowned Mende storyteller, whose work was even published (Gbomba, 1987) and impacted research on Mende storytelling significantly (Cosentino, 1980), including Spencer's own writing on the matter (Spencer, 1990).

I think [Lele Gbomba] stood out above the others in acting ability. His ability to transform himself. His physical transformation. Apart from the use of costumes, he was able to transform himself. You watch him performing and you see a woman. You watch him performing and you see a chief. You watch him performing and you see a beggar. You watch him performing and you see a weak old man. He was able to use his body that way. At the time [I met him] he was quite elderly. [...] As far as I know, at the time, he didn't have anybody he was working with. He didn't have an apprentice. [...] He inspired me to use that storytelling style a bit more expansively. All my productions after that were in that style because I felt that I had found something authentically Sierran that one could use. (Spencer, J., theatre and media professional, 2016, personal communication)

Like many storytellers, Usifu Jalloh, a Sierra Leonean storyteller who is now mainly based in the UK, has developed his own storytelling style mixing different languages, music and dance in order to promote Sierra Leonean culture and its rich oral heritage, but also to promote a Sierra Leonean identity, as he emphasises below. This is of course not without its complications in a multi-ethnic nation such as Sierra Leone, as mentioned above.

How do we develop a Sierra Leonean identity if we do not validate our own stories?
And see how these stories relate to the contemporary world we are living in.
(Jalloh, U., theatre professional, 2016, personal communication)

As discussed in Chapter 2 and above, identities and cultural forms are continuously reconfigured and hybridised, increasingly more so as a consequence of intensified neoliberal and digital globalisation and its accelerated global flows. But these dynamics at the same time also lead to attempts to reaffirm and celebrate cultural 'traditions' and identities, searching for singularities, authenticity and 'true' autochthony. As a result of this dialectic of flow and closure, notions such as 'identity', 'tradition', 'authenticity' and 'autochthony' are highly politically charged, but also full of contradictions, tensions and ambiguities. For example, they have the potential to be used both as legitimation for marginalisation and exclusion *and* as a tool for people to assert their own cultural heritage, authority and place in history. They also exhibit a paradoxical combination of staggering plasticity and seemingly self-evident 'natural givens' (Geschiere and Nyamnjoh, 2001), which fuels debates about the politics of belonging and the dialectics between autochthonous and allochthonous cultural elements. But it is clearly impossible to identify a point of departure that defines this timeless authenticity (Mukhopadhyay, 2012), which would in turn inform a difference between autochthonous and allochthonous elements in absolute terms.

However, so-called 'traditional' performances, and arts in general, do celebrate and capitalise on this notion of 'authenticity' and 'autochthony' for political and identity-forming, but also commercial reasons. This means that while they may be turned into fetishized commodities to satisfy the curiosity of the general public, and the exotic desires of an international audience more specifically, their essentialism might also be employed in a strategic manner to highlight certain issues and support 'a grounded critique of differential relations of power' (Huggan, 2001, p. x).

While the following argument outlines reasons and techniques for introducing and hybridising 'autochthonous' and 'allochthonous' elements in contemporary Krio theatre, it should be read with the above discussed tensions and limitations in mind and the consciousness that autochthonous and allochthonous cultural elements and forms are not characterized by a rigid dichotomy. On the contrary, they are the product of a continuum of cultural flows, transformation and translation across localities, regions and national borders and are within themselves already inherently hybridised.

African theatre scholar Éliane Utudjian Saint-André suggests in her writings on theatre in Nigeria, Ghana and Sierra Leone that ‘the integration of traditional elements into modern African theatre is more subject to aesthetic and ethic purposes than religious or ethnic ones’ (Utudjian Saint-André, 2007, p. 810, my translation). This might be true – at least in the case of Sierra Leone – for the post-independence era, during which the focus lay on building a common Sierra Leonean identity and ‘traditional’ culture was at times critiqued for various reasons, as mentioned above. However, many interviewees for this research disagreed with this postulation. They highlighted that for them the use of ‘traditional’ or autochthonous elements and the ways these are inserted into a play often depend on their target audience, and that it is thus more of an ethnic choice, or at least both an aesthetic and an ethnic choice. This especially seems to be the case for developmental theatre, where specific communities and ethnic groups are targeted and the plays are made as relevant as possible to them by utilising autochthonous and culture-specific elements, such as particular dress styles and culture-specific idioms, but also by performing the whole play in the relevant ethnic language. However, the choice of language and linguistic manipulations is also heavily influenced by general language politics as well as by techniques to create a character or set the tone and scene for a play, as one of my interviewees explains:

Plays for entertainment [...] I write in English, but the development plays I write in Krio. Again, it’s interesting, you can think in Krio for example and then translate all in your mind and then you write in English. Sometimes you can think almost directly in English but when I want to capture the African-ness of my drama I don’t allow myself to think straight in English. I tell myself the story in Krio and then I write in English and the difference is huge. You feel this is Standard English but then you know it’s African. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

Sometimes the integration of autochthonous elements is also simply a practical choice. Some practitioners, for example, use a traditional song or drumming to attract people to the performance or use props from the communities they perform in rather than travelling across the whole country with their own props:

You use the technique that is most practical and economical. You cannot create a drama that will require you to use a lot of prop, travel all over the place... and you hope to create something that the audience out there will identify with because [...] they have to relate to it. So you have to think about what the group would do once they get permission to perform... they go out there and start drumming and then the dancers will dance and then people will start watching and once you have a sizeable crowd, the narrator will come and say, ‘Well people, we have a message here for you and this message is...’ and then maybe they deliver the message in a song so you have them hooked and the drama unfolds. It’s a combination of aesthetic, cultural, practical things. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

Existing literature cites stylisation, transposition, adaptation, and reinterpretation as key techniques to introduce autochthonous material into contemporary African theatre (e.g., Nwosu and Uchegbu, 2015; Utudjian Saint-André, 2007). It would go beyond the scope of this chapter to discuss the varying definitions of and nuances between these techniques in much detail (for example, what does ‘adaptation’ mean in the postcolonial context?) as well as the implications of who actually uses these techniques and in which circumstances (for example, is it an ‘autochthon’ introducing ‘autochthonous’ elements?) and what the latter signifies in terms of cultural appropriation. But the following outline shall help understand the different approaches and support the analysis of their presence in contemporary Krio theatre production.

Stylisation is often considered as the opposite of photographic realism, a turning towards the ‘naïve’, an aesthetic idealisation and a subordination of single elements in favour of the overall composition, such as in Expressionism and Cubism, but also as ‘a selection of elements which can be representative of concentrated reality’ (Saint-Denis, 2009, p. 67). In theatre, however, this can lead to simplification and superficiality.

For [the French actor, theatre director and drama theorist] Saint-Denis²⁵ the distinction between style and stylisation was essential. In contrast to the organic quality of style, he viewed stylisation as a specious attempt to update a play through adding superficial decorative elements that might, for example, change the drama’s era, but without illuminating the playwright’s ideas. (Saint-Denis, 2009, p. 55)

I would also argue that stylisation can entail dangers of essentialism and reductionism; potentially reinforced – following the French actor and director Charles Dullin’s²⁶ notion of stylisation – by a lack of sensibility not only in the *mise-en-scène*, but also in the actual performance.

In Dullin’s view, stylization often forces the actor to lose contact with life and with interior performance; it employs external artifices that move the actor’s performance away from the truth. Moreover, according to Dullin, stylization does not care about sensibility; transposition, on the contrary, ‘exalts’ sensibility. (Tian, 2018, p. 145)

Transposition in theatre – both in terms of content and form – is often linked to realism, but in a way that ‘the authentic is made theatrical; the real is transformed into poetic metaphor on stage [...] [and] it becomes more real than the real’ (Richardson, 2016, p. 309). Adaptations usually involve an updating of the original for current audiences, this means certain elements

²⁵ Michel Saint-Denis (1897-1971), Jacques Copeau’s nephew and disciple, significantly influenced the development of European theatre with his approach to actor training.

²⁶ Charles Dullin (1885-1949), also a student of Jacques Copeau’s and a prominent figure of French theatre in the early twentieth century, developed the theory of ‘theatre of transposition’, which was influenced by his experiences of East Asian theatre.

are relocated, translated and transformed. Reinterpretations are often linked to the concept of adaptation but involve a new or different interpretation, a rethinking of the original – as such they seem less constricted in developing a new creation.

The concepts and aesthetics of transposition and adaptation and their impact on a global intertextuality are more widely researched in literary and film studies (e.g., Dovey, 2002, 2009; Sanders, 2006) and theories of translation or text analysis (e.g., Milton, 2009) – where the former usually denotes a change in content, but the preservation of form, and the latter describes a change in form, but the preservation of content (Whittlesey, 2013). As such, a transposition could be, for example, a transfer of the content to a different culture, geography or time in comparison to the original, and an adaptation could also describe a shift to a different medium or art form. Although literature and film are obviously different art forms and media, these definitions do help thinking through techniques and reasons for introducing and hybridising autochthonous and allochthonous elements in theatre – not just on a formal level, but also on the level of the drama, the theatre text.

Current developmental theatre in Sierra Leone focuses on the ‘traditional’ (due to its audiences and the communities it targets, as mentioned above), and autochthonous elements of various ethnic groups, especially in the form of song, dance and music, thus predominate. This represents a good example of the hybridisation between the two publics discussed above, embodying different public realms: The ‘modern’, ‘civil’ forms of governance (in the form of NGOs who fund developmental theatre) make use of the ‘traditional’ and ‘primordial’ for their own purposes and advancing ‘glocal’ agendas.

While ‘adaptation stands out as one of the dominant and most influential dramatic techniques adopted by modern African dramatists for creation and recreation of literary works’ (Nwosu and Uchegbu, 2015, p. 33), transpositions and reinterpretations seem to dominate in terms of techniques to present autochthonous material in current developmental theatre in Sierra Leone. For example, if ‘new’ ‘traditional-style’ music is included (instead of historically established, already well-known songs), the form, style and rendering of these new elements allow audiences to relate to them and identify them as something they are familiar with. As per the definitions above, this technique can be classified as a transposition – making the authentic theatrical and preserving the form.

In developmental theatre, allochthonous elements (often equated with ‘Western’ elements in this context) are usually only introduced, if the theme or content of a play require it:

Most of the time we focus on the traditional because we take this to communities all over the country; unless the subject matter, the theme requires the Western [style] then we do it. Like sometimes we do rap songs, but it depends on the subject we want to put across. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

In terms of techniques to integrate allochthonous material, transpositions and adaptations seem to dominate, which are both inherently linked to the notion of hybridisation. It needs to be stressed again, however, that contemporary Krio theatre as a whole is already characterised by a fundamental hybridity and synthetic approach, as discussed in detail in Chapter 3 and above; for example by using European-style theatre techniques while focusing on Sierra Leonean content and integrating various art forms and genres, as in current university theatre productions or the occasional productions for entertainment (such as the melodramas in the East of Freetown or the performances as part of the recent Globe Theatre's tour of *Hamlet* at the British Council).

That's what we strive, that's what I strive for. To have a hybrid. I kind of go for fully professional Western type theatre, [but] the resources are not even there. Simple things like lighting or sound equipment, they are non-existent here. We have to use emotive material like drumming, dance to create mood and things like that. It has to be a hybrid. It has to be a hybrid, that's what I strive for in the type of content we get from [the students]. (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #5, 2016, personal communication)

All these hybrid forms inherently refer to the structure, function and theatricality of both autochthonous and allochthonous elements, and completely integrate indigenous forms' non-mimetic techniques, their collective creation processes (including active audience or community participation), their characteristics as total theatre (combining various art forms and genres) and their highly physical and improvisational acting style. Furthermore, Sierra Leone and especially Freetown (as the backdrop of many of these theatrical productions) is a hybrid in itself, a melting pot of many different elements of various 'traditional', 'Western' and diasporic cultures of both the past and present – all of which also impacts the aesthetics of theatre, as one of my interviewees highlights:

[The different elements that come together in a play are] a hybrid because the life we live now is mixed, it's a mixture of traditional and Western but we are still Africans and there are things that are still African about us. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

Existing hegemonic structures, however, do reinforce the dichotomy, constructed during and as a legacy of colonialism, between different forms of cultural expressions on the basis of their locations, such as the 'modern' versus the 'traditional', the 'global' versus the 'local' or the 'North' versus the 'South'. The value system attached to these categorisations is another expression of cultural hegemony and the remnants of colonial power structures, which seems to continue to influence even the understanding and approach of some theatre practitioners in Sierra Leone (as the quote below illustrates) and thus undermines the advancement of true hybrid productions – between various local influences and beyond.

I think that most people practicing theatre have had no exposure outside of Sierra Leone and their own environment. They are not in a position to break conventions or to consciously try to draw from other traditions. A lot of what they do is 'primitive'. If they are doing formal theatre, most of them will not even make any effort to bring in traditional forms. Those who are doing traditional forms will not make any effort to bring in Western forms. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2016, personal communication)

Many of my interviewees also interpreted technology as an allochthonous element, affecting the aesthetics and the techniques to develop a play, with technology being a significant trait of the typical 'Western theatre style', as it was often called by them. Technology in this sense relates mainly to the tools that support the production and mise-en-scène of a play, such as a stage that separates the performers from the audience (like a proscenium stage), stage design, sound and lighting. But technology that supports the wider dissemination of theatre, such as mass media like radio and TV, also affects its aesthetics, the techniques for the development of plays, structural principles as well as choices in terms of the introduction of autochthonous and allochthonous material and linguistic manipulations.

Although the analysis of radio dramas, which are very popular in Sierra Leone as mentioned above, is not at the core of this research, it is thus interesting to briefly contrast the development of radio dramas with that of live theatre performances, especially as many radio drama playwrights come from a live theatre background or switch between the two. Radio and TV obviously increase the reach of a play, making it more accessible for a wider audience base (especially illiterate population segments), and offer other advantages (such as the recording and preservation of a performance), but there are also limitations and challenges attached to them. The ownership of these media platforms affects programming and content production, the medium itself also shapes the content and its reception, and technical constraints further influence, and limit, aesthetics and artistic choices. For example, the specific format of radio dramas limits plays to a certain extent as it does not lend itself to many characters, which subsequently impacts the content (Musa, 1998). Also, radio dramas are obviously a language-based theatre, which increases the focus on language-related effects, such as the use of double-meanings or the exaggeration of ethnic accents (Conteh-Morgan, 2004). Furthermore, playwrights must adapt their general approach and write with their ears instead of their eyes, as one of my interviewees points out:

I have to switch off, if I am writing for radio, forget about the stage and everything... [I am] writing with my ears... and the advantage of radio is that it can be anywhere... anything you want to do... but then again, depending on the kind of story you want to do, you have to make it realistic as well, unless you want to write a fantasy story. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

Some radio dramas in Sierra Leone are developed – similarly to the ideas and principles behind TfD – in a more participatory manner in order to make the stories more relevant to their audiences' lives and realities.

It's not somebody who's sitting there just telling a story. [People need to know that] this is our own story. [...] It's about dealing with issues that people want to address. Also, not only highlighting the issues but [it is] also about finding solutions. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

Developmental theatre, whether it is live or on the radio, tends to be developed with certain target communities or ethnic groups in mind, as mentioned above. Similarly, other types of theatre, such as performances for 'pure entertainment', are also usually developed and adapted depending on the audience, as the quote below confirms:

[For international audiences] it's mainly storytelling, singing and dancing. Melodrama most of the times. If we want to do [full] plays, we go for the Sierra Leone communities, we go for the African communities. [...] We go for schools. In schools we do plays in English. (Theatre professional, Interviewee #3, 2016, personal communication)

If 'traditional' dances, stories or performances with masks – interestingly often termed 'cultural performances' in Sierra Leone – are commodified to be presented at hotels, for tourists or an international audience, they are 'sterilised' (Theatre professional, Interviewee #3, 2016, personal communication). This means that they are adapted in terms of their choreography, timing and performance techniques. Furthermore, a storyteller is often used to explain culture-specific elements to this 'uninitiated' audience (as the quote below and Figure 9 illustrate).

We prepare their mind, we use various techniques for them to understand [the performance], like storytelling which is part of our international features. [...] When there is an international audience [and] I want to tell a story in Krio, we prepare them. So, I [...] say [for example]: What we are about to tell you is a traditional folk story from Sierra Leone, it's about a rabbit. The rabbit is the human in our folk songs, in the stories most of the time. We are rabbits and a rabbit never loses, it is the main moral. [...] We prepare them, [...] we give them the introduction. [...] My companion will tell the story in Krio and then I will translate it in English [...]. In Sierra Leone before we tell you a story we have a call, I will say 'Eee' and you will say 'Aaa' and again 'Eee' [...] and then we start our story. [...] Storytelling is good [for international audiences] and dance is also universal. (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2016, personal communication)



Figure 9: A performance by the Freetong Players International in 2011 with two storytellers, one of them (Tutie Haffner in the front-right) telling the main story in Krio and the other (Charlie Haffner in the front-left) translating it into English (photo by the author)

This type of commodification, that disconnects performances from their historical and social context, does not only clear performances of their original meaning and create new meaning, but it also favours a focus on aesthetic over ethnic choices and interpretations when it comes to the development and mise-en-scène of a performance – leading to universalising tendencies and forms, as performance scholar Anna Scott argues:

People's corporeal productions dissolve when they are disconnected from their social and historical contexts and delivered into transnational entertainment flows. This disappearing act gives rise to 'unauthored' performances by creating a universal 'form' that obliterates the person-performer's specificity and agency. Deployments of certain colours or decisions to perform at a specific time become stylistic choices and are misinterpreted as mere by-products of the dance event. (Scott, 2001, pp. 108-109)

In summary, the aesthetics of contemporary Krio theatre are not only shaped by indigenous and colonial legacies, the global cultural flows accelerated by neoliberal globalisation, the commodification of culture and ICTs, but also by other factors, such as its audiences, other art forms and the general political economy of culture in Sierra Leone, which contributes to the current predominance of developmental theatre.

4.4 Conclusion

Contemporary Krio theatre is a hybrid of a number of different elements, sourced from various indigenous African and European theatre heritages, integrating cultural expressions such as instrumental music, singing, choreographies, gestures, masquerades, rituals, storytelling, dance, chants and spiritual symbols as well as 'modern' sound, light and visual effects. Using contemporary Krio theatre as a case study to analyse cultural production in the postcolony (and in particular in a state up until recently classified by 'the international community' as post-conflict), this chapter identified the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes and thus focused on the first part of my main research question, namely on the impact of the continuum of local and global flows on theatre aesthetics in Sierra Leone. This chapter also showed that theatre responds to macrocosmic processes through microcosmic translation and transformation, embedding its development in its local historical, cultural, social, political and economic context.

As a result of the reduced space for theatre in the cultural ecology of Sierra Leone since the 1990s – which is due to a number of reasons such as the country's political and economic instability and its civil war, but also the growing popularity of other art forms and media – as well as a result of the multi-layered consequences of the civil war, competing financial priorities and the influx of international aid money since the end of the civil war, theatre has become more easily recruited by the development industry and its development goals, agendas and strategies. Developmental theatre thus dominates the current theatre scene in Sierra Leone, and existing theatre practices, and generally artistic freedom, are circumscribed by the imposition of the present didactic and developmental agenda and by funders who prescribe narratives in relation to their own programmes and strategies, selling theatre as 'infotainment' (Bharucha, 2009). By both circumscribing and endorsing theatre through the power of its funding, the development industry occupies a complicated and dualist role vis-à-vis theatre and does not only affect its aesthetics in a narrower sense (such as its symbols, images and forms), but also in a wider Rancièrian sense, such as the relationships of theatre, including the perceptions of its role, functionality and who it is for.

However, despite the current focus on developmental theatre in Sierra Leone, there are a number of efforts to move beyond this circumscription of theatre and the narrow scope of developmental theatre; both by theatre practitioners and philanthropists, who fight for the development of a more independent, diverse and professional and a less instrumentalised cultural and creative sector as a whole. There are, for example, occasional non-developmental theatre performances in Freetown (at festivals, conferences, hotels or as part of the British Council's arts programme), performances of so-called melodrama (mainly in the East of Freetown), performances by university groups and some storytelling theatre. Besides these

initiatives, new digital media and technologies also play a significant role in the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone, as they create both new scope and new challenges for theatre. They offer different and easier modes of digital transmission and thus the potential for more exchange, change and hybridisation, while at the same time preserving and fixing an otherwise ephemeral cultural experience.

There are some tendencies that see 'authentic' Sierra Leonean culture and imagination threatened by these technologies as well as the increased exposure to global flows. As a result of this sense of cultural loss and a renewed search for identity and meaning, there seems to be a growing refocusing on the 'traditional' and the 'local' and increasing attempts to document, safeguard and reinvigorate Sierra Leone's cultural heritage (such as 'traditional' types of performances, instruments, languages and stories). Globalisation, however, does not only cause homogenising, but also heterogenising effects and hybridisation, which is clearly visible in Sierra Leonean theatre aesthetics. Strategies of 'glocalisation' (Robertson, 1992) and the translation and localisation of global symbols can be identified, for example, in the way plays are created and performed or even in the type of stories that are told.

In summary, the development of contemporary Krio theatre was and is not just shaped by its roots in indigenous theatre, the frictions and specific aesthetics introduced by colonialism (outlined in Chapter 3), the global cultural flows accelerated by neoliberal globalisation, the commodification of culture and ICTs, but also by local flows in terms of its audiences, other art forms and the general political economy of theatre in Sierra Leone, which has led to the development industry being the biggest paying commissioner of current theatre productions. While the focus, functionality and aesthetics of contemporary Krio theatre thus keep changing due to the social, political and economic context it evolves in and the steady incorporation and translation of new, also 'global', forms and media, contemporary Krio theatre continues to fulfil its original function as a means of communicating to local audiences by using Sierra Leone's lingua franca Krio as well as other ethnic languages. It also continues to fulfil some of the most fundamental functions of culture in general, carrying and transmitting memory and giving people the opportunity to make sense of and re-enact their life.

To revitalise the country's theatre sector and develop a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector in general, many of Sierra Leone's theatre practitioners, and other artists and creative entrepreneurs, increasingly call for a stronger and more suitable legal framework and proper enforcement thereof as well as structural, institutional and operational changes. A thriving, independent and diverse cultural and creative sector, supported by an effective infrastructure and independent funding, is crucial not only for the survival and future opportunities of individual artists and the stimulation of artistic quality and innovation, but also for the enhancement of a democratic, socially just and culturally pluralistic society. The next chapter will discuss this in more detail.

5. Glocal flows and the ecology of theatre in Sierra Leone

While Chapter 4 offered a micro-level analysis of contemporary Krio theatre and the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes, this chapter moves beyond aesthetics and theatre as an art form and focuses on the macro-level, the ecology of theatrical production in Sierra Leone. This chapter continues to analyse the political economy of culture in Sierra Leone and as such the cultural, social, political and economic factors and power relations that constitute and shape cultural production, distribution, consumption and regulation, but focuses on a different aspect, namely the second part of my main research question: How does the continuum of local and global flows, in particular within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems, impact the policy, structural and institutional context for theatre production in Sierra Leone?

Hence, Chapter 5 discusses the impact of cultural flows, local and global hegemonies and the more specific framework of the global creative economy, international development paradigms and international cultural relations on the policy, structural and institutional context for cultural production in the postcolony. It also locates both the enabling potential and possible threats of governance structures, legal frameworks and infrastructure for viable and sustainable CCIs in the postcolony; especially within the context of a post-conflict state, the bifurcation of the state and the two publics, intellectual property rights and copyright laws as well as financing mechanisms and educational opportunities. This chapter thus envisages how theatre as a form of cultural production and as a cultural industry is influenced by both local and global policies, structures and institutions. This leads as well to questions about governmentality, of local institutions and agents of power as well as of international organisations and their strategies.

As highlighted throughout the previous chapters, Sierra Leone had a vibrant and productive arts and in particular theatre scene between the late 1960s and the 1980s, which, however, experienced a steady decline during the 1990s due to political and economic instability, mass emigration, the lack of venues and especially due to the country's civil war. Like in other sectors, institutions, governance structures and resources within Sierra Leone's CCIs were left extremely fragile after the war and were further affected by the country's health and economic crisis following the Ebola epidemic between 2014 and 2016. The full impact of the 2020 / 2021 Covid-19 pandemic is still difficult to assess at the time of writing, but it is probable that it will lead again to many competing demands on resources.

Many of the issues that Sierra Leonean theatre faces, especially at the macro-level, thus also apply to the CCIs more widely. The following chapter therefore analyses the policy, legislative, structural and institutional framework for Sierra Leonean CCIs more broadly and puts certain findings into context by providing examples from other African countries to allow

a linking of particular Sierra Leonean findings to the larger debate on contemporary local cultural production within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems.

5.1 Policy and legislative context for cultural and creative industries in Sierra Leone

5.1.1 Introduction

Before analysing the policy context for CCIs in Sierra Leone in the late 2010s and the beginning of the 2020s, and in particular Sierra Leone's *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* (ratified in 2013), it is useful to briefly contextualise this analysis by providing a historical perspective on the country's public discourse on and governance of culture as well as their development within the context of local and global flows over time.

The Constitution of Sierra Leone from 1991 (which re-established a multi-party system after Siaka Stevens' one-party system) is committed to the promotion, protection and development of the country's culture and heritage, and according to Section 12 the government should:

- a. promote Sierra Leonean culture such as music, art, dance, science, philosophy, education and traditional medicine which is compatible with national development;²⁷
 - b. recognize traditional Sierra Leonean institutions compatible with national development;
 - c. protect and enhance the cultures of Sierra Leone; and
 - d. facilitate the provision of funds for the development of culture in Sierra Leone
- (Government of Sierra Leone, 1991, p. 9).

But until the ratification of the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* in 2013, Sierra Leone did not have a formal cultural policy. In 1978 the historian Arthur Abraham (a Lecturer at Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone) conducted a study on cultural policy in Sierra Leone, commissioned by UNESCO, which was then published as *Cultural Policy in Sierra Leone* (Abraham, 1978). The Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs later laid claim to this study, 'describing it as the first cultural policy prepared by the Ministry' (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 61). Among a number of crucial recommendations, Abraham's report highlighted as a starting point the need for a nation-wide survey to identify the main cultural resources of Sierra Leone and map historical, religious, natural, artistic and sociological aspects of Sierra Leone's diverse cultures. This mapping, however, was never carried out. Hence, instead of an effective 'cultural policy', a 'politics of culture', a form of

²⁷ It is not outlined what exactly is 'compatible with national development' and who decides that, but I presume this is to be understood in the context of 'traditional' cultural practices (for example by secret societies) that disadvantage or endanger certain segments of society, in particular children and women (such as FGM).

instrumentalisation of cultural production to support nationalist politics and represent the state, was in place (Mbaye, 2013, p. 255).

Sierra Leone is signatory to some international standard-setting instruments and declarations pertaining to culture, such as the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights;²⁸ the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ratified in 1996); the 1972 UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and National Heritage (ratified in 2005); the 1976 Cultural Charter for Africa (which, however, has been superseded by the 2006 African Union Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, which has not been signed yet by Sierra Leone); the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (ratified in 1983); the 1989 Declaration by the ACP States on return or restitution of cultural property (signed in 1989); and the 2000 partnership agreement between ACP Member States and the European Community (signed in 2000), which also includes a declaration on ACP cultural heritage and on the return or restitution of cultural property.

There are, however, a number of international conventions on culture that have not yet been ratified; such as the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, the 1970 UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, the 2003 UNESCO Convention on Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the 2005 UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions. It is not entirely clear why these conventions have not been ratified by Sierra Leone but given that they are international treaties that require states to ensure that their national laws and practices are compatible with the provisions of the treaties, it is possible that the delay in ratifying some of these conventions is linked to existing gaps in Sierra Leonean legislation (more on this below). However, it also highlights the low priority of culture within both the public discourse and governance in Sierra Leone over decades.

This is still reflected, for example, in recent governments' poverty reduction strategy papers and national development plans. Both most recent governments (the APC government under President Ernest Bai Koroma from 2007 to 2018 and the current SLPP government under President Julius Maada Bio in power since 2018) only mention arts or culture in their strategic plans as part of their objectives for developing the tourism industry in Sierra Leone. The APC's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper *An Agenda for Change* (2008-2012) only mentions 'arts' and 'culture' once as part of the country's potential for developing tourism

²⁸ It was not possible to verify when Sierra Leone ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, but as it was adopted by the UK at a time when Sierra Leone was still a British colony, it is probable that it just continued to automatically apply in Sierra Leone after independence. Section 5.1.3 will explain this further.

(Government of Sierra Leone, 2008, p. 137) and its follow-up *Agenda for Prosperity* (2013-2018) does not mention 'culture' at all and only mentions 'arts' once, namely in the context of '[constructing] Arts and Crafts Centres to facilitate marketing of locally produced handicrafts' (Government of Sierra Leone, 2013a, p. 38). While the current SLPP government's *Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023* prides itself for representing a shift 'from the traditional Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper model of orienting planning to people-centred, long-term development thinking in line with regional (African Union) and global (Sustainable Development Goals) planning perspectives' (Government of Sierra Leone, 2019a, p. ii), it also only mentions 'culture' and 'art' once each, in the context of '[supporting] local entrepreneurs to promote tourism-based activities' (Government of Sierra Leone, 2019a, p. 80).

The SLPP's *Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023*, the current blueprint for development and 'growth' in Sierra Leone, aims at achieving middle-income status and sustainable development for the country 'in the not too distant future' (Government of Sierra Leone, 2019a, p. i) and to improve people's lives through education, inclusive growth, and building a resilient economy.²⁹ This, however, cannot take place in a vacuum, as 'development' is always also linked to cultural practices and identities as well as a sense of belonging.

The fact that the conventions mentioned above have not yet been ratified does not only call subsequent governments' commitment to culture into question (such as the commitment to safeguarding intangible heritage and promoting cultural diversity), it also limits civil society's possibilities to hold the government accountable for not setting up and implementing a framework that would support, for example, the safeguarding of intangible heritage, such as indigenous theatre, and the development of the CCIs. Furthermore, ratification of such international conventions and treaties would also provide further opportunities for international cultural cooperation and partnerships and for Sierra Leone to reassert its position within the international community, its discourses and practices.

As discussed in Chapter 2, not only the CCIs themselves are growing rapidly, but also the discourse on them; with the notion of 'creative economy for development' often introduced as the logical succession to previous 'culture and development' discourses (De Beukelaer, 2015). However, 'culture' and 'development' are complex concepts whose meaning have changed significantly over time. Different understandings of their relationship, generally marked as 'culture and development', and the introduction of other concepts to this relationship (such as 'creative industries' and 'creative economy') make the debate even more

²⁹ In order to achieve this, the current government identified the following key policy clusters: (1.) human capital development; (2.) economic diversification; (3.) infrastructure and economic competitiveness; (4.) governance and accountability for results; (5.) empowering women, children and persons with disability; (6.) youth employment, sports and migration; and (7.) addressing vulnerabilities and building resilience (Government of Sierra Leone, 2019a).

complex and at times also blur it. Furthermore, there are obviously also local variants to the notions of 'culture', 'development' and 'creative economy' and the understanding of their relationship.

But as discourses frame both problems and their possible solutions, the production and reproduction of discourses create meaning and a notion of 'the truth'. As such, discourses can become 'institutionalised' and live on in policies, organisational practices as well as hegemonic ways of thinking (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, pp. 94-95). It has been argued that the current debate about 'culture and development' in the form of the creative economy discourse is an example of such a discourse, as it is unequally impacted by global flows from the Global North and its knowledge systems. The latter undermine the epistemological diversity of the world (De Sousa Santos et al., 2007), colonise discourses in the Global South, invalidate their understanding of what already exists locally (e.g., how cultural expressions are created, distributed, consumed and regulated) and limit their ability to find locally grown answers to local challenges:

The discourse of the creative economy is contrarily colonizing the cultural imagery, primarily through the perceived orthodoxy of the conditions for creation and circulation, rather than through the influx of cultural expressions, which is crucial in the cultural imperialism thesis (Tomlinson 1991). Critical development scholars argue that such a foreign imaginary is not wanted or needed as valid local knowledge (systems) exist (Shizha and Abdi 2014, 3). (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 129)

De Beukelaer (2012, 2015) also argues that the current global creative economy discourse is influenced by Eurocentric universal development and modernisation thinking, which was common in early development theory and practice and focuses on economic progress, seeking to achieve some universal type of growth and development trajectory while ignoring specific histories and contexts – which in itself highlights important postcolonial issues and tensions. The role of international institutions in promoting this global creative economy discourse (such as the UN declaring 2021 the 'International Year of Creative Economy for Sustainable Development') further underlines these postcolonial issues and tensions and emphasises the power relations and hegemonies within which these international organisations are situated:

The main drivers of the global creative economy debate are policies and reports from international organizations, which in turn draw on the work of creative consultancies that travel the world to 'do a Florida thing' (McGuigan 2009), using the influential but flawed work of Richard Florida.³⁰ At the same time, technical

³⁰ Richard Florida, a US American urban studies theorist, postulated in the 2000s through his writings, such as *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002), *Cities and the Creative Class* (2004) and *The Flight of the Creative Class* (2005), that a new or emerging 'creative class' is a key driver for economic growth through creativity and innovation and thus for economic development in post-industrial cities. This significantly influenced theories of and approaches to placemaking and urban regeneration. His thesis

support from international organizations like UNESCO, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) and the British Council (BC), also work primarily within their respective logic when advising ministries and NGOs on the adoption and implementation of the creative economy discourse. (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 22)

Furthermore, the global popularity of the creative economy discourse highlights the impact of neoliberal globalisation on cultural policies world-wide (McGuigan, 2005). The current global creative economy discourse thus does not only dominate the cultural imagery, but also the concepts, language and strategies used to discuss, manage and regulate cultural production, which leads to the use of concepts, language and strategies that may not be suitable or relevant for a specific locale or may not even be fully understood in its context.

In Sierra Leone, the influence of this hegemonic thinking and the global institutionalisation of the discourse on 'culture and development' and the 'creative industries' is clearly visible in the concepts, language and strategies employed in the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* (which will be analysed in the next section) and, more generally, by the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and its officials. However, Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp (2015) have also highlighted contradictions and tensions between the global discourse on 'culture and development' and its actual application in Sierra Leone, illustrated by examples such as the highly popular masquerades (which are dominated by secret societies) and Freetown's annual lantern parade, both of which have been described in Chapter 3:

On the one hand we can see how the Ministry leads attempts to reinvent cultural phenomena such that they accord with the 'ethically functional' model of culture manifest in [UNESCO's] *Our Creative Diversity* report or Sierra Leone's own draft cultural policy [at the time of their writing the 2013 Cultural Policy had not yet been ratified]. Dangerous, boisterous and politically charged events [such as the lantern parades and masquerades] must therefore be sanitized and secularized, depoliticized and commoditized. On the other hand, it is evident that such efforts, which make visible the seeming power of global discursive flows, encounter local 'frictions' (Tsing 2005), which frustrate the translation of discourse into practice, disrupt globalizing processes, and complicate simple models of power disparities. (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 121)

Furthermore, the move from the focus on 'culture and development' – in the sense of a school of thought in development studies that focuses more on the anthropological notion of culture (Nederveen Pieterse, 2010), that is on culture as 'a way of life', and in the sense of using cultural 'traditions' and expressions to support the delivery of development initiatives

and its application in urban and creative city policies have, however, been widely criticised for being elitist, enhancing gentrification and property speculation and thus reinforcing social and economic inequalities (e.g., Evans, 2009; Montgomery, 2005; Oakley, 2009; Peck, 2005). In a more recent book, *The New Urban Crisis: How Our Cities Are Increasing Inequality, Deepening Segregation, and Failing the Middle Class – and What We Can Do About It* (2017), Florida seeks to address some of these criticisms and the challenges and contradictions that come with this type of urban growth.

and their agendas – to the notion of ‘creative industries’ (as stand-alone drivers of development) happened later in Sierra Leone than in other countries; both in practice and in the general discourse. The 1990s, when the creative industries discourse started to emerge globally (emanating mainly from the UK, Australia and Canada), were in Sierra Leone dominated by its civil war and the 2000s, when the concept of the ‘creative economy’ appeared, saw Sierra Leone, in general, and development agents, in particular, concentrating on post-conflict recovery.

After the war, in the 2000s, both discourse and practice in Sierra Leone thus still focused on ‘culture and development’, in the sense of seeking to follow a ‘culture-sensitive’ approach to development and using cultural instruments and expressions, especially theatre, for reconciliation, social cohesion and nation-building. The instrumentalisation of cultural expressions for social benefits and to support specific development agendas still continues (often in the form of ‘infotainments’), as discussed in Chapter 4. But the creative industries discourse, focusing on creative entrepreneurs, the economic potential of creative expressions and the enhancement of creativity and innovation, seems to gain more and more interest and support since the 2010s. Interventions such as the British Council’s Creative Economy programme (which will be discussed in more detail in Section 5.3.3 below) boost this discourse further. The *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* is also based on this twofold notion of the relationship between ‘culture’ and ‘development’, seeking to support both ‘culture-sensitive’ development and the promotion of culture and the CCIs for development:

Culture should be a central component of Sierra Leone’s development strategies in a double sense. On the one hand, the strategies must be sensitive to the cultural roots of the society, to the basic shared values, attitudes, beliefs and customs; on the other, they must include as a goal the development of culture itself, the stimulation, development and expansion of creativity and cultural preservation and promotion. (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 76-77)

But other concepts related to the global creative economy discourse, such as ‘global city’ (Sassen, 1991), ‘creative city’ (Landry, 2000) or ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002) have not yet permeated the discourse in Sierra Leone. Hence, as the ‘creative industries’ or ‘creative economy’ discourse is relatively new in Sierra Leone and as it has not been translated into practice yet (at least not systematically and strategically), there is a chance for the country to either make this global discourse and its local implementation more meaningful and useful for the specific Sierra Leonean context or to strategically decide to abandon it and replace it with a more suitable alternative. This could be achieved by not subscribing to the normative aspects of the global creative economy discourse and its ‘best practice’ implementation strategies (often guided by neoliberal undertones), but by – based on a holistic and historicising understanding (in Bayart’s sense, but also from a political economy perspective)

– building upon what already exists and developing both a theoretical and practical framework that works best for the local context and the complex relationship between culture and development in the postcolony. This could also avoid the urban / rural divide often exacerbated by the creative economy, especially in the Global South (Joffe, 2013).

The 2013 Creative Economy report, even though it can be considered to be part of the normative global discourse on the creative economy, outlines four sets of useful questions for developing cultural policies, strategies and indicators – questions relating to (1) the current status quo, resources and capacities of the sector, (2) its potential and strengths, (3) the problems that might be addressed through cultural and creative industries development, and (4) appropriate indicators of success (UNESCO and UNDP, 2013, p. 124). De Beukelaer (2015, p. 151) adds a fifth set of questions to these to highlight the importance of '[balancing] the social, symbolic and economic roles of culture in society': What kind of cultural industries should be developed? How should formal and informal, for-profit and not-for-profit, public and private, exclusive and inclusive initiatives be balanced? Thinking through these questions and potential answers may help to identify the policy, structural, institutional and operational changes needed to support the development of a more diverse and independent cultural and creative sector in Sierra Leone, and beyond.

5.1.2 The Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs and the National Cultural Policy

Based on Sierra Leone's constitution and its legal obligations, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (MTC) is the main public body tasked with preserving, protecting and promoting Sierra Leonean culture. However, in practice the responsibilities of formulation, execution and implementation of policies and other strategies relevant to culture at national level are scattered between the MTC and a long list of other ministries that carry culture and culture related agendas in their portfolio (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013): The Ministry of Information and Communications (responsible for, for example, ensuring that a certain percentage of airtime is allocated to local content); the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (responsible for, for example, facilitating the integration of cultural issues into educational policies and programmes as well as the provision of training for cultural practitioners at tertiary level); the Ministry of Youth Affairs (responsible for establishing youth programmes that enhance the appreciation of local culture); the Ministry of Sports (responsible for promoting 'traditional' sports and games); the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development (responsible, for example, for mainstreaming culture into national development policies, ensuring the assessment of the cultural impact of all development activities and supporting funding and training opportunities for culture); the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (responsible, for example, for ensuring the integration of traditional healthcare

into the national healthcare system and incorporating culturally-sensitive communication methods in public health campaigns); the Ministry of Trade and Industry (responsible for supporting the development of cottage industries); the Ministry of Finance (responsible for providing financial support to cultural programmes and projects and setting up a tax relief for donations to the arts); the Ministry of Lands, Country Planning and Environment (responsible, for example, for the protection of cultural and natural heritage and the establishment of eco-museums at community level); the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs (responsible for minimising the negative impact of 'harmful traditional practices' and promoting 'positive traditional institutions and values'); the Ministry of Justice (responsible for formulating and revising laws for the effective preservation, protection and promotion of culture, ensuring the ratification of relevant international instruments and declarations on culture and establishing appropriate enforcement mechanisms for the Copyright Act); the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (responsible, for example, for promoting traditional knowledge in agriculture); and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (promoting cultural cooperation and Sierra Leone's identity, image and values abroad and facilitating international exchange programmes for artists and cultural practitioners).

All the above-mentioned ministries and their culture-related agendas operate according to different notions of 'culture', somewhere along the spectrum between culture as a 'way of life', 'culture-sensitive' development and the promotion of culture and the CCIs for development. Although not all the ministries mentioned above carry responsibilities that are directly relevant for the development of the CCIs as such (for example, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs), the large number of institutions involved in matters pertaining to the ecology of cultural production makes the coordination of policy implementation and sector development – and consequently effective and meaningful changes and the holistic development of the CCIs – more difficult to achieve.

Furthermore, the MTC does or can only provide very little support for the preservation, protection and promotion of culture, and the CCIs more specifically, as it has for decades been chronically under-resourced as a result of not ranking very high in subsequent governments' priorities. For example, in 2015 the MTC's recurrent budget was 1.7 billion Leones (£119,245), 0.2% of the government's total recurrent budget, of which only 527 million Leones (£36,938) went to the Directorate of Culture (Government of Sierra Leone, 2013b). The ministry's recurrent budget for 2020 was more than double compared to the 2015 budget (3.8 billion Leones, equalling £266,548), but still only represented 0.2% of the total recurrent budget (Government of Sierra Leone, 2019b). Government priorities and budgets have instead, especially since the end of the civil war, focused on other policy areas such as health, education, infrastructure, legal institutions and natural resource management to 'develop' the country. While these are of course crucial policy areas, this focused approach has been

argued to be short-sighted and only a 'quick fix', as targeting a small number of crucial institutions and ministries as part of national development plans and programmes 'leaves other ministries and departments in its wake, leading to partial reform or the creation of "liberal bubbles"' (Harris, 2013, p. 154).

The fact that the MTC had no formal policy to work with until 2013, as mentioned above, further limited and complicated the Ministry's mandate. A review by the Public Sector Reform Unit in 2010 of the management and functions of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs also cited 'the ineffectiveness of the existing legislation [alongside inadequate resource and budget allocation and limited professional capacity] as one of the factors contributing to the Ministry's inability to function according to its constitutional mandate and strategic responsibility' (Basu and Sam, 2016, p. 6).

A new national cultural policy was to address these issues, but it took over a decade for it to finally be in place. Already in 1999 attempts were made to develop a new cultural policy and in 2006 a draft (which was supported by many key figures within the sector) was finally presented to the Attorney General, but the new *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* was only ratified by Parliament in 2013. Strengthening the legislative framework for culture by ratifying the new cultural policy and reviewing the Monuments and Relics Act of 1967 (more on the latter in Section 5.1.3) were highlighted in 2015 by Foday Jalloh, the Director of Culture at the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, as part of their post-Ebola development strategy; alongside offering technical expertise to support the showcasing of Sierra Leone's artefacts and school and community outreach programmes by museums to teach children and communities the importance of Sierra Leone's culture and its museums (AllAfrica, 2015).

The 2013 Cultural Policy's mission, as stated in the policy document, is to 'preserve, protect and promote cultural diversity, with a view to reviving and strengthening national consciousness, understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage and artistic creativity, and enhance its contribution to poverty reduction and overall national development' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 2). Accordingly, its high-level aims focus on enriching Sierra Leone's national identity, strengthening cultural understanding and appreciation of the arts and incorporating culture into development frameworks to contribute to poverty alleviation and stimulate creativity to improve the quality of life of Sierra Leoneans (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 3). The policy also highlights the importance of reviving the cultural life at community level 'as a way of encouraging intercultural dialogue and understanding among the people' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 4) and 'as a way of promoting peaceful and durable reconciliation' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 93).

The *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone 2013* thus instrumentalises 'culture' on three levels: (1) to inspire and enhance a national identity, especially for younger generations, but

also for a state whose identity and image have been largely affected by the civil war of the 1990s; (2) to promote intercultural, interethnic and interreligious dialogue and enhance social cohesion; (3) to contribute to a wider agenda of national development and poverty alleviation. There are certainly a number of reasons to be critical of this type of instrumentalisation, as discussed throughout the previous chapters, because it can lead, for example, to essentialism, patrimonialisation, the misrepresentation and promotion of distinct ethnic groups and delimited localities, the oversimplification and stereotyping of cultural expressions as well as the limiting focus on culture's economic value. However, it is important to note as well that this policy and its approach more widely – if taken seriously and implemented well – also highlight culture's intrinsic values and overall importance and support the growth of an ecology that is beneficial to local cultural production. In terms of theatre, the policy clearly states that the sector – despite its importance to Sierra Leonean cultural life – is constrained by the lack of venues, professional training, resources and adequate copyright enforcement (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 59-62).

At this point it is also useful to remember, as discussed in Chapter 2, that the dichotomy between culture's intrinsic and instrumental values is misleading as intrinsic values are situated at the root of all other values (Guest, 2002) and that from a postcolonial standpoint, and especially within the context of Africa, the distinction between culture's intrinsic and instrumental values is generally problematic. This is because the concept of art for art's sake (which defies any form of instrumentalism) has risen within a Eurocentric perspective on artistic production, and because indigenous arts and artists have many different functions – and by extension impacts and values – in society at the same time, including entertaining, educational, moral and utilitarian functions (Achebe, 1975; Senghor, 1974). Furthermore, it is important to remember the duplicity of culture and its potential to be a source of resistance despite attempts to instrumentalise or commodify culture and thus control it in a hegemonic sense (e.g., Caves, 2000; Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Gilroy, 1992; Peterson, 1990; Ryan, 1992).

While the 2013 Cultural Policy's mission and high-level aims do not specifically mention the development of the CCIs or the creative economy, the more detailed strategic objectives also include the provision of infrastructure and resources to protect cultural heritage, the establishment of structures to support creative industries and the set-up of effective copyright enforcement mechanisms (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 3-5). These structural and legal improvements would obviously also enhance the development of the ecology of culture as a whole, even if this is not explicitly mentioned as part of the policy's mission.

The policy also highlights the need for drawing up a 'national inventory of the country's different forms of cultural expression' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 94) and '[undertaking] nation-wide research into Sierra Leone's traditional crafts

industry, traditional skills and knowledge, folklore, music and dance' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 97) as a starting point for the preservation of Sierra Leone's heritage. However, the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* still has not been implemented – to the frustration of many of my interviewees.

I don't believe the ministry was working with any policy [before the ratification of the new policy in 2013]. And since the current policy came into effect, they don't seem to be working with it either. There doesn't seem to be any effort to implement what is in the policy. Every minister dreams up what they think should be done and try to implement it sometimes with the support of the technical staff, sometimes against the advice of the technical staff. There really has been no structured approach to cultural issues in Sierra Leone for a long time.
(Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2020, personal communication)

Within the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, the Directorate of Culture oversees the ministry's responsibilities and interests relating to culture. It is not clearly communicated, however, what this notion of 'culture' entails; neither in the 2013 Cultural Policy nor on the MTC's website. The published copy of the 2013 Cultural Policy even leaves Section 1.3 on the definition of culture blank, showing no text at all under this section (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 41; for reference a copy of the page can be viewed in Appendix C). While this probably happened by mistake, one cannot help but interpret this as quite a symbolic and telling omission. Furthermore, the 2013 Cultural Policy does not clearly communicate the government's notion of the CCIs although 'cultural enterprises and creative industries' are among the fourteen key policy areas (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 95-100). Its definitions are imprecise and the terms 'cultural industries' and 'creative industries' are subsequently used interchangeably. While the policy document refers to the growing knowledge economies, it does not mention the concept of the 'creative economy'.

The 2013 Cultural Policy refers to a very wide range of cultural forms and expressions – from 'community life' (and its festivals and ceremonies), 'language', 'folklore', 'cultural heritage' (including traditional knowledge, religion, traditional cultural institutions, museums and monuments) to 'fine arts', 'performing arts' (which include theatre, dance and music), 'film' and even 'sport'. This creates the need for further policy distinctions and strategies, 'given the different responses demanded by these very different areas of activity' (Matarasso and Landry, 1999, p. 12). But despite its broad understanding of culture, the focus of the 2013 Cultural Policy seems to lie on the country's cultural heritage, folklore and various expressions of 'tradition' and their revival (including the aim to preserve 'authentic' forms of performance). Several of my interviewees also argue that the definition and understanding of 'culture' is fragmented in Sierra Leone and often serves as an imagination of the past, associated with 'tradition', heritage, indigenous cultural expressions and a 'traditional' way of life.

As discussed throughout the previous chapters, the association and common equation of 'culture' with 'tradition' or 'the authentic', however, raises a number of issues, both in terms of theory and practice; such as constructing and fixing a past that has never existed as such as well as turning 'tradition' or 'the authentic' into a fetishized commodity (which happened, for example, to the performances of the National Dance Troupe, as mentioned in Chapter 3). Furthermore, 'culture' obviously does not only refer to the past and history, but also to contemporary types and forms of expression which contribute to the living and ever evolving identities of people and nations as well as to the CCIs.

These different notions of 'culture', but also the intrinsic relationship between 'traditional' cultural expressions and productions and the contemporary CCIs, represent a key challenge for the adequate development of cultural policies and legal frameworks; especially in 'developing' countries where 'domestic creative industries [...] are still predominantly sourced from traditional culture' (Cunningham et al., 2008, p. 69). It is often believed, as seems to be the case in Sierra Leone too, that 'traditional culture' and heritage, such as indigenous theatre, need to be protected to support the development of the CCIs. However, while 'local' cultures and heritages are the base for many creative activities (for example in terms of inspiration or skills) and certainly need to be protected, the CCIs need different policy interventions and different types of support and protection compared to 'traditional' cultural heritage organisations and institutions. Cultural policies world-wide have for long concentrated on cultural and natural heritage, the conservation and promotion of this heritage (including the promotion of 'traditional' arts and crafts) and on cultural tourism linked to this heritage. The development of the CCIs, however, necessitates a shift from this 'heritage cultural policy' to a wider array of strategies and policies that are more systemic and strategic, focusing on the whole value chain including support activities. This shift also emphasises a focus on not only outputs and products, but also on processes, financing, training and employment, thus on the whole ecology of culture. Hence, while the cultural heritage sector is often based on a grant-giving scheme, the CCIs (which are mainly driven by micro, small and medium enterprises) need different ways of governmental and public support, such as capital loans or tax abatements and access to business expertise.

However, cultural policy should of course provide for, protect and promote the whole range of cultural expressions, products and services that exist across society, and 'the popularity of the creative economy discourse [and of the creative industries in recent development discourses] should not eclipse the range of cultural and creative activities that will never be economically viable' (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 127). The shift from grant-giving 'heritage cultural policies' also raises questions and a necessary debate about the regulation and control of the CCIs, the requirement of bodies to oversee the different industries and the suitable and appropriate role of the state and public policy within these developments (Pratt,

2004). However, answers to these questions and strategies to support the whole range of existing cultural expressions will certainly not be the same globally and of course also not be the same across Africa. On the contrary, to avoid simply subscribing to global normative discourses and their implementation strategies, answers to these questions, especially when they lead to policy formulation, need to be informed and guided by the local cultural practitioners and indigenous communities who will be primarily affected by such a policy, as argued for not only by the practitioners and communities themselves, but also by activists and scholars such as Rustom Bharucha:

While it could be argued that a vast body of creative practices in the 'South' are no longer as resilient [...] – and therefore, a policy for their preservation and the income generation of their custodians becomes mandatory – it is necessary to remember [...] that the articulation of such a policy should come from the communities themselves. (Bharucha, 2010, p. 33)

In Sierra Leone, this does not seem to be the case and culture seems to be mainly discussed at policy level in relation to certain aspects of national governmentality, such as supporting nation and identity-building as well as national development agendas and poverty alleviation, especially since the end of the civil war, as outlined above. Within the latter context, culture is often linked to and considered an important vehicle for tourism (for example, by showcasing indigenous performances, as well as local cuisine, craft, music and heritage). While in the 1980s Sierra Leone was mainly branded as an exclusive sun, sea and sand or 'beach and island-based discovery' (World Bank, 2017, p. 4) destination, since the 2010s ecotourism (including locations in the hinterland, beyond the country's beautiful beaches) and culture (especially in the form of national heritage sites and 'traditional' cultural expressions, such as performances with masked devils) also feature more prominently in the discourse on tourism.

Globally, cultural tourism is a fast-growing market, geared towards learning about diverse cultures, experiencing special local sites and promoting international cultural exchange. As such, the cultural tourism industry includes a comprehensive typology of cultural sites, products and experiences; from heritage sites, performing arts venues, visual arts, festivals and special events, religious sites, rural destinations (such as eco-museums), indigenous 'traditions' (including performances), crafts and contemporary popular culture expressions (such as fashion, media and design) to language acquisition, gastronomy, industry and commerce (such as factory visits, mines, breweries and distilleries) and special interest activities such as painting, weaving or photography (Smith, 2003). Theatre tourism plays an important part not only in this fast-growing market but also in the general branding of cities, such as London or New York City (Bennett, 2005).

Although the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone 2013* also celebrates culture as a major vehicle for tourism development, it acknowledges that tourism can have both positive and negative effects on communities; such as employment and income generation on the one hand and ‘the erosion of moral values’ (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 118) on the other. The policy therefore highlights the need to strike a ‘reasonable balance between the benefits of the [tourism] industry and the real or potential negative effects’ (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 118).

At an institutional level, the linking of culture to tourism is reflected in the linking of tourism and cultural affairs in the same ministry. The Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs’ vision, as stated on its website, also suggests a focus on tourism within the ministry:

The ministry of tourism and culture wish to transform Sierra Leone tourism ‘home of hospitality’ into one of the most attractive tourists and cultural destinations in the world. To provide quality products, services, and facilities with good value for money, positioning Sierra Leone as a competitive, hospitable, quality and environmentally friendly destination while maximizing the benefits from tourism for the government, local communities and investors. (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2020a)

The importance of tourism in the wider Sierra Leonean discourse on national development is also highlighted by various donor-funded programmes to develop a profitable tourism industry (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015) and in the current government’s *National Development Plan 2019-2023*, where revitalising the tourism industry is one of the key areas in the policy cluster on economic diversification and promoting growth.

In practice, tourism – at least in the sense of international tourist arrivals – has been growing steadily since the 2010s (apart from a dip in arrivals during the Ebola epidemic and a presumed³¹ dip as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic) with an average annual growth of 5 percent over the last 10 years (UNWTO, 2021). The absolute number of international arrivals is, however, still relatively low (in 2018, for example, Sierra Leone had around 100,000 arrivals; UNWTO, 2021) and it is not clear from the available figures how many of these arrivals were business travellers and how many travelled for leisure. But in 2019, travel and tourism contributed 4 percent to Sierra Leone’s GDP (with business spending representing 62 percent) and 4.1 percent to the total employment (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020). However, there is no data available on the different forms and types of tourism in Sierra Leone and their uptake by both national and international tourists, which would illustrate how important culture really has become for tourism in Sierra Leone and its contributions to the national economy.

Despite the growing celebration of culture as a vehicle for tourism and of cultural tourism for national development in Sierra Leone, it is important to remember that the relationship

³¹ The numbers for 2020 were not yet available at the time of writing.

between culture and tourism is delicate, if not problematic; especially if culture is only supported and promoted in order to attract foreign investment and expenditure from international tourism. Judging from the experience of other countries across the world, the tourism industry can certainly revive and strengthen the production, preservation and promotion of cultural expressions and create a number of positive impacts, such as increased employment and business opportunities, economic benefits for local communities and improved infrastructure. On the other hand, tourism, and especially mass tourism, can also have a number of negative effects, including an increase in commodity prices and cost of living, export of profits by non-local owners of tourist enterprises, import of labour and under/unemployment due to the seasonality of the industry, reduction of opportunities for local businesses as a result of all-inclusive packages, economic over-dependency on tourism by the local community, environmental destruction, changes in values and customs and social problems such as drugs and prostitution (Nyamanga, 2008).

Tourism, especially international mass tourism, also tends to lead to 'staged authenticity' (MacCannell, 1973) and the commodification of certain types of supposedly 'authentic' cultural expressions, which is often very visible in the performing arts. 'Traditional' theatrical performances are popular in many tourist destinations, which on the one hand can support their safeguarding, but on the other hand often leads to simplistic or abridged versions of such performances. As mentioned in Chapter 4, in Sierra Leone 'traditional' dances, stories or plays presented at hotels or for tourists and international audiences are 'sterilised', thus adapted in terms of their choreography, timing and performance techniques to suit the taste and level of understanding of these audiences. This is problematic on several different levels, as the following demonstrates.

The commodification of culture in general in the postcolony, as discussed in Chapter 2, has been found to be particularly shaped by dynamics of cultural essentialism, external appropriation and exoticism, 'an aestheticising process through which the cultural other is translated, relayed back through the familiar' (Huggan, 2001, p. ix). Applying the principle postulated by sender-receiver models in communication theory that the receiver (in the context of this research the audience or the consumer) creates or at least decodes meaning – 'filtered through a culturally endowed eye or ear' (Comaroff, 1996, p. 174) – one can argue that this process changes the meaning of cultural expressions. But the commodification of culture in the postcolony also leads to modifications in the cultural production itself to suit customer demands and desires. This creates two kinds of cultural products and production systems, one for local production (in which artists struggle to make a living) and one for international audiences or export (Pratt, 2004). The two systems are usually separate from each other and often difficult to permeate (due to lack of access or finance, for example), although they sometimes do converge, as in the form of collaborations between artists of the Global North

and the Global South. In 'world music', such 'collaborations' often prepare music of the Global South for global consumption by altering local aesthetics, softening perceived differences and making them 'market ready'. It is often these hybrid forms that are subsequently being constructed and considered as 'authentic' (Taylor, 2007) – another interesting illustration of the constructivism of concepts such as 'authenticity' and 'tradition'.

The dichotomy between the local and the global production and distribution system, however, does not only have aesthetic, but also economic and structural implications. Research on the Senegalese music industry, for example, showed that local music sales to Senegalese nationals did not provide a net income growth for the national economy and that global music sales, as they are managed by international companies, only provided returns via the personal income of the artists (Pratt, 2004). Furthermore, if local cultural expressions are not protected and can be commodified by anyone without the consent of local communities and cultural producers, this can obviously lead to expropriation and exploitation. This issue of ownership will be discussed in more depth in the next section on the legal framework for CCIs in Sierra Leone.

Tourism and the commodification of cultural expressions, but also the instrumentalisation of culture for nation-building and other nationalist purposes thus circumscribes the notion of what 'culture' is and can be in a specific locale and significantly impacts the meaning and production of cultural expressions by presenting culture as static, constructing the notion of what is 'authentic' and 'traditional' and singling out certain types of cultural expressions over others. As examined in Chapter 2, this is particularly problematic in the postcolony as notions of 'authenticity' and 'tradition' are tied to colonial classifications of tribes and ethnic groups.

Although the past decade has seen some crucial improvements for the Sierra Leonean CCIs at policy and legislative level, such as the ratification of the 2013 Cultural Policy and the enactment of a Copyright Act in 2011 (which will be discussed in more detail in the next section), most artists and creative professionals bemoan the little interest in culture by the government, evidenced by the fact, for example, that both the 2011 Copyright Act and the 2013 Cultural Policy have not been fully implemented yet. As a consequence, culture has also not been mainstreamed into other policies and strategy papers relevant for the development of the CCIs, such as the trade policy, which has been in discussion for years (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, personal communication, 2020).

Furthermore, there is currently no apex or lobbying body for culture and the CCIs in Sierra Leone that could drive forward a more consolidated approach to the development of the sector. Although the 2013 Cultural Policy postulates that a National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC) shall be established to take on this role, this institution still has not been set

up, which obviously also stalls the implementation of the 2013 Cultural Policy.³² Until the NCAC has been set up and can take on policy and sector coordination in a more strategic and targeted manner, a cross-departmental working group, chaired by the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, could fill the gap to enhance collaboration and synergies between all the above-mentioned existing ministries and institutions that have a stake in the cultural affairs of Sierra Leone.

5.1.3 Legal framework for cultural and creative industries in Sierra Leone

As a result of colonialism Sierra Leone's legal system is based on the British system and now comprises constitutional, common, statutory and customary law (Kabbah, 2021); a complex system characterised by 'an uneasy relationship between the received or English laws and the traditional or customary laws' (Kane et al., 2004, p. 6). This means that upon independence from the UK, the existing laws of the colony and the background laws of the UK (including any international agreements signed by the UK while Sierra Leone was a colony) continued to apply, as long as these laws were not modified or replaced by new laws written and enacted in Sierra Leone (Bangura and Ganji, 2009; Kabbah, 2021; Kane et al., 2004). The current legal framework to preserve, protect and promote Sierra Leonean culture is only made up by the following laws, with one of them still dating from before independence in 1961: The 1946 Monuments and Relics Ordinance, which was upgraded to an Act in 1962 and further amended in 1967; the 2004 Local Government Act; the 1965 Public Archives Act; the 1960 Cinematograph Exhibitions Act and the 2011 Copyright Act.

The following section focuses on the two most relevant laws for this research. It begins with only a brief discussion of Sierra Leone's existing heritage legislation (represented by the 1967 Monuments and Relics Act), as it is currently in the process of being changed, and then goes on to discuss Sierra Leone's Copyright Act in more detail as well as its implications for the ownership and protection of indigenous cultural expressions, such as indigenous theatre, and the tensions between copyright, IPRs and cultural rights.

Sierra Leone's heritage legislation is an interesting example of colonial governmentality and its legislative legacy in Sierra Leone, but it is also an interesting example of how the limitations of legislation can be a consequence of a lacking in-depth situational analysis, in this context of the existing cultural heritage and the specific threats it faces (Basu and Sam, 2016, p. 25). As described in detail by Basu (2012), the original 1946 Monuments and Relics Ordinance was not passed as a result of a perceived local need, but in response to a British

³² In 2006, an Interim National Commission for Arts and Culture was set up to support the development of the new cultural policy, but it ceased to exist when government changed in 2007 (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2020, personal communication).

Colonial Office edict to the governors of British West Africa – which comprised of The Gambia, Sierra Leone, Gold Coast (today's Ghana) and Nigeria – to introduce such legislation in order to prevent the export of antiquities from British West Africa onto the international art market; a concern that had been reinforced by the discovery of ancient cast bronze heads in Nigeria that caused a sensation in the international art world in the late 1930s.

The Monuments and Relics Act of 1967 focuses on 'the preservation of ancient, historical and natural monuments, relics and other objects of archaeological, ethnographical, historical or other scientific interest' (Basu and Sam, 2016, p. 25) and has long been considered outdated and ineffective. As a result, the Act has been subject of a review in 2016 whose aim was to develop recommendations for a holistic reform of the heritage sector in Sierra Leone, including the safeguarding of not only tangible heritage (such as monuments and cultural sites) but also intangible cultural heritage (such as indigenous theatre and oral 'traditions'). The review thus proposed the repeal of the Monuments and Relics Act and the introduction of a new National Heritage Bill to be in line with international instruments and standards on cultural heritage protection, while also being suitable and sensitive to the specific context in Sierra Leone, and to underpin new approaches to the governance, management and financing of heritage (including professional standards in heritage conservation, community-based heritage management approaches, cultural education in primary and secondary education and training of heritage-related skills in tertiary education) (Basu and Sam, 2016). Following the procedure for the introduction of new legislation, a memorandum was prepared for Cabinet following this review, but since then the process was not taken any further, as one of my interviewees outlined to me:

Of all these steps [to introduce new legislation] only the first was accomplished, the review, though the ministry claimed it was sent to cabinet stage. But that was that. This was at the tail end of the previous Koroma government. Since [the APC] lost [the last presidential election] the present government is still to speed up. (Theatre professional, Interviewee #3, 2020, personal communication)

The Copyright Act enacted by Parliament in 2011 repealed an earlier Act of 1965, recognising the urgent need for a more appropriate framework that enables artists to benefit from their intellectual property (including literary work such as plays, choreographic work, theatre performances and expressions of folklore, such as folk plays). The Copyright Act was also intended to protect artists from illegal reproduction and pirating, which affects especially the country's music, film and broadcasting industries but also the authorship of theatre plays and performances. Whereas some argue that the Copyright Act was finally passed due to the intense lobbying from artists, others feel that the Act's ratification was linked to Sierra Leone's recognition of two significant international IP agreements: firstly, the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) by the World Trade Organisation

(WTO) – which, according to critics, globalises the IPR system of industrialised states in the Global North and undermines national IPR legislation appropriate to specific local ethical and socio-economic contexts (e.g., Shiva, 2007); and secondly, the Harare Protocol on Patents and Industrial Designs by the African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO, an intergovernmental organisation across Africa that grants and manages intellectual property rights for its member states, which are predominantly Anglophone, complimenting national frameworks).³³

Regardless of why the 2011 Copyright Act was finally passed, the impetus was not enough to get the Act to be fully implemented to date. This also means that the Collecting Society of Sierra Leone is still not functional either, although it is (as defined in Section 54 of the Act) key to administering copyrights, collecting and distributing royalties and '[promoting] activities for the dissemination of national cultural works in and outside Sierra Leone' (Copyright Act, 2011, Section 54). But several interviewees for this research argued that the implementation of the Act and its support and reinforcement structures is not enough; to effect change there also needs to be more education on copyright and intellectual property, as the following quote illustrates:

I once met a high school classmate and he said to me: 'Charlie, when are you releasing your next acapella album?' 'Soon', I responded. And he continued: "Please as soon as you release it, help me get one, just one copy. I want to send it to my elder brother in America, who will reproduce it in large quantity, sell it to the hundreds of Sierra Leoneans in America and buy me stuff. Shoes, like these ones I am wearing, perfumes, dresses for me and my girlfriend. In addition, he sends me money from the sales. So please hurry up and release the next album. Now I have asked my brother to buy me a car from the sales of your next album." I nearly dropped dead! Why such occurrences, not to mention blatant piracy by businessmen and others? Lack of copyright education, political will and operational structures to combat piracy is the answer. (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2020, personal communication)

In practice, there is often a gap between legal agreements and their implementation, which makes day-to-day regulation challenging, if not impossible. This is obviously not just the case in and an issue for Sierra Leone. But as it is not entirely clear why the implementation of the 2011 Copyright Act has been stalling for so long in Sierra Leone (some interviewees refer to the lack of interest by subsequent governments, others point to the general lack of resources), one wonders if it is also linked to the Act lacking relevance to and understanding of the specific context in Sierra Leone. Although one could argue that laws provide at least a basis for change that can be referred to and built upon, legal frameworks clearly do not offer

³³ African francophone countries are members of another regional body, the Organisation Africaine de la Propriété Intellectuelle (OAPI).

solutions for long-term structural change if they do not take account of and are not accompanied by cultural, political, economic and social realities.

One of these realities, for example, is that in many African countries written laws and customary laws operate in and represent different spheres and different publics; and as such they also represent and protect different types of cultural expressions. Another reality is that intellectual property is a historically Western concept, rooted in the history of patents as a tool of colonisation (Shiva, 2007), that defines mostly corporate and individual, but not communal ownership and its remuneration. For example, the British intellectual property system, which has influenced similar legislation in many Anglophone African countries, does not cover what may appear to lack definite origin and ownership, like indigenous theatre forms (including masquerades and storytelling) which evolve over time within specific communities and are not authored by a single individual. Hence, such legislation does not explicitly recognise cultural ownership rights of local communities who actually do own the heritage (Kyule, 2016; Ndoro and Kiriama, 2009). It also does not provide any answers to questions such as the following: Who can own and commodify indigenous theatre and other oral 'traditions', if they are conceived of as common goods which are shaped, re-created and distributed by everybody within a community?

Furthermore, while Eurocentric IP laws implemented in many African countries apply, at least to a certain degree, to individual artists who perform and sell their art via 'modern' media, they often do not sufficiently cover 'traditional' performers, as literature scholar Lisa McNee (1998) shows in her study on intellectual property and orality in West Africa, which focuses particularly on Wolof griots (*gëwël*) in Senegal. The latter usually operate in contexts that do not encourage or allow the production and sale of recordings, which complicates not only their existence and survival in the global marketplace (McNee, 1998), but also their authorship rights and the notion of intellectual property more broadly. A *gëwël*, for example, specialises in the genealogy and historical chronicles of a noble family to whom his family is linked. This means that while his performance and interpretation of the historical material is of his own creation, the content itself and the historical knowledge belong to the noble family (McNee, 1998).

This poses a fundamental problem that Eurocentric IP legislation is hardly equipped to solve: Who does such a performance of genealogy belong to? To the person who can perform it or to the person whose genealogy it represents? The same questions can be asked in relation to indigenous theatre (and its derivatives like contemporary Krio theatre) in Sierra Leone: Who does indigenous theatre belong to? To the performer or to the community in which it evolves? How can they both be protected and remunerated? How can other forms of communal theatre be protected, such as developmental theatre plays and Theatre for Development productions, which are created with communities and 'spect-actors' (Boal, 2008)

as active participants in the process, but which are usually funded by NGOs, development agencies or the government (as discussed in Chapter 4)? These questions highlight a number of tensions and ambiguities, which are based on different notions of ownership in different epistemologies, and they also challenge the concept of the common good more broadly (which I discuss in more detail further below).

While Sierra Leone's Copyright Act 2011 has seemingly made an effort to address some of these issues, there are still some discrepancies between the law and the cultural, political, economic and social realities in which it is situated. For example, Section 9 Subsection (1) of the 2011 Copyright Act in Sierra Leone does protect 'expressions of folklore', in the sense of 'a group-oriented and tradition-based creation of groups or individuals reflecting the expectation of the community as an adequate expression of its cultural and social identity' (Copyright Act, 2011, Section 9), against 'reproduction, communication to the public [...] and adaptation, translation and other transformation, when the expression is made either for commercial purposes or outside a traditional or customary context' (Copyright Act, 2011, Section 9). However, this protection does not extend, as per Section 9 Subsection (2), to 'the borrowing of expression of folklore for creating an original work of an author, provided that the extent of the utilisation is compatible with fair practice' (Copyright Act, 2011, Section 9). But there are no provisions made as to what 'fair practices' involve and how to regulate these.

There are further contradictions and omissions within the 2011 Copyright Act, such as the procedure for the registration of works, as per Section 49, referring solely to registered works, productions and associations of an 'author', which in Section 1 is defined as 'a person who created a work' (Copyright Act, 2011, Section 1). So how can ethnic communities register their expressions of folklore, such as 'folkloristic' performances, especially those that do not have an author but have been passed down from generation to generation? Furthermore, the economic and moral rights linked to registered copyrights, as outlined in Sections 10 and 11 of the Copyright Act, only refer to the rights of authors. So how can communities and their expressions of folklore be economically and morally protected? How can and will they be remunerated if expressions of their cultural and social identity are reproduced, adapted, translated or transformed for commercial purposes? How are the tensions and links between collective and individual rights and responsibilities navigated and regulated? And finally, how can communities and individuals be morally protected if expressions of their cultural and social identity are used for non-commercial purposes, as in the case of developmental theatre?

Regarding the latter, for example, the IPRs related to developmental theatre productions in Sierra Leone are currently unclear and depend on the specific contract between theatre practitioners or communities on the one side and NGOs or UN agencies on the other. In some cases, the IP belongs to the commissioning organisation, in other cases IPRs are not considered at all (Theatre professional, Interviewee #3, 2021, personal communication;

theatre and media professional, Interviewee #4, 2021, personal communication; theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2021, personal communication). This obviously leaves room for ambiguities and potential tensions.

Sierra Leone's Copyright Act 2011 thus illustrates that the transferal of laws that are based on Eurocentric systems of thought and societal structures to the African context not only poses practical issues, but also highlights important postcolonial issues and tensions in the field of cultural heritage and arts management, as introduced in Chapter 2. Comaroff and Comaroff also remind us that law, and 'the capacity of constitutionalism and contract, rights and legal remedies, to accomplish order, civility, justice, empowerment' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001, p. 38) is just another fetish. And like all fetishes, this one has also a fantastic, illusionary quality, proposing that laws and 'legal instruments have the capacity to orchestrate social harmony' and hiding the fact that 'power produces rights, not rights power; that law in practice, by extension, is a social product, not a prime mover in constructing social worlds' (Comaroff and Comaroff, 2001, p. 38).

In the context of this research, one thus needs to interrogate the global power structures and colonial legacies that have directed and still direct the production and regulation of intellectual property legislation and their local implementation. This is particularly important as when examining the most important treaties and conventions pertaining to IP throughout history³⁴ and their local implementation from a political economy perspective, thus examining them as historically, politically and socially situated, 'a history of colonialism, postcolonialism and economic globalisation can be observed' (De Beukelaer and Fredriksson, 2018, p. 6) and 'an extension of a (neo-)colonial practice' (De Beukelaer and Fredriksson, 2018, p. 18) can be identified.

Sierra Leone is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and ARIPO, party to TRIPS (as mentioned above) and signatory to a few international instruments for copyright and related rights (such as the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances in 2012 or the Marrakesh Treaty in 2013). But it has not yet ratified other significant international instruments and treaties pertaining to copyright and intellectual property more broadly, such as the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886), the Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations (1961), the WIPO Copyright Treaty (1996) or the WIPO Performances and Phonograms Treaty (1996). This means that Sierra Leone and its citizens cannot benefit from these international treaties, 'reducing potential contribution of copyright related industries to

³⁴ Such as the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (1886); the Universal Copyright Convention (1952); the Rome Convention for the Protection of Performers, Producers of Phonograms and Broadcasting Organisations (1961); the World Trade Organization's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (1994); the WIPO Copyright Treaty (1996) and the WIPO Performance and Phonograms Treaty (1996).

exports on the GDP as most countries are not obliged to protect works of countries which are not members of specific treaties and agreements' (ARIPO, 2018, p. 29).

Until the enactment of the Copyright Act in 2011 and other recent IP laws (the Patents and Industrial Design Act in 2012 and the Trademarks Act in 2014), Sierra Leone's IP legislation was still linked to British legislation, a legacy of colonialism as mentioned above. This so-called dependent system determined that, for example, 'a patent [or a copyright, an industrial design or a trademark] with effect in [Sierra Leone] was obtainable only by having an invention protected in [...] the United Kingdom first and having the effect of that patent extended to [Sierra Leone]' (ARIPO, 2016, p. 8). This means that only since the enactment of these new IP laws in the 2010s original IP applications can be made in Sierra Leone and are now assessed by the Office of the Administrator and Registrar-General in Freetown in collaboration with ARIPO (Jegade, 2020). The Copyright Act 2011, the Patents and Industrial Design Act 2012 and the Trademarks Act 2014 are comparable to existing IP laws in other common law jurisdictions like the United Kingdom (Jegade, 2020), but it has been argued that overall, the current IP legislation in Sierra Leone is incomplete and that the implementation and enforcement of the existing laws is insufficient.

As outlined in detail already elsewhere (e.g., De Beukelaer and Fredriksson, 2018), the history and practice of colonialism and neoliberal globalisation have also led to tensions in the postcolony between copyright, IPRs and cultural rights (which are human rights as per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and include rights to access to, participation in and consumption of culture as well as cultural liberties). Copyright laws influenced by European cultural history and their legal divide between the author and the audiences tend to prioritise intellectual property rights over cultural rights, which 'reinforces a political economy that is rooted in colonial history without consideration of social and power relations that significantly impact the basis on which ownership and participation is balanced' (De Beukelaer and Fredriksson, 2018, p. 3). A report by the UN Special Rapporteur in the field of cultural rights also highlights the need for increasing opportunities for participation in cultural life and preserving non-commercial culture, while protecting authorship (which differs from copyright protection); for example, through the use of open licences (such as the Creative Commons). The report therefore argues 'to expand copyright exceptions and limitations to empower new creativity, enhance rewards to authors, increase educational opportunities, preserve space for non-commercial culture and promote inclusion and access to cultural works' (Shaheed, 2014, p. 1). The cultural rights and human rights perspective thus highlights important aspects of the intellectual property discourse that tend to take a back seat when copyright is primarily discussed in terms of trade, such as

the social function and human dimension of intellectual property, the public interests at stake, the importance of transparency and public participation in

policymaking, the need to design copyright rules to genuinely benefit human authors, the importance of broad diffusion and cultural freedom, the importance of not-for-profit cultural production and innovation, and the special consideration for the impact of copyright law upon marginalised or vulnerable groups. (Shaheed, 2014, p. 19)

While the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone 2013* also highlights 'the need to respect the cultural rights of all persons as defined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in Articles 13 and 15 of the International Covenant on Economic and Cultural Rights, and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 50), these rights are not mentioned in the 2011 Copyright Act.

The cultural rights perspective also emphasises the need to recognise and validate different notions of intellectual property, copyright and, more generally, authorship and ownership of cultural products and productions. As is the case for most African societies, the Sierra Leonean notion of 'artists' and 'art' historically differs from the 'traditional' Eurocentric idea of the 'genius-artist', and common contemporary differentiations between 'author' or 'creator' and 'interpreter' are references to Eurocentric systems of thought and classification. Furthermore, the Western bourgeois notion of art for art's sake and linked capitalist value systems are also dichotomist to the historical African context. This does not mean that in African countries the 'traditional' performers' art used to be and still is for free, but it could not be 'bought' in the same way as in the capitalist system of market economies and cultural commodities. 'Traditional' performers often receive gifts and other physical acknowledgements for their work, and their position and right to perform the community's 'traditional' arts remain in constant negotiation (McNee, 1998).

The historical African notion of the 'artist' and 'artistic creation' and their function within society thus are not and cannot be protected by Eurocentric intellectual property rights or copyright laws, as they originate from fundamentally different systems of thought. The main problem of implementing the same Eurocentric intellectual property laws globally, without considering local cultural specificities and diverse epistemologies, is, however, not only rooted in clashing notions of 'art' and 'artists', but also in culturally divergent notions of ownership and property, the different roles that are given in each culture to an individual and the community and the context-specific relationship between an individual and their community. As mentioned in Chapter 3, in precolonial Sierra Leone notions of ownership were historically based on principles and balances between the individual and the community such as reciprocity (which continue to exist to some degree to this day), conceiving of property and ownership in an inherently different way to 'modern' cultures of individualism in the Global North and their related legal frameworks. In the case of the former, the property system was based on a 'double legal identity', composed by the community as a 'corporate legal entity' and the individual as the user of the common good (McNee, 1998). But current economic and legal

structures in the postcolony often fail to accommodate such diverse notions of land, kinship and use (Larner, 2011).

Applying this reasoning to contemporary intellectual property would mean, for example, designing an IP system that is based on the rights, privileges and responsibilities of both the individual and the community and that does not conceive of them in a simple dichotomy. This also challenges the concept of common goods, or the commons, and highlights the tensions between attempts to protect the commons (such as indigenous and communal theatre or 'traditional' knowledge) and attempts to maintain or provide free and equitable access to them. For example, while the notion of the commons implies certain limits to property rights, many recommendations for the protection of 'traditional' knowledge from informational imperialism are linked to the creation of new property rights (Atteberry, 2010). In order to circumvent the paradox between protection and oppression (in the sense of exclusion and limited access to the commons) that Eurocentric IP systems perpetuate, it may thus be necessary to completely break with Eurocentric notions of authorship, copyright and intellectual property and to develop instead systems and legislation that foster cosmopolitan commoning. Recent discussions in the field of biodiversity in terms of protecting indigenous knowledges from biopiracy by developing a model of collective intellectual rights based on a *sui generis* regime (e.g., Garcia dos Santos, 2007) may offer some interesting starting points for such an endeavour.

The need for a locally appropriate understanding and regulation of intellectual property also challenges the notion of piracy as an illegal and destructive practice. Generally, copyright issues – and linked to these especially issues with pirating – are often discussed 'in terms of potential (economic return from creativity) that is lost because of what is lacking (enforcement), while ignoring the potential transformation of what exists' (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 66); that is working with the realities in a specific locale and identifying the type of legal framework and enforcement thereof that would suit the local context best to foster the development of the CCIs. Many interviewees for this research in Sierra Leone also argued very strongly against pirating and for more effective copyright legislation and a stricter enforcement (as the quote below illustrates), in the hope of finally being able to make a living as artists and no longer losing out because their artistic work (especially music and film releases) is immediately copied and sold on the black market.

When [the film union] got the information [about pirates selling videos], you know the network... everybody got the information, and we all went there [...] and we beat all of them. We destroyed all their things. You know this piracy thing is pissing us off. So, we want to stop it. (Theatre and film professional, Interviewee #19, 2016, personal communications)

But many of my interviewees did not seem too concerned about the type of legal framework and enforcement (or cultural rights for that matter), as long as there is a framework that is enforced.

However, as long as the parallel informal economy exists and potentially even dominates, because the formal economy and public institutions are failing or are not strong enough and because legislation is not implemented and enforced, it does seem to make more sense to work with the current realities, with the aim of slowly changing them for the better from the inside out or the bottom up. This seems particularly pertinent as informality also shapes the ways the state and civil society are intrinsically linked within the cultural field, and not just the conditions and precariousness of cultural and creative work (Mbaye and Dinardi, 2019).

In Sierra Leone, successful musicians like Emmerson, for example, have found specific ways to work with and around the threat of piracy:

First of all, what Emmerson does when he finishes in the studio is, he pays for the mass production himself. [...] He will pay upfront for like 10,000 copies. And then he has his own guys who he will drop those to. And because his stuff goes like hot cake, 2-3 days, he has collected enough money back again to produce more. So that's what he will do for up to 3 weeks to one month and then he will cease production because he knows now the pirates are already at work. (Development professional and music producer, Interviewee #17, 2016, personal communication)

Working with the existing realities also seems to have helped in Nigeria, where the informal economy and pirate-controlled distribution networks are considered to have even supported the rise of Nollywood (Lobato, 2010). Nollywood is also a good example of how culture can promote and support economic diversification, with the CCIs (and Nollywood in particular) having been identified as one of the priority sectors in Nigeria's *Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017-2020* with the objective to generate USD 1 billion in foreign exchange by 2020 (Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2017, p. 64).

Although Nollywood is often highlighted as the success story of CCI development in Africa (both by analysts and practitioners) and Nigeria has become on many different levels a role model for many African countries (not just Sierra Leone), it is important to bear in mind that policy transfer in the sense of a direct replication of policies without acknowledging diverse and locally specific cultural, social, political and economic realities is problematic and often ineffective due to the 'many worlds of CCI policy making' (Pratt, 2009). Nevertheless, in practice a synchronisation of policy ideas and approaches (Alasuutari, 2016) and the adoption of 'fast policies' (Peck and Theodore, 2015) can be observed around the world – which creates frictions between different ideological and practical objectives as well as frictions between the abstract ideal of and the global discourse on the CCIs and their 'imperfect' local translation and implementation within already existing structures, institutions and practices (De Beukelaer, 2021). While there are of course lessons to be learned from others and elsewhere, this emphasises – once more – that truly understanding and building upon the local context (and its opportunities and challenges) is more important than following global 'best practice'

examples (De Beukelaer, 2015; Mbaye, 2013), especially as these global best practice examples are often dominated by examples from the Global North.

However, examples like Nollywood, which initially grew in the informal sector but is now becoming more and more formalised following increased interest and intervention by both public and private bodies, do highlight a number of useful points, such as the importance of questioning the rigid dichotomies of 'informal' and 'formal' as well as 'illegal' and 'legal' and their usefulness for the development of the CCIs in West Africa and beyond. Cultural policy scholars Jenny Mbaye and Cecilia Dinardi (2019) also argue that 'governmental institutions (whichever their geographies) are entangled in informal processes and that (informal) grassroots cultural interventions have become part of (formal) mainstream cultural circuits; [meaning that] there are always some ins (formality) in the outs (informality) and always some outs (informality) in the ins (formality)' (Mbaye and Dinardi, 2019, p. 579). This thus also raises the question of,

whose culture of CCIs should influence current debates? Should it be the neat and legal framework of CCIs as promoted by UNESCO, UNCTAD, the British Council, the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, and the likes? Or should it be the illegal practice of pirates that have helped create a context in which consumers buy but producers fail to earn from that? My argument is that the solution lies in neither: the former is a sterile notion of a broken industry system that is not worth copying (Diawara, 2013), while the latter is messy and unfair, and should not serve as an example either. The challenge is to look at [a] variety of messy practices that exists in between. (De Beukelaer, 2017, p. 587)

In some contexts and countries working with the current realities and the 'messy practices' that exist could thus even mean working with pirates rather than against them (especially when there is no working alternative); for example by regularising the pirates' work and legally including them in the distribution process to build on their extensive and efficient distribution networks (which are growing more and more with the increased availability of digital technologies since the late 1990s) and thus increasing markets, income and eventually the viability of the sector (De Beukelaer, 2015).

The need to uncover and highlight the messy practices that exist beyond policy and official discourses, in order to understand how things really work, is part of the reason why both sector practitioners and experts in Sierra Leone, and beyond, keep pointing out the urgent need for data collection and the documentation of activities and resources across the CCIs. The lack of reliable and comprehensive statistics and information on the various dimensions of the CCIs, in particular regarding their value (both in social and economic terms), also undermines the recognition of their potential, not just in Sierra Leone. Gathering evidence and insights is crucial to sensible and meaningful policymaking, so it is hoped that more data and qualitative evidence will help reform policy and legislation and convince policymakers and other key influencers to invest strategically in the context-specific drivers of CCI development.

Consistent data collection would also contribute to the accountability of public institutions and allow for the tracking of progress as well as the impact of policies, investments and structural changes over time. The remainder of this chapter aims to contribute to this need for documentation and to the unearthing of some of ‘the messy practices’ that exist by dissecting the structural and institutional framework for the CCIs in Sierra Leone.

5.2 Structural and institutional context for the cultural and creative industries in Sierra Leone

5.2.1 Governance structures and institutions

The current structural and institutional context for Sierra Leonean theatre (and the CCIs as a whole) is intrinsically linked to the general status quo and ongoing ‘development’ or ‘redevelopment’ of the Sierra Leonean state, its institutions and public expenditure following the informalisation of many aspects of political, economic and social life, the politicisation of resources and the ensuing decline of the formal state during Siaka Stevens’ rule in the 1970s and 1980s, which are also thought to have been some of the factors that eventually led to the country’s civil war (Harris, 2013; Meyer, 2007; Reno, 1995; Richards, 1996).

State building and the promotion of democratically and transparently run institutions is a complex and long-term process, especially in a country with a history of a ‘rhizome state’ (Bayart, 2009) or a ‘shadow state’ (Reno, 1995) as well as entrenched patron-client politics and neo-patrimonialism. However, this process has to be seen not only in the present context of a state classified by ‘the international community’ until recently as post-conflict (and the challenges and competing demands that come with that), but also in the wider historical context of Sierra Leone as a postcolony. It has also been argued that international development agents have ignored Sierra Leone’s domestic political economy and the firmly enrooted neo-patrimonial dependencies between local chiefs and national political elites for too long, and that a more historicised and culture-appropriate approach to institution-building (and development in general) is called for. Such an approach would transcend the simple transfer of Western-style institutional models and base itself on a comprehensive domestic political economy analysis, including informal and ‘traditional’ power structures, such as the chieftaincy system and its relationship to both rural livelihoods and national politics (Harris, 2013; Meyer, 2007).

As highlighted throughout Chapter 3, the hybrid governance system established in Sierra Leone by colonial rule (which had governed through both chiefs and a ‘modern’ state) continued into the postcolony and as a consequence ‘traditional’ authorities also became key stakeholders in the governance structures after independence (Harris, 2013; Kup, 1975; Reno, 1995). Hence, while the ‘modern’ state is commonly considered to have significant

power to impose or at least promote its meanings and values (in the context of this research this would be the meaning and value of 'culture'), the bifurcated state in Sierra Leone and its meanings and values are inherently shaped and influenced by both 'modern' and 'traditional' agents and perspectives, and all the disjunctures in between.

This hybridisation, and the tensions inscribed in it, are also reflected and played out in the general conception of 'culture' in Sierra Leone as well as in the governance structures and institutions that shape the ecology of theatre. Although the 2013 Cultural Policy does not provide a definition of 'culture', as discussed above in Section 5.1, the policy – as a statement of the state's system of principles – does offer insights into the conception of 'culture' by the bifurcated Sierra Leonean state and its governmentality. This conception is very broad, as mentioned above, ranging from 'community life', 'language', 'folklore', 'cultural heritage' to 'fine arts', 'performing arts' (including theatre) and 'film' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013). The 'two publics', however, seem to each focus on narrower conceptions of 'culture' – from the more urban, national and 'civil' realm of culture for tourism, museums, monuments and creative industries, on the one hand, to an understanding of 'culture' as giving meaning and structure to life through folklore and 'traditional' knowledge and beliefs, on the other hand.

Furthermore, the delivery of the 2013 Cultural Policy and its strategic objectives is based on a hybrid system of governance structures and institutions that 'manage' and 'regulate' culture. As such, the policy explicitly mentions Paramount Chiefs, section chiefs and village heads (who represent the more 'traditional', 'primordial' public realm) as important grassroots institutions for the administration of cultural affairs:

As elected representatives of their communities, they serve as main link and entry points between their communities, government and development agencies. [...] As heads of secret societies of their communities, they are traditionally recognised as custodians of traditions and cultures; and as the opinion leaders and change agents they can provide legitimacy and credibility to government policies and programmes in their local communities. (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 84-85)

Among its fourteen key strategic priorities the 2013 Cultural Policy also includes 'traditional' cultural institutions, such as chiefdoms and secret societies, with the aim to strengthen them, so that they can contribute to the preservation and promotion of 'culture' and 'social harmony' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 103-105) – without, however, considering the contested nature of these 'traditional' institutions. Furthermore, given that Sierra Leone is a multi-ethnic country with officially sixteen different ethno-linguistic groups, it seems apparent that these 'traditional' cultural institutions will not contribute to the preservation and promotion of one single national 'culture', but to the preservation and promotion of many different cultures.

As long as the Paramount Chiefs are a strong element of governance, they will always be guardians of their ethnic culture. (Arts manager, Interviewee #26, 2016, personal communication)

While this is obviously important and desirable in terms of the protection of cultural diversity, it remains to be seen how this will affect and shape the strengthening of a national Sierra Leonean identity, which is another key aim of the 2013 Cultural Policy. For although ‘unity in diversity’ is widely promoted in Sierra Leone (Basu, 2013), as mentioned in Chapter 3, the politicisation of ethnic identities has shaped the country’s political history and processes of state and class formation since independence (Kandeh, 1992) and ‘people’s primary identity and loyalty is with their ethnic [...] group and its own form of organisation and leadership’ (M’cleod and Ganson, 2018, p. 5) – as opposed to the nation-state and its national identity.

Furthermore, chiefs and secret societies are not only ‘protectors’ and ‘promoters’ of culture, they are also agents of power within a complex system of reciprocity and patrimonial relationships (as outlined in detail in Chapter 3), and as such they also have the power to endorse and uphold their notion of culture and their own ‘truth’ and thus to undermine and exclude other, potentially challenging, perspectives. In this context, it is also important to remember that Paramount Chiefs and their sub-chiefs were the sole local government in Sierra Leone from 1896 to 2004, when a new Local Government Act was passed and generally elected local councils were created.

Following this decentralisation and devolution of functions, powers and services to local councils in 2004, the structural context for culture was also supposed to change. For example, the responsibilities for local museums, cultural villages and libraries were to be devolved from the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs to local councils. This also required local councils to ‘mobilize the necessary resources for the funding of cultural development activities in their communities’ (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 140). However, this has yet to be realised, and at the time of writing the Local Government Act 2004 is under review, together with the National Decentralisation Policy of 2010, to be in line with the current SLPP government’s *Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023*.

Within the currently existing plans on decentralisation, the Directorate of Culture in the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs continues to have direct oversight responsibilities for five national institutions funded by the state: the Monument and Relics Commission whose mission is ‘preserving, protecting and promoting our heritage and relics be they scientific, ethnographic, historical and cultural’ (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2020b); the Sierra Leone National Museum whose mandate covers the ‘storage, preservation and exhibition for education, research and visitation of artifacts, historical and national cultural heritage’ (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2020b); the Sierra Leone Railway Museum whose mission is the ‘preserving and exhibiting of the Railway heritage for

posterity' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2020b);³⁵ the Sierra Leone International Theatre Institute (SLITI) whose mandate is to 'coordinate and implement all theatre related activities' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2020b) and the Sierra Leone National Dance Troupe, 'the epitome of Sierra Leone's tradition, culture and heritage and laurel earner nationally and internationally' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2020b).

These national institutions should in theory receive regular subventions from the MTC for the implementation of their own activities, but in practice the funding is not as regular as it is supposed to be, as one of my interviewees disclosed:

The government should give something every quarter. In the past years once you get two quarters, you don't get the other two quarters. (Arts manager, Interviewee #10, 2016, personal communication)

While it is not public knowledge what the exact reasons for these funding issues are, they obviously limit what these institutions can do and achieve, both for themselves and the wider ecology of culture.

The fact that four out of the five directly funded national institutions are heritage institutions further illustrates the state's focus on cultural heritage, folklore and various expressions of 'tradition', thus on 'culture' as an imagination of the past – which has significant implications not just for the conception of national Sierra Leonean 'culture', as discussed above, but also in terms of policy and legislative development and its appreciation of and suitability for the CCIs and the ecology in which they can thrive. This also limits the space and support that are afforded to contemporary Krio theatre and its conception as a cultural industry, which increases its dependence on local elites, development agencies, international NGOs and international cultural organisations. The latter thus continue to take over some of the core responsibilities and authorities of the government (especially in terms of funding, but also in terms of setting agendas and promoting specific ideas and ideals) and thereby become 'the arbitrators, the interpreters, the facilitators' (Roy, 2014, para. 4) of what is possible and desirable.

The predominance of heritage institutions among the five directly funded national institutions also suggests that the official, 'sanitised' version of cultural heritage in Sierra Leone has for long been seen as resting solely within the custodianship of the national state. Furthermore, the amendment of the Monuments and Relics Act in 1967 gave the Monuments and Relics Commission the power to acquire and manage the Sierra Leone National Museum,

³⁵ In addition to being a state-funded institution, the Railway Museum, opened in 2005, also had some funding and support over the years from various institutions and organisations in the UK, such as the UK's Department for Culture Media & Sport, the British Library as well as a still active, formal 'Friends of Sierra Leone National Railway Museum' organisation.

which in turn also oversees and manages the Railway Museum. This obviously gives the Monuments and Relics Commission a lot of authority and power; in terms of influencing the discourse on 'culture' and 'heritage' in Sierra Leone, but also in terms of shaping the ecology of culture in Sierra Leone. This not only undermines or even excludes different perspectives and approaches, but also poses a challenge for the legitimacy of activities and interventions outside the state-run system and for the inclusive growth of the wider cultural ecology. It also leads to issues of access (to spaces, knowledge, data and archives), which decreases engagement and participation. Research on the cultural heritage sector in Kenya, for example, also describes how enshrining a single authority (the National Museums of Kenya) as the only legitimate heritage manager in the country promoted one hegemonic storyline and excluded other voices and perspectives (Hughes, 2007).

The Sierra Leone International Theatre Institute (SLITI) is the Sierra Leonean chapter of the International Theatre Institute (ITI), the World Organisation for the Performing Arts, and it also plays the role of a national theatre body in the absence of a national theatre association. ITI was founded in 1948 to create 'platforms for international exchange and for engagement in the education of the performing arts, for beginners and professionals alike, as well as using the performing arts for mutual understanding and peace' (International Theatre Institute, 2020), aligning itself with UNESCO's goals on culture, education and the arts and thus also advocating for the protection and promotion of cultural expressions and practitioners. Following this mission, SLITI was founded in 1985 to promote theatre through secondary school competitions and celebrating events like the World Theatre Day and the International Dance Day, and to engage practitioners in capacity building workshops. These workshops usually focus on topics such as playwriting or the general development of plays, but not on theatre management skills. However, despite being a subvented agency of the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, funding is always an issue for SLITI, which obviously impacts their capacity to fulfil their mission and the range of activities and support they can offer to the sector, as the quote below highlights. However, their funding issues are not only linked to the somewhat volatile support by the MTC and the lack of other more permanent funders (which is similar across the CCIs), but also to the fact that since the decline of theatre in Sierra Leone there are less and less theatre companies who would or could pay their SLITI membership fee.

Not much has happened in terms of training of theatre groups. We attempted to do one, I think it was last year, but we have not done a follow up action and other activities because of funding. We cannot be training [if] the fund is not there. [...] So, it has been so difficult. There are times when we have a partnership with the British Council. [...] Recently we did something with the British Council celebrating Shakespeare [as part of Shakespeare's Globe tour of *Hamlet*, mentioned in Chapter 4]. Then you get some funding for the organisation, but it is all

performance oriented [rather than core funding]. (Bobson-Kamara, E. M., Arts Manager, 2016, personal communication)

The National Dance Troupe, representing Sierra Leone's various ethno-linguistic groups and their specific 'traditional' dances and masked performances, was formed around Sierra Leone's independence as part of efforts to create and strengthen a national narrative and to encourage Sierra Leoneans to have pride in their diverse cultural heritage. As discussed in Chapter 3, the sign of 'the authentic' was, however, not just instrumentalised by the state for identity-founding purposes, but also turned into a commodity, sold in-country at state functions and to tourists, and internationally to represent Sierra Leone.

Until recently, the National Dance Troupe had its base at Aberdeen Cultural Village, located in the Western part of Freetown, close to the main city beach and in an area that until the civil war used to be (and increasingly is again) dominated by hotels, bars and nightclubs; hence not too far from pre- and post-war entertainment and tourism institutions.³⁶ Despite its proximity to very urban amenities, it was built and structured like a small rural village, and generations of families were living there since the troupe's formation in 1964, supporting their meagre income as performers with subsistence farming. Although the National Dance Troupe played an important role over the last few decades both in symbolic and functional terms for the promotion of Sierra Leonean culture and its performing arts in particular (especially in the wake of independence and general nation-building efforts, as outlined in Chapter 3) and although its members are on the government's payroll, the dancers, masked performers and drummers, like other artists in the country, struggle to make a decent living.

Furthermore, as a result of the decline of the formal state and its institutions, cuts to public expenditure and the general political and economic situation of the 1980s and especially the 1990s with the start of the civil war, there was less and less government support for the performers and less and less investment in the cultural village in general, which also contributed to the decline of its facilities. In the mid-2010s, plans were made to develop a new cultural space at the site of Aberdeen Cultural Village (including an art gallery) with the support of the INGO Action Aid and to move the Cultural Village and the National Dance Troupe to a new, less urban site in Mile 6, about an hour's drive from Freetown, offering better facilities and more decent housing. This new Cultural Village in Mile 6 was to be developed by the entity that would take over half of the land at the original Aberdeen Cultural Village (a prime property location), with the idea to create a cultural hub:

We took the proposal to the government of Sierra Leone for us to divide that piece of land [of the Aberdeen Cultural Village] into two. Half of that land goes for the construction of the art gallery [and would remain government property] and the remaining we give to an individual or an institution who can construct a new

³⁶ The map of Freetown above in Figure 2 locates Aberdeen and the Cultural Village.

cultural village [at Mile 6] for us that will house the National Dance Troupe and that we can then transform into an institute of arts and culture. We'll have the dance troupe, and we have that place as their residence, and additional to that, we'll have weavers, we'll have carvers, we'll have theatre artists, everybody can come there. (Civil servant, Interviewee #8, 2016, personal communication)

But even these plans, which seemed well on their way in 2016, have not been fully executed as of mid-2021. Several of my interviewees argue that this is another example of the lacking interest in and commitment to the cultural and creative sector by subsequent governments. Many of the artists of the National Dance Troupe initially also objected to being moved outside of Freetown (further away from potential engagements at hotels and bars) and having to leave the site in Aberdeen that had been their home for decades. They moved to Mile 6 in the end, but as the development of the new cultural space in Aberdeen is stalling, some were recently allowed to return to Aberdeen and 'squat' on the land where the Cultural Village was originally located.

The stalling of the development of the new cultural space in Aberdeen and other recent initiatives to support the cultural and creative sector in Sierra Leone (including the delay in the implementation of both the 2013 Cultural Policy and the 2011 Copyright Act) also has to be seen in the context of the 2018 general elections in Sierra Leone that saw the power shift from Koroma's APC (in power from 2007 to 2018) to Maada Bio's SLPP, which obviously affected continuity in government departments but also changed priorities and nullified previously made promises.

2013/2014 [when the National Cultural Policy was ratified] was Koroma's time. Since 2018, when the government changed, we are in limbo about cultural policies and structures. This government is talking about an Entertainment and Heritage Act. We are waiting. (Theatre professional, Interviewee #3, 2020, personal communication)

Similarly, Charlie Haffner, the now retired Artistic Director of the Freetong Players International, had been promised land by President Koroma to develop a performing arts college, which for years he had been lobbying for to respond to the lack of professional training and educational facilities within the Sierra Leonean ecology of culture, in general, and the theatre ecology, in particular (Section 5.2.2 below discusses this lack of educational opportunities further). However, this plan was also spoilt by the 2018 election, as Haffner explains:

[Koroma] did not only promise but delivered – a 3-acre plot at Number 2 village [the village at one of the most popular beaches along the peninsular outside Freetown]. After preparing the land, turning the sod and drawing the campus plan, the new peninsula road was diverted to pass through our land, so we lost it. Reporting to Koroma, he instructed for the land to be replaced, which they did with a 5-acre at a village near Waterloo. It was then close to the 2018 elections which they lost. So, we too lost everything. (Haffner, C., theatre and heritage professional, 2020, personal communication)

In the absence of strategic approaches and strong institutions that transcend political changes and influence, the difficulty with these promises and ad-hoc support by various governments is obviously that they depend on the willingness of politicians. But they also foster neo-patrimonialism and patron-clientelism. Furthermore, effacing the divide between the public and the private, the patron-client system also opens the door for corruption, extraversion and personal enrichment by individuals through their positions of power. For example, in 2011 senior members of the organising committee to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Sierra Leone's independence were accused of embezzling funds and were investigated by the Anti-Corruption Commission of Sierra Leone (Basu and Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2015, p. 112).

As discussed in Chapter 3, any state generates hierarchies and exclusionary practices, but the politics and hierarchical power relations in the postcolony are additionally fuelled by extraversion and the 'politics of the belly' (Bayart, 2009) as well as by 'aesthetics of vulgarity' that philosopher and political theorist Achille Mbembe identifies in the tendency to excess and lack of proportion in the postcolony (Mbembe, 2001). However, as highlighted above, these political and economic structures and local acts of excess (both in abuse of power and appropriation of money, land and other status symbols) also have to be seen through the lens of colonial legacies and contemporary global power relations that drive neoliberal capitalism.

As a result of the under-investment in the CCIs, the long-standing centralisation and hegemonisation of public cultural funding and limited access to private funding (more on this in Section 5.2.3), the CCIs remain informal and fragmented outside the core national state-sponsored institutions mentioned above (which are, however, also under-resourced). Furthermore, attempts by artists and creative entrepreneurs to create and sustain unions and other structures or networks to support practitioners in various industries and promote their interests are often not sustainable due to lacking resources and time. In terms of theatre, SLITI takes on the role of a national theatre network to some extent, as mentioned above, but its limited revenue and staff restrict its capacity to fulfil this mission and to strategically support the sector. Moreover, being one of the five national institutions that are directly funded (even if intermittently) by the MTC also links SLITI to the state and its governmentality and thus potentially circumscribes its relationship with the sector. During the more vibrant and productive phase of Sierra Leonean theatre, organisations such as the National Association of Professional Theatre Artists and the National Association of Theatre Groups used to coordinate theatre groups and sector activities, but they also ceased to exist as a result of the decline of the sector and the growing focus on developmental theatre since the early 2000s (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2021, personal communication). Some interviewees also suggest that competition and to some extent jealousy play a role in the failed

attempts to get better organised across the CCIs. This is not surprising, as ‘the creative entrepreneur works within collaborative-competitive networks which can just as easily cut against collective solidarity as work for it’ (O’Connor, 2019, p.10).

The ecology of theatre and culture more broadly in Sierra Leone thus lacks crucial elements and structures, which is, however, also tied to factors outside the ecology of culture, such as generally lacking educational opportunities, infrastructure and finance. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Freetown does not have a single venue dedicated to and appropriately equipped for cultural events. But there are some spaces that are used for performances and cultural representations, such as the British Council’s auditorium, the auditorium at Fourah Bay College, the Miatta Conference Centre, the Ballanta Academy’s courtyard (which is supposed to be upgraded to a small open-air theatre), the cinema at Lagoonda Hotel, some churches, hotels and bars (such as O’Casey’s)³⁷ and Lumley Beach (the main city beach). Most of them are in the Western, more affluent part of the city, which is also home to the National Stadium that is sometimes used for large cultural events (such as the celebrations of Sierra Leone’s 50th anniversary of independence in 2011), festivals and concerts. However, given the size and rental cost of the stadium (on top of other costs such as security, light and sound system) it is difficult for smaller organisations to break even, let alone make a profit when putting on events there.³⁸

5.2.2 Education and training

There is a significant lack of education and training facilities and opportunities for theatre and the CCIs more broadly in Sierra Leone, in terms of both technical and managerial skills that could strategically and holistically underpin the capacity needed for the context-sensitive development of the CCIs. Initial music education, for example, happens mostly through churches and their brass bands. Performing arts training, more generally, is only offered at a couple of fee-paying private schools (the Ballanta Academy of Music and Performing Arts, the Rozinka School for the Performing Arts and the relatively new Empire Arts Institute), and to some extent as part of the teacher training at Milton Margai College of Education and Technology and as part of the English and Cultural Studies courses at Fourah Bay College’s English Department and Institute of African Studies (introduced in Chapter 4). The few existing educational opportunities are thus dominated by informal training, self-study and ad-hoc

³⁷ The owners of O’Casey’s had plans to grow the bar, which hosted regular live music concerts and other cultural events, into a cultural hub, to also offer a platform for other organisations and projects across the CCIs. But due to Covid-19, the bar had to be closed and the property was returned to the landlord; ‘we still have that plan [to grow O’Casey’s into a cultural hub] in the back of our mind, but everything would need to start from scratch’ (Cairnes, T., Producer, 2020, personal communication).

³⁸ The map of Freetown in Figure 2 locates the above-mentioned spaces that are used for performances.

workshops, either by international institutions like the British Council (more on this in Section 5.3.3 below) or by local cultural and creative organisations and enterprises themselves. The Freetong Players International, for example, have for years informally trained their own performers, or We Own TV Sierra Leone, a filmmaking collective, occasionally offer workshops on scriptwriting and the use of technology, equipment and software.

While it is certainly important, as mentioned above, to question rigid dichotomies such as 'formal' versus 'informal' training and their usefulness within the context of the CCIs and their development (not just in Africa), it is also important to reflect on the different values and functions of formal and informal training in different locales and contexts. Mbaye (2013), for example, argues that cultural workers in West Africa see formal training and learning as a tool to accredit and legitimise their informal experience and training, whereas cultural workers in the Global North often feel unprepared by their initial formal training and thus prefer informal on-the-job learning. Thus, while formal training can be considered a significant 'postpractice' requirement in one locale, it may be less useful, maybe even irrelevant in another.

Irrespective of these dialectics, several of my interviewees suggest that the general scarcity of training opportunities – whether formal or informal – affects the development, professionalisation and recognition of the CCIs in Sierra Leone. Basu also gives an example of the effects of the lack of training facilities in his research on the cultural heritage sector in Sierra Leone: due to the lack of opportunities and resources to further heritage conservation and management the protection that existing legislation provided for national monuments was only ever nominal (Basu, 2015; Basu and Sam, 2016).

However, a private Malaysian university (Limkokwing University) opened a campus in Freetown in 2017, offering diploma and bachelor courses in wider creative economy disciplines such as sound and music technology, architectural technology, interior design, graphic design, digital photography, digital media, ICT and software engineering (Limkokwing University, 2020). While it is encouraging to see such courses offered in Sierra Leone, the main question is who can afford to pay their fees? Given Sierra Leone's socio-economic context I mentioned before and the relatively low average buying power in Sierra Leone (which will be expanded on in the next section, 5.2.3), private institutions like the Limkokwing University are likely to only provide access to education for an already well-established socio-economic segment of society.

The issue of limited access to education and training opportunities for theatre practitioners and cultural workers more broadly, especially in terms of higher education, thus also has to be seen within the wider context of the impact of commodification, neoliberalism and neoliberal capitalism on education. It has been argued, for example, that commodified universities have become 'the purveyors of credentials [in the sense of a certification of learning that has value in the economy], saleable skills, [and just] another consumption

experience' (Miller, 2010, p. 204). Furthermore, focusing on efficiency over equity, neoliberal education policies promote governance reforms (such as output-based aid or results-based finance), cost-cutting and market solutions through private schools, thus reproducing social and economic inequalities (Klees, 2017), but also changing the notion of education as a public good and the experience of education per se. The World Bank, in particular, is considered to have spread the neoliberal education reform agenda across the Global South, '[influencing] the global directions for education policy, backed by conditional grant and loan money that ensures countries follow those directions' (Klees, 2017, p.5).

The *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* highlights the importance of education for the transmission of traditions and cultural values and thus commits to promoting an educational system that 'stimulates and rewards creativity, enhances cultural understanding and appreciation and develops moral values and ethical behaviour drawing largely from our traditions and cultural values' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 108). It also promotes '[the teaching of] the traditional industries and performing arts [such as theatre] at all levels of the educational system' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 97) among its strategies to develop the CCIs. While the policy commitment to education on culture in the sense of 'traditions', heritage and a way of life is implemented to some extent in the current primary and secondary school curriculum (which also includes performing arts at junior secondary level), there are no provisions made to date for a framework on professional training in the form of vocational or tertiary education that would underpin the context-sensitive and context-specific development of the CCIs.

In his opening statement at a 'sensitisation workshop' on mainstreaming culture and creative industries into the trade policy in 2016, the then APC Deputy Minister of Tourism and Cultural Affairs emphasised the importance of capacity building to support domestic production across the CCIs and highlighted the following priority training areas: business planning, management, marketing, ICT and product design and packaging (Fofanah Bellah, 2016). But he did not expand on how this should or could be achieved and to date no clear steps have been taken into that direction. Furthermore, the CCIs have also still not been mainstreamed into Sierra Leone's trade policy. As both these were initiatives of the previous APC government, it remains to be seen if and how the current SLPP government will take them forward and respond to the current lack of education and training opportunities as well as to other challenges the CCIs face.

5.2.3 Financing and funding

Besides the structural aspects already discussed above, other factors such as the challenging business environment and the limited access to funding and financing further contribute to the fragile value chain across the CCIs and thus constitute considerable threats for their growth

and sustainability. As noted above, the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs has only a relatively small budget at its disposal and its existing support mechanisms, besides funding the five national institutions mentioned above in Section 5.2.1, tend to focus on the promotion of cultural activities with branding or quick revenue-generating benefits, often as part of a wider heritage and tourism agenda.

The patronage of the arts for branding purposes by political parties has a long history in Sierra Leone. According to Nunley (1985), party symbols, such as those of the APC and the SLPP, were already used in the 1960s for the decoration of lanterns during the popular Lantern Festival described in Chapter 3. Nunley also suggests that both the rise of the APC itself and the subsequent introduction of the one-party state in 1978 were supported by the APC's patronage of lantern-building groups and masquerade societies and their ability to mobilise followers (Nunley, 1985). Today, political parties still offer occasional ad-hoc support for certain cultural representations and events, mainly for displays of 'national culture' and folklore; for example, at festivals, on occasions of nation-wide celebrations (such as the country's Independence Day, as in the Figures 10 and 11 below) or for 'political cheerleading' as part of their political campaigns before elections. In this context culture is thus mainly instrumentalised to further a political agenda, in the sense of promoting institutional legitimacy or a certain type of propaganda. This kind of support, however, does not feed into the sustainable growth of artistic and creative practices, cultural organisations, or the ecology of culture more broadly.



Figure 10: Performance at the National Stadium in Freetown in 2011 (funded by the government) on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Sierra Leone's Independence Day (photo by the author)



Figure 11: Performers in the colours of the Sierra Leonean flag at the National Stadium in Freetown in 2011 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Sierra Leone's Independence Day in 2011 (photo by the author)

Financial and structural support by public institutions for theatre and the CCIs more broadly is thus almost non-existent and only a small range of cultural and creative activities are currently supported by NGOs and development agencies (mainly funding theatre for educational and developmental purposes, as analysed in Chapter 4) or by private and business sponsors (such as mobile phone companies or breweries) – as the quote below emphasises.

The only way you make money as a musician [in Sierra Leone] is to somehow have a relationship with a mobile phone company. And primarily that's Africell. (Producer, Interviewee #21, 2016, personal communication)

The challenge with sponsorships, however, is that they are often also only ad-hoc and once-off payments around a particular project or event, and they thus do not lend themselves to supporting longer-term organisational or sector development either.

There is a tendency in the cultural sector – especially it seems in countries with relatively well-funded and well-functioning public support for culture – to look down upon the commodification and commercialisation of culture. This criticism is often part of a wider critique of neoliberalism, the market society and capitalist globalisation of culture, which have changed, and keep changing, the *modus operandi* of the CCIs, as discussed in Chapter 2.

This is an era in which there is a global market in culture and cultural production; in which multinational corporate interests are even seeking to generate monopolistic or oligopolistic copyright, patent and intellectual property rights over cultural productions; and where lifestyles are increasingly packaged for consumption and delivered wholesale into our living spaces primarily through the television and internet. (Mudimbe, 2012, p. xiv)

These critical voices also highlight the dangers of 'selling out', such as funding agencies' and patrons' interests, or generally financial interests, superseding the interests of artists and the public more widely. These dangers are obviously real, and they do have significant implications for both practitioners and audiences on several different levels, as discussed in Chapter 4. This criticism may sometimes also be part of a general nostalgia for times and circumstances when it was more important to 'democratise' culture than to make money with it, as the quote below suggests:

We got into theatre when [...] the world was not so commercial. In the days of the Dele Charley [...] we were told that even if there was one person in the auditorium, as long as we had advertised, we should perform for that one person because that's their entitlement. [...] So, money was a premium. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #9, 2016, personal communication)

But considering money as a premium is certainly easier when you are not fully dependant on this money and when you have another source of income, as many Sierra Leonean theatre directors and playwrights of Dele Charley's generation from the late 1960s to the 1980s did. But if you do not have any other income, the question may often not so much be whether to 'sell out' or not, but whether and how to make a living as an artist or a creative entrepreneur. Hence, when analysing the financial aspects of cultural production, and more generally the commodification of culture in Sierra Leone and other African countries, it is thus important to consider the reality of artists and creative entrepreneurs in these countries, who often do not have an alternative income or access to abundant public funding.

In these cases – especially in contexts where there is very little public funding for culture like in Sierra Leone – the choice is thus not whether to 'succumb' to market forces, but more about how to use these forces for one's own purposes and benefits (Huggan, 2001). This notion also relates to the argument that cultural production is not located either in the community or in the market; it is located in both (De Beukelaer, 2012). As a result of this, however, it is even more important to have strong and suitable policies, laws and institutions that protect communities and can enhance the success of especially individual artists and small cultural organisations within the wider market environment.

Commercialising your cultural or creative expression obviously also does not necessarily equal 'selling out'. There are examples whereby following a commercial business model and avoiding the dependency on public funding (and the agendas that come with public funding too) can even support the growth of an alternative, critical arts scene. In Nigeria, for example, a new privately funded fringe theatre scene has developed in the last fifteen to twenty years, supported by commercial business models and a generally growing festival and event

culture.³⁹ But this does not necessarily mean that entertainment is their main objective, even if some of the work is very accessible and less experimental, as many artists feel a strong commitment to speaking out about important issues and to presenting critical observations of contemporary society through their work (International organisation staff member, Interviewee #29, 2020, personal communication). Some also argue that the commercialisation of popular theatre in Africa has led to more full-time theatre practitioners, greater productivity and better performances (Musa, 1998). There is also a general sense that ‘the exciting work and growth [in the cultural sectors across West Africa] is driven by independent, dynamic arts organisations funded by the private sector’ (British Council, 2017, p. 14).

In this context it is also important to remember that, as discussed in Chapter 2, the meaning of ‘commodity’ itself is culturally negotiated (Appadurai, 2005; Mukhopadhyay, 2012). Analysing the production and dissemination of cultural expressions from this postcolonial and postmodern point of view also questions the rigid, binary and totalising systems of classification in modern Eurocentric thinking that have created divisions such as commodified versus noncommodified, gift versus sale, market versus community or material versus spiritual. The unstable meanings of commodities also create the potential for agency and subversion of dominant meanings – only, however, if one has the right and the ability to commodify and to control the terms of the sale or the meaning of the exchange, as legal scholars Margaret Jane Radin and Madhavi Sunder stress:

Another central insight [of recent research to rethink commodification] is that economic empowerment and cultural empowerment are indelibly linked. [...] Controlling culture – the arena though which we represent ourselves – is essential for attaining power. For better or worse, markets are a primary means of distributing and debating cultural representations. Thus, cultural control requires some market control. This is an important new turn in progressive theorizing; many progressives have previously resisted the commodification of culture, worried in particular about the appropriation of cultural forms and knowledge by outsiders. But the new authors deploy commodification as a strategy for both economic and cultural growth. (Radin and Sunder, 2005, p. 19)

But economic empowerment is not always that easily attained. It is, for example, nearly impossible for Sierra Leonean artists and creatives to get access to loans or investments from traditional sources, such as banks, as the CCIs are considered high risk, guarantees are hard

³⁹ For example, the Lagos Festival, the largest performing arts festival in Nigeria and West Africa, has been an important part of this growing festival culture, not just in Nigeria but across West Africa. It was founded by the British Council in 2013 as a platform to connect Nigerian and British artists and theatre sectors to enhance exchange, collaboration and professional development. The idea for the festival came as a response to the lack of cultural infrastructure and performance spaces that were undermining the growth of the theatre sector in Lagos. Subsequently, the festival transitioned to being produced by a fully Nigerian team and since 2019 the festival is run by a completely independent Board (Lagos Theatre Festival, 2020).

to obtain and there is a lack of data that could underpin the assessment and support of investment plans. Furthermore, return on investment in the CCIs generally tends to be low, which is why the CCIs usually do not attract traditional kinds of investors (Nurse, 2016). In addition, microfinancing for CCI start-ups and SMEs or loan and investment schemes specific to the CCIs (such as the Creative Industry Financing Initiative funded by the National Bank of Nigeria,⁴⁰ the Creative Arts & Entertainment Industry Loans by the Nigerian Export – Import Bank,⁴¹ the Doen Foundation,⁴² Ayada Lab⁴³ or HEVA Fund in East Africa⁴⁴) are not available in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leoneans, however, do have access (at least in theory) to a regional guarantee fund, the Cultural Industries Guarantee Fund (CIGF), which facilitates the access of creative enterprises to bank financing by guaranteeing financing for projects between 1 million CFA francs (£1,390) and 155 million CFA francs (£215,000) (Nurse, 2016). Managed by the Investment and Development Bank of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in Lomé (Togo), it was initially set up in 2003 for five Francophone West African states (Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Senegal and Togo) but extended to all ECOWAS member states (including Sierra Leone) in 2009. In Sierra Leone, however, this fund does not seem to be known, as none of the interviewees for this research, neither practitioners nor government officials, mentioned it as a possible source of financing. The reason for this may be linked to the fact that the fund is operated from a Francophone West African country, as the exposure and exchange between Anglophone and Francophone West African countries is limited. But also, while researching this fund myself, it was difficult to find any further details on it, such as eligibility criteria and the application process.

Hence, due to the challenging funding and financing environment, personal investment (either from other sources of income or family money) is a major source of financing, especially

⁴⁰ More information on the Creative Industry Financing Initiative in Nigeria can be found here: <https://www.gtbank.com/business-banking/sme-banking/loans-advances/the-creative-industry-financing-initiative> (accessed 20th October 2020).

⁴¹ More information on Creative Arts & Entertainment Industry Loans by the Nigerian Export – Import Bank can be found here: <https://neximbank.com.ng/nigerian-creative-arts-entertainment-industry-loans/> (accessed 20th October 2020).

⁴² Through subsidies, equity investments and loans the Doen Foundation supports initiatives that enhance the cultural infrastructure in North, West and East Africa, focusing on Tunisia, Mali and Uganda. More information can be found here: <https://www.doen.nl/home-1.htm> (accessed 20th October 2020).

⁴³ Ayada Lab is an incubation and acceleration programme funded by the Goethe-Institut and the Institut Français in five West African countries (Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal). More information on it can be found here: <https://www.ayadalab.com/> (accessed 20th October 2020).

⁴⁴ HEVA Fund is a dedicated finance, business support and knowledge facility for creative industries in East Africa that offers seed and growth funds; the first of its kind in Africa. More information can be found here: <http://www.hevafund.com/> (accessed 20th October 2020).

for start-up and early-stage CCI organisations. According to a study on alternative and innovative funding mechanisms for CCIs in ACP countries, self-financing accounts for as much as 80 to 90 percent of all financing (Nurse, 2016, p. 10). But crowdfunding seems to become more and more popular and also more and more successful in many ACP countries, providing in addition easier access to the diaspora; 'it is here [in the diaspora market] where there is greater demand for crowdfunding activities as this market generally has a higher level of access to online banking services and greater familiarity with crowdfunding models' (Nurse, 2016, p. 11). This is certainly an opportunity for Sierra Leone, a country with large diasporas in the UK and the USA and personal remittances of around 62 million USD in 2019 alone, which represented 1.6 percent of GDP (World Bank, 2020b).

The *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* sets out a comprehensive system to support and finance culture, including a national endowment fund, funding from the national lottery, a percentage contribution from entertainment tax, tax deductions for financial contributions by NGOs, commercial and other organisations, a duty waiver on items used by cultural organisations as well as requiring the private sector 'to set aside a certain percentage of their profits for sponsoring social and cultural projects' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, pp. 140-141). However, this has not been set up yet either; according to my interviewees this is due to the lack of political commitment and the change in government after the 2018 general elections.

It is important to note, though, that while access to finance is certainly a crucial element for sector development, the notion that all an artist or creative entrepreneur requires to succeed is funding and financing is misleading. Financing mechanisms that operate as stand-alone interventions have been found not to lead to the desired level of sustainability across the CCIs (Nurse, 2016, p. 12), as they need a wide range of services and legislation to grow sustainably, including general support for ease of doing business.

5.2.4 Cultural consumption habits and audience development

Another challenge for sustainable growth across the CCIs in Sierra Leone relates to the country's relatively low average buying power and thus to the consumption / reception / transmission phase of the creative value chain. As mentioned in Chapter 2, it has been argued that demand for entertainment (and thus by extension the CCIs) rises with economic growth and increased leisure time, urbanisation and a young population (Bakker, 2008; cited in De Beukelaer, 2014). But in a country like Sierra Leone where the average buying power is generally relatively weak, arts and cultural or creative products and services are still often considered a luxury. This applies especially to the potentially more resource-intensive events and art forms, such as theatre (as pointed out below by a theatre and media professional in

Freetown), where production costs and thus ticket prices can be very high to cover expenses such as venue hire, sound and light system and marketing.

If you do theatre, probably you'd want to ask a minimum of 20,000 (£1.50) or 50,000 Leones (£3.80) for people to go watch. And people can for 5,000 Leones (£0.40) buy a pirated Nigerian movie and not only that, the neighbourhood can come to the house of who bought it to watch the movie. So why would I choose between putting food on the table and going to the theatre? Why would I go watch theatre and not go to my neighbour and watch [a movie] or just go and buy it? And you also have these makeshift video centres where you pay 1,000 Leones (£0.08) to watch [a movie] so that is what is going on now. (Theatre and media professional, Interviewee #12, 2016, personal communication)

Given that the annual income level of 64 percent of Sierra Leonean households lies below 10,000,000 Leones (£775) and that of 16 percent of households below 1,000,000 Leones (£77) (Statistics Sierra Leone, 2019, p. 190), the majority of Sierra Leoneans cannot afford to regularly spend between 20,000 (£1.50) or 50,000 Leones (£3.80) or even more on theatre or festival tickets (such as 60,000 Leones, £4.60, for a ticket at the Ma Dengn Festival). There are, however, ways and attempts to circumvent this issue, at least to a certain degree; such as the Freetown Music Festival being able to sell tickets for 5,000 Leones (£0.40) due to very successful fundraising from corporate sponsors, or the Freetong Players International using public spaces for their performances as much as possible.

But the issue of growing theatre audiences, and more generally consumers of cultural and creative content, products and services, is not only about making the economics of theatre or cultural production work for the Sierra Leonean context. It is also about addressing the social segmentation of cultural consumption and about audience development, as De Beukelaer suggests:

While many lament the relative inability of the wider population to pay for culture, some offer a different reading. It is, they argue, not only about the ability to pay, but also about the willingness to do so. There is, after all, always money for beer and the church. This links the 'willingness to pay' debate in cultural economics (Throsby 2001, 80–82) to the (limited) ability to pay, given the relative lack of spending power. (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 88)

To develop audiences and the 'willingness to pay' rests on increasing interest, reach and access, building relationships with existing and potential audiences and offering diverse types of engagement. In Ghana, for example, the diversification of theatre, new private cultural spaces and venues (such as Terra Alta in Accra) as well as street arts festivals (such as the Chale Wote Art Festival) – all offering an alternative to state-sponsored performances at the National Theatre and using unconventional performance spaces – have started attracting new and younger audiences for theatre and the performing arts in a wider sense. Furthermore, a new generation of playwrights and performers (such as Elisabeth Efua Sutherland) are not only challenging contemporary society in Ghana and beyond by producing plays and

performances focused on socio-political issues, but they also challenge the conventional notion of 'theatre' by using diverse spaces and performance contexts (International organisation staff member, Interviewee #28, 2020, personal communication).

The issue of access, especially in the sense of mental access and cultural democracy, also links to cultural and creative education and the role of new technologies and media. The *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* sets out strategies to 'mitigate the impact of cultural imperialism and promote our culture both locally and internationally, [for example by promoting] the use of local arts and culture in the media' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 19). The policy also charges the Ministry of Information and Communications with ensuring that a percentage of airtime is allocated to local content (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 128); it is not indicated though how high this percentage should be.

Furthermore, no data is available on how much local cultural content is actually distributed by Sierra Leonean media. There is one radio station, *Culture Radio* (a charitable community organisation), who is committed to airing mainly local music and whose mission is 'to safeguard and promote our physical, ethnic, linguistic and spiritual heritage [...] [and] to promote our culture and artistic expression' (Culture Radio, 2020). But judging from the interviews for this research as well as my own experience, not a lot of local cultural content is generally distributed across the whole media landscape. Hence, the lack of Sierra Leonean content on radio and television, but also the lack of cultural journalism, which both could promote the CCIs and raise awareness and interest, further contribute to the invisibility and underestimation of the CCIs.

A number of interviewees for this research also stated that there would be more audiences for theatre in Sierra Leone if it was more widely available and marketed in a different way, especially to attract younger people, by speaking to diverse ways of consuming cultural content in diverse spaces, both offline and online.

A lot of people, they say [theatre] is old fashioned and nobody wants to go sit in a boring hall. [...] You have to incorporate certain things to make it more interesting, more lively for you to get people's attention to actually come and sit and watch it. If plays do want to compete with [music and film] you have to step up your game or else people won't show up. (Musician, Interviewee #1, 2016, personal communication)

However, some analysts, such as De Beukelaer (2015), argue that the absence of demand is not just a result of the absence of supply and that there has been extensive demand, production and circulation of cultural content in many African countries, but that this has not led to the expected social and economic yield. While De Beukelaer does not offer a direct answer as to why the social and economic yield has so far been less than anticipated in many African countries, he describes how, for example, cheap digital production facilities

created more potential for overproduction and overdistribution in the Ghanaian and Burkinabe music industries, which reduces the potential to earn a living from music production (De Beukelaer, 2015, p. 89) – and this is certainly also true for other African countries, such as Sierra Leone.

The specific reasons for low social and economic yield certainly depend on the specific context in individual countries, but they often do seem to be linked to fragile value chains and other, more global challenges, such as challenges linked to digital technologies. While some argue that new ICTs offer great opportunities for the CCIs, such as lowering production costs and providing access to global markets (e.g., Barrowclough and Kozul-Wright, 2008b) and consider them in general essential to economic development and the promotion of democratisation, social ‘advancement’ and cultural ‘progress’ (e.g., Hivos, 2016), others also point out the limitations of ICTs and are more sceptical about their true potential due to issues such as reinforcing inequality, the concentration of power, the intensification of commercialism and unpaid labour (e.g., Hesmondhalgh, 2019).

A fact is, however, that despite unstable electricity and internet, a still relatively low internet penetration rate of 13.1 percent of the total population (as mentioned in Chapter 4) and a relatively high average cost of around £4 for 2GB of mobile data (which is 0.5 percent of the annual income of 64 percent of Sierra Leonean households), more and more cultural professionals and creative entrepreneurs in Sierra Leone use online and digital technologies and platforms (such as Instagram, Facebook and WhatsApp) to increase visibility, expand their reach and create pluralistic narratives about what culture means in Sierra Leone today. Access to online technologies and platforms has of course been particularly important during the Covid-19 pandemic, which put a halt to much of Sierra Leone’s cultural life.

Contemporary cultural creation, curation, production, distribution and consumption is thus inherently linked to new technologies, increasing outlets and thereby giving a larger pool of people a voice to share diverse experiences and memories.

[African artists and creatives] realise that they have something to offer and that their work doesn’t have to be packaged in a certain way. People are prouder of what they have. (International organisation staff member, Interviewee #28, 2020, personal communication)

And if access increases and becomes more egalitarian and equitable, technology can also enhance the creation of new networks and communities and shift the consumption of not only knowledge and information, but also the consumption of cultural content – all of which in turn has the potential to shift centres of power.

However, while new technologies play a significant role in the recent developments of theatre (as outlined in Chapter 4, particularly in relation to radio drama) and across the CCIs in Sierra Leone and while the lack of cultural venues has also contributed to a rapid

digitalisation, production and distribution remain critical challenges in Sierra Leone, especially in the music and film industries. For example, musicians who can afford it (such as stars like Emmerson and Jimmy B) record their albums in Ghana or Nigeria, where they have access to higher quality recording and mastering equipment and better trained sound technicians. And while the increasing access to digital technologies led to a growth of Sierra Leone's film industry,⁴⁵ it faces substantial competition from Nollywood and soap operas from the Philippines and Indonesia, which are very popular and can often be purchased at a cheaper price. In summary, adequate equipment, software, resources and training are an issue across the CCIs, which also affects the output quality and in turn audience interest.

But the steadily increasing technological capacity across Sierra Leone (in terms of both technology in itself and a growing digital literacy) does provide key opportunities for theatre and the CCIs more broadly: for awareness-raising and access (using digital technologies for information on and advocacy for culture and diverse cultural expressions); programming and audience development (using digital tools to grow and engage audiences both online and offline); cultural production and distribution (developing new creative practices, goods and services and dissemination channels); the documentation, safeguarding and archiving of cultural expressions (such as developing databases on practitioners, and digital archives of performances, sounds, images and indigenous musical instruments); and offering diverse narratives about history, heritage and culture. However, these opportunities may only be translated into actual change and impact if more and more artists and creatives are able to consciously navigate, and maybe even overcome, some of the new technologies' limitations mentioned above, if the necessary knowledge base and skills can be developed and if access in general increases and becomes more egalitarian.

5.3 International organisations and cultural relations

5.3.1 Introduction

As a result of the above-discussed lack of education opportunities and financing mechanisms for the CCIs, international organisations and relationships play a disproportionately large and significant role in the current cultural ecology in Sierra Leone, as they offer sought-after funding, partnerships, technical assistance, capacity building, collaboration and exposure. But it is also Sierra Leone's general 'long history of foreign influence [that has shaped] relationships with aid and intervention in the present' (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013, p. 21). The

⁴⁵ Films made by small enterprises, such as WeOwnTV (which is supported by a US based non-profit-organisation), or by charities, such as WAYout, have appeared on national and international television and have won awards in festivals. WeOwnTV's documentary 'Survivors' (which portrays Sierra Leone during the Ebola outbreak, exposing the complexity of the epidemic and the socio-political turmoil it caused) was even nominated for an Emmy Award for Outstanding Social Issue Feature Documentary.

2013 Cultural Policy also highlights the importance of international cultural relations for 'projecting [Sierra Leone's] identity, image and values abroad' and 'enhancing the participation of the international community in the preservation, protection and promotion of its cultural heritage and artistic creativity' (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 44).

This context gives international organisations significant political, economic and social capital and power; not only to promote and implement their own agendas and approaches but also in terms of shaping the whole ecology of culture in Sierra Leone through their de facto policy-making based on their interventions. This includes INGOs determining the type of theatre that is currently producible, as analysed in Chapter 4, and thereby – to extend Roy's (2014) criticism of NGOs and their effect on the public psyche – also affecting the potential for alternative types of theatre and a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector overall. While the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs has of course de jure authority in terms of setting formal policies and strategies for the sector, the lack of resources to fully implement these adds to the de facto authority of international organisations and their programmes. Furthermore, international organisations and their programmes do not necessarily respond and conform to the existing 2013 Cultural Policy and its vision, aims and strategic objectives. This challenges not only the democratic viability and authority of Sierra Leone's existing cultural policy but also the democratisation, localisation and meaningfulness of future policy-making processes, which in turn has significant implications for the power structures guiding policy transfer, the global synchronisation of policy approaches and the adoption of fast policies (as outlined above in Section 5.1.3).

The next two sections therefore offer a more detailed analysis of the initiatives, strategies and governmentality of international cultural organisations operating in Sierra Leone and international cultural relations more broadly. Before doing so, it is helpful to distinguish between the concepts of 'international cultural relations' and 'cultural diplomacy', which are often used interchangeably in practice. However, existing literature conceives of cultural diplomacy – in the sense of the instrumentalisation of culture by states and their agents for the purposes of foreign policy – as part of the broader field of international cultural relations, which are shaped by diverse types of agents and activities (e.g., Figueira, 2013; Mitchell, 1986):

It is undeniable that nowadays non-state actors and their activities are an increasingly important part of cultural relations (Isar, 2010); however, states (and the organizations they construct and participate in) remain one of the most important structuring agents of the international system, which has become a global state system with the spread of the state institution worldwide (Jackson & Sorensen, 2007). (Figueira, 2015, pp. 164-165)

This has also implications for the notion of 'culture' that is portrayed in and exported through international cultural relations, as states and their construction of nationalism still tend to conceive of culture in a more static and less diverse way (as outlined throughout the previous chapters); especially in their cultural diplomacy policies and practices (Figueira, 2015). Furthermore, it is important to remember that international instruments (such as the various UNESCO conventions) that shape cultural and creative sectors globally and normative narratives on them (as discussed above in relation to the creative economy discourse) are also products of power plays and subsequent agreements between states (Figueira, 2015).

Apart from international NGOs who only support a narrow scope of cultural expressions as part of their development strategies and the wider sustainable development agenda pronounced in the SDGs (as analysed in Chapter 4), the number of international organisations based in Sierra Leone who are active in the Sierra Leonean cultural and creative sector is very low. There are currently only two – UNESCO and the British Council – and both act on behalf of states and their governmentality, albeit in different ways. While the British Council is the UK's 'international organisation for cultural relations and educational opportunities' (British Council, 2020), UNESCO is an intergovernmental organisation whose policies, programmes and budgets are determined by its General Conference, which is comprised by all its member states (UNESCO, 2021a). As such, UNESCO's remit and sphere of influence is not always without conflict between the organisation's ideals and its member states' national interests, to the extent that 'UNESCO, [...] like other organizations of the UN system features theatres where the power game of cultural diplomacy is played at a multilateral level (Figueira, 2015, p. 181). Up until the civil war, the Alliance Française also had an office in Sierra Leone, but it was not reopened after the war.

Hence, despite the influx of international aid money and NGOs into Sierra Leone since the end of the civil war and despite the global celebration of culture as both an enabler and driver of development, Sierra Leone can be considered an 'aid orphan' (Rogerson and Steensen, 2009) in the field of culture due to the relative absence or inactivity of international organisations operating at the nexus between culture and development (such as the Goethe Institut, the Doen Foundation or the Arterial Network, who are much more active in other parts of Sub-Saharan Africa). This is particularly concerning as inefficiencies and inequities that lead to aid orphans 'can entail considerable global costs, to the extent that the aid community as a whole fails to invest systematically where aid is expected to have the most impact' (Rogerson and Steensen, 2009, p. 1).

5.3.2 UNESCO

UNESCO seems quite active in Sierra Leone, but its budget for the country is relatively low – USD 19,705 for 2020 (UNESCO Transparency Portal, 2020) – and its focus disproportionately

directed towards education. Out of the thirteen projects active between January 2020 and December 2021 only three relate directly to the cultural and creative sector and the other ten focus on education, such as promoting and supporting digital skills development, lifelong learning, teacher training and policy review. Similarly, the UNESCO Institute for Statistics website offers relatively abundant data on education and literacy in Sierra Leone, but none on culture.

Furthermore, the three cultural projects active in Sierra Leone between January 2020 and December 2021 are all not just specific to Sierra Leone, but part of regional projects implemented across several West African countries. They relate to the promotion of CCIs (to become drivers and enablers of sustainable growth and employment), the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage (in Sierra Leone this involves a needs assessment and the development of a five-year project plan)⁴⁶ and the conservation and promotion of World Heritage sites to increase their eco/historical-cultural tourism value (UNESCO Transparency Portal, 2020).

As outlined in Chapter 2, existing literature discusses in detail the UN's and particularly UNESCO's role in linking 'culture' and 'development' (e.g., De Beukelaer and Freitas, 2015; Maraña, 2010; Singh, 2015; Vlassis, 2017; Wiktor-Mach, 2019) and their position in the more recent creative economy discourse, highlighting that UNESCO shifted the focus in the creative economy debate on its social and human aspects before its economic aspects and that UNESCO, more generally, stresses the importance of development beyond economic terms (e.g., De Beukelaer, 2015). Somewhat paradoxically then, two of the three current interventions by UNESCO in the Sierra Leonean cultural and creative sector, although spanning a variety of forms of culture from tangible and intangible cultural heritage to CCIs, are explicitly focused on economic growth.

Furthermore, as of mid-2021 there are still no Sierra Leonean sites inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List, although six Sierra Leonean sites were added to the Tentative List in 2012. Out of these six sites, two are classified as natural heritage, three as cultural heritage and one as mixed heritage. Two of the cultural heritage sites (Bunce Island and The Gateway to the Old King's Yards) directly relate to Sierra Leone's position in the transatlantic slave trade and are thus not only of national, but also global interest.

UNESCO's World Heritage Convention (1972) and World Heritage List have been widely criticised for its Eurocentrism, nationalist agendas, not considering diverse understandings of heritage and the needs of diverse communities enough, as well as for other serious issues linked to the designation of World Heritage sites, such as forced relocations of communities

⁴⁶ It was not possible to find out through my research what the objectives of this needs assessment are and if it includes theatre or theatre-related intangible heritage.

(Meskell, 2013). Furthermore, it is questionable ‘how the international community chooses to identify, reify, protect, and promote something called “World Heritage” as a privileged category’ (Meskell, 2013, p. 483). It has also been shown that political and economic factors, such as having a seat in the World Heritage Committee (which in turn is affected by a country’s political and economic power), impact both the nomination and selection process of potential World Heritage sites (Bertacchini and Saccone, 2012). But despite all this, most countries still seek the attention and value that World Heritage List inscriptions bring with them (Meskell, 2013).

Both Sierra Leonean and international advocates also hope that the inscription of the six tentative Sierra Leonean sites on the World Heritage List would ‘officially’ recognise their importance, with the view of not only being able to protect these sites better, but also to contribute to a positive image of Sierra Leone and thus to cultural tourism as well as economic growth. This is obviously an important and potentially rewarding endeavour on many different levels, from protecting important historical sites and enhancing cultural diversity to offering economic opportunities. However, one fears that this ‘local authenticity’, reinforced by national and international institutions, is only produced as a commodity for global tourism, as exemplified by the positioning of Bunce Island for African American slave heritage tourism (Zetterstrom-Sharp, 2013) and the general promotion of culture as a vehicle for tourism, discussed above. Furthermore, it will be important to ensure that local communities can truly participate in and benefit from this heritage, which is their human right and also an important aspect of cultural democracy; for example, by fostering more collaborative and participatory heritage conservation, protecting and enforcing ownership rights better and setting standards for the fair utilisation of heritage resources. It will also be crucial to link the protection of this tangible cultural heritage to the safeguarding of Sierra Leone’s intangible heritage in order to achieve a more holistic approach to the protection and promotion of heritage, as mentioned above in Section 5.1.3.

5.3.3 The United Kingdom and the British Council

The British Council, the UK’s international organisation for cultural relations, is currently the only foreign cultural institute represented in Sierra Leone, giving it a disproportionately large and unilateral influence on the cultural ecology. In 2015 the British Council launched a new global arts strategy, *Art Connects Us*, with the aim to ‘[find] new ways of connecting with and understanding each other through creativity’ (British Council, 2015, p. 1) and to ‘[increase] the number of cultural connections between the UK and the world [by 2021]’ (British Council, 2015, p. 3). The importance of arts and heritage for the UK’s cultural diplomacy and as part of its foreign policy strategies is also clearly stated in *Art Connects Us*:

[The increased number of cultural connections between the UK and the world and the programmes and projects to achieve this] will directly and indirectly create

value for the UK, through new international opportunities; access to a large international network; and increased influence for the UK more widely. This also meets the priorities of the UK's devolved administrations to promote their culture overseas. (British Council, 2015, p. 3)

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the British Council has offices in 20 countries and focuses its work on 'creating opportunities and enabling young people [defined by the British Council, at least for their arts programme, as persons aged 18 to 35] to fulfil their potential – improving their employability, resilience and networks' (British Council, 2017, p. 8). In 2017, a new arts strategy for Sub-Saharan Africa was launched (in line with *Art Connects Us*) and since then the British Council has been delivering its work in the arts in three clusters across SSA: West Africa (covering Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Senegal),⁴⁷ East Africa (covering Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan and Tanzania) and Southern Africa (covering Botswana, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe). As long as local and national contexts and sensitivities are taken into account in programming, this new regional approach provides a number of opportunities for artists and creative entrepreneurs in West Africa and other African regions, such as region-wide collaborations, platforms for showcasing work and access to audiences and consumers of cultural and creative content, goods and services.

Up until 2017 the British Council's arts work in West Africa focused on Nigeria, culminating in a UK/Nigeria season in 2015-16, which so far has been one of the British Council's largest arts programmes co-created in Africa (Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, 2019, p. 9). Over the last decade, before the more consolidated and strategic cluster approach, arts and CCI projects in Sierra Leone only received limited and more ad-hoc support. However, this does not necessarily mean that this type of approach did not have the potential for a longer lasting or sustainable impact. In 2004, for example, the British Council in Sierra Leone funded the British photographer Tim Hetherington and the Sierra Leonean photographer Sullivan Khallon to document the fast-disappearing Krio architecture of Freetown, which culminated in an exhibition and a publication of the photographs, accompanied by texts that offer both historical and personal perspectives on Krio architecture (Williams and Butler, 2005). This project is significant insofar as it also created a bank of digital images to be stored in the National Library, which is particularly meaningful in a country with weak archival services. The British Council in Sierra Leone is also credited for having had a pronounced effect on the theatre scene in Freetown prior to its decline from the late 1980s due to the training it offered and due to its auditorium being one of the few performance spaces

⁴⁷ Although there is a British Council office in Cameroon, it is not part of the West African arts cluster, as the British Council only offers English language courses and exams but no arts programme in Cameroon.

in town: 'The British Council was our home. [...] A lot of the short courses I've done in theatre have been facilitated by the British Council' (Academic and theatre professional, Interviewee #5, 2016, personal communication).

The British Council's arts programme in West Africa between 2019 and 2021 focuses on 'supporting the creation of new art and sharing this art to audiences both online and in person; sharing skills and knowledge between creative communities in West Africa and the UK; and creating new connections between young people in West Africa and the UK' (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020a). All programme activities fall into two main programme streams: 'Creative Economy' and 'Connecting'.

The Creative Economy programme offers training in business and digital skills, networking events, access to new markets, connections to resources, financial opportunities and mentoring through specific activities, such as the Creative Enterprise Programme,⁴⁸ Creative Hustles⁴⁹ and the Multiplier Lab⁵⁰ (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020b). One can certainly argue that through this programme and approach the British Council does not only add to the promotion of creative entrepreneurship and the creative economy discourse, as discussed above, but also to the issue of the 'workshopisation' of education and professional training in the CCIs. One can also argue further that the latter frames the development of the CCIs solely in technical terms and promotes the simplistic notion that skills transfers, capitalisation and entrepreneurship training are *the* solution to the challenges that existing cultural and creative practices in many countries of the Global South face (De Beukelaer, 2015). However, it is a reality that in a country with a significant lack of training opportunities and longer-term education programmes for the CCIs, many practitioners make use of any source of training they can access. The choice is thus not necessarily whether to 'succumb' to this type of training, the rationale of international organisations it might transmit and the hegemonies within which these international organisations are situated. But the choice might be about how to leverage this training and the relationships it can offer judiciously and for one's own benefits; a choice that is supported by the notion of an active and empowered local agency.

The Connecting programme offers mobility grants, a digital arts residency taking place within festivals (CollabNowNow), an exchange and showcase opportunity for SSA and UK

⁴⁸ The Creative Enterprise Programme is a five-day workshop with the aim to support entrepreneurs in the CCIs in the very early stages of their business. The programme is delivered in partnership with the UK-based innovation foundation NESTA and local trainers (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020b).

⁴⁹ Creative Hustles are seminar-style events that offer young people the opportunity to find out more about artistic and non-artistic livelihood options across various CCI value chains (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020b).

⁵⁰ The aim of the Multiplier Lab is to strengthen intermediaries such as cultural / creative hubs and sector support organisations, to enhance their capacity to engage, connect and collaborate with their peers in other parts of West Africa and the UK (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020b).

festivals (FestivalConnect) and a platform for SSA and UK artists to collaborate and create new art (new Art new Audience) (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020c). The Covid-19 pandemic has of course impacted the implementation of this programme for most of 2020, but as many activities as possible were revised to fit new restrictions and moved online. The pandemic, however, further highlighted a lack of digital capacity and inequalities in terms of access to technology and internet across many West African countries (International organisation staff member, Interviewee #28, 2020, personal communication).

Whereas the British Council's arts programme in every West African country works towards the two core programme streams mentioned above, the specific programme and activities in each country respond to the country context and its needs. In Sierra Leone, the programme focuses on film, fashion and music. The Freetown Film Lab, for example, offers filmmakers trainings in storytelling, script writing, producing, directing and marketing 'to compete in the international film market and hence improve their quality of production and livelihood' (British Council Sierra Leone, 2020b).

Across West Africa, the British Council programme is now mainly delivered by local partners, which should contribute to more sustainable impact and to enhancing the wider ecology of culture. These partners are often hubs in some form or shape, as hubs already have specific context knowledge and existing networks and can convene people in their spaces. According to the Arts Programme Manager in West Africa, this was particularly useful in Sierra Leone, as they were also more aware of potential issues, such as issues with digital accessibility and connectivity, and they were better placed to find solutions. For example, many invitees of an online event during the Covid-19 pandemic did not have enough data to stream a 1.5-hour event or had internet issues, which led to the videos being shared via WhatsApp instead (International organisation staff member, Interviewee #28, 2020, personal communication).

While many practitioners welcome the opportunities provided by the British Council for international connections, collaboration and exposure to different ways of working and other cultural contexts, there is a concern about these collaborations being truly equal and of similar benefit to all parties involved. A simple example for this is the fact that due to visa restrictions many African artists and creatives cannot travel as easily as their UK counterparts, especially not to the UK. International cultural relations and cultural policy scholars such as Annika Hampel (2017) also argue that collaborations within current cultural diplomacy programmes are often not true collaborations, but skewed by one-sided selection processes, unequal funding and allocation of resources, lacking intercultural competencies and a focus on outputs and outcomes rather than processes. Hampel therefore argues for 'fair cooperation' to counter prevailing neocolonial dynamics within cultural diplomacy approaches and strategies, based on a de-hierarchisation of collaboration partners, continuous attention to equal opportunities

and conditions and 'more equitable prerequisites, structures and frameworks – which need to be created and provided by political institutions, networks and agencies' (Hampel, 2017, p. 101).

Furthermore, as one of the UK's key agents for cultural diplomacy, the British Council focuses on facilitating connections between the UK and the countries in which it works. But if the British Council wants to be a true convenor of equitable connections with and across Africa, it should also use its organisational history – and the colonial history of the country it represents – for 'some good', by using its presence and networks in various African countries to provide a platform for more multilateral connections and more cooperation of Africans with Africans, in the spirit of supporting South-South relations overall.

However, given the British Council's role in contributing to the implementation of the UK's foreign policy and international cultural relations strategies – which is clearly stated not just in the British Council's global arts strategy mentioned above, but also in other official British government documents, such as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's British Council Tailored Review (2019) or the report by the Parliamentary Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence (2014) – it is clear that the British Council and its programmes have to be strategically aligned with government priorities and 'must continue to ensure that it serves wider UK interests to best effect' (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2019, p. 5). Hence, even though the British Council is an arm's length body of the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (known as the Foreign and Commonwealth Office until September 2020), it is not independent from government, its pressures and governmentality. This is illustrated, for example, by the testimonies to the Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's influence (2014) or the recommendation by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's report in 2019 to 'work with the Department for International Trade to promote more effectively commercial opportunities in the education sector' (Foreign and Commonwealth Office, 2019, p. 6). As such, it is doubtful to what extent the British Council can truly decide and shape its role as a convenor of connections with and across Africa.

Another example of the close cultural relations between Sierra Leone and the UK is the relationship between Freetown and Kingston upon Hull (commonly abbreviated to Hull), who became twinned towns in 1979 to 'promote friendship and understanding; strengthen commercial, educational and cultural links and stimulate and foster mutual exchanges at all levels between the peoples of the two cities' (Hull City Council, 2020). Hence, town-twinning, a strategy by local governments to foster commercial, educational, cultural and other social interactions between communities, can be understood as cultural diplomacy at a local level and thus be conceptualised within the context of 'city diplomacy' (Acuto, Morissette and Tsouros, 2017) or 'paradiplomacy' (Tavares, 2016). Freetown is also twinned with four other cities, three of them in the USA (Kansas City since 1974, New Haven since 1996 and

Charleston since 2019) and the fourth being Hefei in China (since 1984). The relationships with these four other twinned cities, however, do not seem to receive the same level of attention and certainly did and do not have the same impact on Sierra Leone's ecology of culture as the relationship with Hull.

Over the years, the relationship between Freetown and Hull resulted in a number of cultural and creative projects, such as an Arts Council of England supported project in 2006 encouraging young people in Hull and Freetown to explore each other's lives through film, photography and writing (Stephenson, 2020). But as part of Hull's status and programme as UK City of Culture in 2017, a year-long programme titled Hull-Freetown 2017 was developed. It supported exhibitions (such as *The House of Kings and Queens*, a photography exhibition by Lee Price on the lives of LGBTIQ+ people in Sierra Leone),⁵¹ commissions (such as a Freetown version of a short film called *This City Belongs to Everyone* that had supported Hull's City of Culture bid),⁵² collaborative projects (such as a series of short films titled *How Do You Have a Happy Life*, which portray the daily lives of residents of both cities),⁵³ exchanges and institutional links (for example between the Hull Freedom Festival, the Freetown Music Festival and the King Dus Arts Festival in Freetown).

While the UK has thus for a long time played an important role in Sierra Leone's international cultural relations, and still does, due to Sierra Leone's unique history and role in the transatlantic slave trade and its eventual abolition, British colonialism and a large Sierra Leonean diaspora in the UK, Sierra Leone's international cultural relations have in more recent years also been shaped by the growing influence of China in Africa, which is not just based on economic but also international cultural relations efforts (Zhang, Wasserman and Mano, 2016). For example, in 2004 a Confucius Institute was established at Fourah Bay College in Freetown to promote Mandarin language studies and, more generally, Chinese culture (including martial arts and Tai Chi courses). The Confucius Institute also organises cultural exchanges, scholarships and job fairs, and thus also operates in the sphere of cultural diplomacy and culture and the economic, but it does not operate at the same level as UNESCO or the British Council and does not support the Sierra Leonean CCIs in any way.

⁵¹ Male same-sex sexual relations are illegal in Sierra Leone under the Offences Against the Person Act from 1861, a legacy of colonial legislation. More on the criminalisation of homosexuality in Sierra Leone can be read here: <https://www.humandignitytrust.org/country-profile/sierra-leone/> (accessed 28th October 2020).

⁵² The Hull short film *This City Belongs to Everyone* can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXJkDgBUR9c> and the Freetown version here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qu1Vd_0GPOc [both accessed 28th October 2020].

⁵³ All the *How Do You Have a Happy Life* short films can be watched here: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLN3UGbDhXoLMcJd9mOMxqxfFd4wt5MR7Q> [accessed 28th October 2020].

5.3.4 The African Union and the Economic Community of West African States

Although the African Union and ECOWAS do not play an active role in the Sierra Leonean cultural ecology and although none of the African Union's or ECOWAS' treaties and plans of action pertaining to culture are mentioned in the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* or seem to have influenced its development or the discourse on culture more generally, it is important in terms of Sierra Leone's international relations to briefly discuss the discourse, strategies and interventions across ECOWAS and the African Union attempting to support the development of the CCIs across West Africa and Africa respectively.

Already the *Treaty of Abuja* (1991), which established the African Economic Community, included a 'Protocol on Culture and African Cultural Common Market' (Article 70, Chapter XII). This was followed by the African Union's *Dakar Plan of Action* (1992), which was developed in the spirit of the World Decade for Cultural Development (1988-1997) and sought to provide a new framework for policy and action for culture in Africa (De Beukelaer, 2015), as well as by the second *Dakar Plan of Action on the Promotion of ACP Cultures and Cultural Industries* (2003), adopted not just by the African Union but by all ACP Ministers of Culture, the *Nairobi Plan of Action for Cultural Industries in Africa* (2005) and the *Algiers Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa* (2008), which updated the Nairobi Plan, based on 'all programmes and conventions on cultural development adopted by different Pan-African and international institutions' (African Union, 2008, p. 2).

It has been argued that the *Dakar Plan of Action* (1992) remained more a plan than leading to action and thus did not make much difference in reality (De Beukelaer, 2015), and the *Nairobi Plan of Action for Cultural Industries in Africa* (2005) indeed continued to highlight similar problems, such as the need for a common market for culture across Africa, piracy and the issue of high taxes on cultural products and activities (taxed as if they were luxury goods) versus low public subsidies (De Beukelaer, 2015). Furthermore, the *Nairobi Plan of Action for Cultural Industries in Africa* (2005) stressed that 'despite the completion of the liberation of the political spaces, economic and cultural spaces have not been liberated or organised' (African Union, 2005, p. 11). The *Algiers Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa* (2008) therefore also called for the implementation of 'a legal and institutional framework for the development of cultural products and their free movement in all African countries as a prelude to the full implementation of the African Economic Community, [...] [to] grant culture systematically a "policy subsidy" in the form of legislative and fiscal measures to foster cultural industries, in particular' (African Union, 2008, p. 13). While the Algiers Plan is also yet to fully achieve its desired impact, the African Continental Free Trade Area came into effect in January 2021 to 'create a single continental market for goods and services, with free movement of businesspersons and investments' (African Union, 2021a) – which will hopefully

also provide new opportunities for and have a positive effect on the CCIs. A number of contradictions within this context are yet to be resolved though, such as the contradiction between the call for a common market for culture and the attempts to implement protectionist measures at country level (De Beukelaer, 2015), like the allocation of a certain percentage of airtime to local content as discussed in Sierra Leone.

In 2006, the African Union also adopted the Charter for African Cultural Renaissance, which replaced the Cultural Charter for Africa from 1976 and aimed at promoting African culture and cultural heritage, cultural democracy and cultural co-operation as well as strengthening the role of culture in development strategies and processes and promoting peace (African Union, 2006). However, the Charter still has not been ratified by many Member States, including Sierra Leone (who signed but has not ratified it yet), which limits the Charter's influence, especially in terms of policy development. Interestingly then, the African Union chose as its theme for 2021 'Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want', a theme that is in stark contrast to the themes of the previous years, such as 'Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions For Africa's Development' in 2020, 'Refugees, Returnees and Internally Displaced Persons: Towards Durable Solutions to Forced Displacement in Africa' in 2019 and 'Winning the Fight Against Corruption: A Sustainable Path to Africa's Transformation' in 2018. The African Union also provides a platform for the Economic, Social and Cultural Council (ECOSOCC), which is a membership-based advisory body of the African Union, providing an opportunity for civil society organisations (including cultural organisations) to lobby African Union institutions and support the implementation of their policies and programmes (African Union, 2021b).

There are a number of other organisations and networks that have been established to enhance co-operation, support and knowledge exchange regionally and across the whole continent, such as the Observatory of Cultural Policies in Africa (to monitor cultural trends and policies, encourage their assimilation into sustainable development strategies and provide guidelines for policy design), the Bureau Export de la Musique Africaine (to support the promotion and export of African music across Africa and throughout the world) and the Arterial Network (to build continent-wide networks across all CCIs and support civil society groups). It has been argued that it was at Arterial Network's first African Creative Economy Conference in 2011 in Nairobi, Kenya, that the notion of an African creative economy and its contribution to development in Africa was first explicitly articulated within practitioners' circles (Mbaye and Pratt, 2020).

The ECOWAS Commission also has a Culture Division within its Department of Education, Science and Culture (created in 1985), which runs programmes relating to copyright and IPR, heritage and cultural exchange, education for the culture of peace and cultural industries development. However, this division is significantly under-resourced, which

undermines its purview and remit (UNCTAD and ECOWAS, 2020). Up until recently, ECOWAS did not have many region-wide agreements pertaining to culture, except a Cultural Framework Agreement (adopted in 1987 to promote the cultural dimensions of development) and a Regional Action Plan for Culture (adopted in 2003 to support the inventory, safeguarding and preservation of cultural heritage). But significant strides have been made since July 2019 to enhance regional integration in terms of cultural policy and actions, when ECOWAS Ministers of Culture adopted a Regional Cultural Policy (intended to promote and safeguard cultural heritage and enhance the professional development of artists and cultural stakeholders) and its accompanying Action Plan 2020-2022, as well as the ECOWAS 2019-2023 Action Plan for the Return of African Cultural Property to their Countries of Origin, which offers strategic guidelines for joint action (UNESCO, 2021b). It will be interesting to track if and how these regional integration efforts will impact both cultural policy and practice in Sierra Leone in the years to come.

5.4 Conclusion

Moving beyond aesthetics and theatre as an art form, this chapter focused on the macro-level, analysing how theatre as a form of cultural production and as a cultural industry is shaped by cultural flows, hegemonic systems and social, political and economic factors that influence both local and global policies, structures and institutions, especially within the context of the global creative economy, international development paradigms and international cultural relations. As such, this chapter focused on the second part of my main research question, namely on the impact of the continuum of local and global flows on the policy, structural and institutional context for theatre production in Sierra Leone.

Although the Sierra Leonean Constitution commits to preserving, protecting and promoting the country's culture and to facilitating the provision of funds for 'the development of culture', and although Sierra Leone does have a National Cultural Policy (ratified in 2013) and some legislation relevant to theatre and the CCIs more broadly, such as a Copyright Act (enacted in 2011) and a Monuments and Relics Act (last updated in 1967), experts and practitioners argue that the current legislation is not sufficient for meeting sector needs and not adequate enough for responding to changing local and global circumstances. Furthermore, the lack of implementation renders the existing legislation as well as the 2013 Cultural Policy and the positive changes they seek to engender largely ineffective.

The fact that the Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs had no formal policy to work with until 2013 and did not rank very high in successive governments' priorities, as well as the ensuing under-resourcing and professional capacity issues have limited the Ministry's mandate and de jure policy-making authority for decades. In addition, the large number of

ministries currently involved in matters pertaining to the ecology of culture and the lack of an apex body for culture and the CCIs (such as the National Council for Arts and Culture, provided for in the 2013 Cultural Policy) makes the coordination of policy implementation and holistic sector development more difficult to achieve. Hence, in the absence of strategic approaches and strong institutions that transcend political changes and influence, public support for culture often depends on the willingness of politicians, which enhances existing structures of neo-patrimonialism and patron-clientelism.

As a result of the chronic under-investment in the CCIs, the long-standing centralisation and hegemonisation of public funding for culture and limited access to private funding or sponsorship, the CCIs remain informal and fragmented outside the few national state-sponsored institutions (which are, however, also under-resourced). The wider ecology of culture thus exhibits key needs across the five core pillars of sector development (human resource, institutional, financial, legal and physical framework), specifically in: sector mapping, archiving and documentation (including the collection of data and qualitative insights into activities and ways of working across the CCIs, but also the archiving of disappearing indigenous cultural practices such as indigenous theatre forms); infrastructure and institution building (such as the National Council for Arts and Culture and practitioner associations); sector-wide coordination; access to finance and markets; the promotion of local culture and access to it (enhanced by cultural and creative education and strategic audience development); sector-specific technical and business skills; as well as further policy development, legislation appropriate for the Sierra Leonean context (for example, on both individual and collective ownership rights and the fair utilisation of 'traditional' resources, such as indigenous theatre) and their full implementation.

It is important to remember though that meaningful, effective and long-lasting changes, with the aim of developing a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector, will more likely be achieved by building upon what already exists and by developing both a theoretical and practical framework that works best for the Sierra Leonean context. Furthermore, the key needs mentioned above are also tied to factors outside the ecology of culture, such as generally limited infrastructure, educational opportunities and access to finance, a challenging business and legislative environment as well as a relatively low buying power of potential audiences. This weak enabling environment makes it difficult, on a macro-level, to enhance and grow the ecology of culture and, on a micro-level, for many individuals to translate their creative skills into a livelihood.

Particularly because of the lack of educational and training opportunities and the limited access to financing for the CCIs, international organisations and relations play a disproportionately significant role in the current ecology of culture in Sierra Leone, as they can offer sought-after technical assistance, capacity building, funding, partnerships, collaboration

and exposure. Apart from international NGOs who only support a narrow range of cultural expressions as part of their development strategies (as analysed in Chapter 4 in relation to theatre), UNESCO and the British Council are the only international cultural organisations currently active in Sierra Leone. This gives both significant political, economic and social capital and de facto policy-making authority; for example, to promote their notion of ‘culture’ and ‘development’ as well as normative global discourses (such as the current creative economy discourse) and to frame the ‘development’ of the CCIs in a certain institutionalised way, inspired by ‘best practice’ examples from the Global North. However, recent regional integration efforts at ECOWAS level, which led, for example, to the adoption of a Regional Cultural Policy across West Africa, as well as the new African Continental Free Trade Area may add another facet to the nature and dynamics of the flows to and from Sierra Leone and thereby also impact both cultural policy and practice in Sierra Leone in the years to come.

6. Conclusions

6.1 Introduction

This research started with the desire to better understand the nature and dynamics of cultural flows and their impact on contemporary Krio theatre in Sierra Leone, especially within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and existing hegemonic structures. Conceiving of these flows, based on Appadurai's notion of the five dimensions of global cultural flows (Appadurai, 1996), as flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas (such as ideas on aesthetics, but also in the form of discourses and policies), it became obvious quite quickly that it was necessary to consider these flows and their impact on cultural production within a much wider context of both local and global historical, cultural, political, economic and social processes. In order to understand the impact of flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas from a very specific, local perspective, it was thus necessary to not only examine the flows in terms of global phenomena (such as the globalisation and commodification of culture and existing systems of power) and in terms of the transposition, translation, transformation and transmogrification of global flows in a specific locale (Lash and Lury, 2007); it was also necessary to analyse the flows *within* the locality of Sierra Leone and the context of wider local cultural, political, economic and social dynamics, thus conceiving of the flows affecting cultural production as a continuum of local and global processes, thereby also questioning the dichotomy and fixed notions of 'the local' and 'the global'.

This led to the investigation that is at the core of this thesis and its main research question: How does the continuum of local and global flows, in particular within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems, impact both theatre aesthetics and the policy, structural and institutional context for theatre production in Sierra Leone? This main research question was linked to several additional, interlinked sub-questions (outlined in Section 1.3) on the roles of agents, institutions, policies and laws governing local and global cultural flows, the power relations within these flows, the cultural, social, political and economic factors that shape theatre production, distribution and consumption, historical legacies, and all their effects. To answer these multi-layered questions, but also to highlight the interconnectedness between the micro-level aspect of aesthetics and the macro-level aspect of policies, structures and institutions, it was necessary to base the methodology for this research (as described in Chapter 1) on qualitative empirical research, analysed from a political economy perspective and underpinned by an interdisciplinary theoretical framework situated at the intersection of postcolonial, cultural, theatre, international development and cultural policy studies.

Chapter 2 developed this interdisciplinary theoretical and conceptual framework to situate my thesis within existing literature and discourses, but also to lay out its key parameters and clarify the terminology used throughout the thesis. As such, that chapter began by discussing the multifaceted concept of 'culture' and its evolution over time, especially within the context of colonialism, and tracing the reification and commodification of culture along historical lines. It then went on to discuss the concepts of 'the local' and 'the global' and their dialectic relationship, highlighting that the notion of hybridity of 'the local' and 'the global' is crucial for this research as it underpins the argument that artistic, cultural and creative production happens in a continuum of cultural flows, translation and transformation across localities, national borders and regions. Chapter 2 also outlined the relationship between globalisation and culture and its perceived manifestations between the homogenisation and heterogenization of culture and highlighted the impact of commodification and globalisation on the discourse about and the *modus operandi* of the CCIs. The chapter ended by discussing the instrumentalisation of culture within the context of international development.

To be able to analyse contemporary theatre production in Sierra Leone throughout Chapters 4 and 5 as historically, politically, culturally and socially situated and to understand the relationships between individuals, institutions, governments and public policies as they constitute the production, distribution, consumption and regulation of cultural production in Sierra Leone, Chapter 3 set out the necessary context by discussing relevant Sierra Leonean historical, political, cultural and social developments and dynamics. Hence, the first part of Chapter 3 developed a genealogy of the Sierra Leonean present, giving a brief account of the country's modern history and analysing the historical, political and cultural developments that have conditioned the present and shaped Sierra Leone, the postcolonial bifurcated state, its institutions, the two publics and their governmentality. The second part discussed the origins, history and development of theatre in Sierra Leone, which set the foundations for contemporary Krio theatre.

Based on the outline of Sierra Leonean theatre's history and development in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 focused on a micro-level analysis of contemporary Krio theatre and the politics of its aesthetics, forms and themes within the context of a continuum of local and global flows, particularly in terms of the cultural, political, social and economic factors that shaped the past two decades in Sierra Leone. Using contemporary Krio theatre as a case study to analyse cultural production in the postcolony, this chapter developed a critical argument about strategies, compromises and the transformation of local theatre practices as a consequence of the current status quo of theatre in Sierra Leone and as a response to current flows and structures reinforced by neoliberal globalisation, commodification and 'culture and development' initiatives. Within this context, it especially identified the relationship between

contemporary Krio theatre and the development industry (the current primary funder of Krio theatre activities).

Chapter 5 focused on the macro-level, the ecology of theatre production in Sierra Leone. As many of the issues that Sierra Leone's theatre faces, especially at a policy and structural level, also apply to the CCIs more widely, it analysed the historical, cultural, social, political and economic factors and dynamics that constitute and shape cultural production, distribution, consumption and regulation in Sierra Leone more broadly. This included discussing the policy, legislative, structural and institutional framework for the CCIs as well as the role of international cultural organisations and international cultural relations within the ecology of culture in Sierra Leone.

The fact that the trajectory of this research has been characterised and shaped by a *longue durée* engagement since 2010 with theatre and cultural production more broadly in Sierra Leone, has enabled me to have a longer-term perspective on cultural developments in Sierra Leone and thus to contextualise the empirical data in a more holistic and historicising manner. Before highlighting my main conclusions in the next section, which give an overview of the core contribution my thesis makes by uncovering the impact of local and global flows on both theatre aesthetics and the structural, institutional and policy context for theatre production in Sierra Leone, I would like to reiterate the gaps and objectives this research sought to address by and beyond answering its research questions, as they illustrate the wider contributions of this thesis.

Firstly, by focusing on contemporary Krio theatre, this research adds to the study of theatre in Sierra Leone. Secondly, the study of the function and functioning of a specific cultural practice in a specific locale in Africa contributes to addressing the gap in the knowledge about the histories, ways of working, opportunities and challenges of contemporary cultural productions in diverse African contexts. Thirdly, being connected to wider historical, social, political and economic questions, this thesis furthers the insights into the links between cultural production, colonial legacies, existing hegemonic structures, globalisation, commodification and the development industry. Fourthly, given its multi-layered investigation and interdisciplinary approach, this research contributes to the understanding and strengthening of the relationship between cultural research, policy and practice – a relationship that is often insufficiently reciprocal and syncretic. Fifthly, this thesis adds to the area study of Sierra Leone and to widening the narrative about the country, which has in recent years been dominated by its civil war, post-war recovery and redevelopment and its Ebola epidemic between 2014 and 2016. Finally, based on the insights, opinions and views of experts and practitioners in Sierra Leone, the discussion throughout this thesis also points towards ways of thinking and points of action (summarised in Section 6.3 further below) that can lead towards a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector, while being sensitive to

local complexities. Overall, this also adds another postcolonial perspective to existing theories and approaches to cultural production, governance and policy.

6.2 A seesaw between microcosm and macrocosm

I show throughout this thesis that cultural productions, such as theatre, and the wider ecology of culture (including the discourse on culture) respond to macrocosmic processes through microcosmic translation and transformation, embedding their development in their local historical, cultural, social, political and economic context. As such, this thesis inscribes itself in the rationale of postcolonial and cultural studies, which show that cultures and their expressions are – and always have been – of synthetic nature and are thus fundamentally multidimensional and hybrid products of continuously changing flows. It stresses as well, however, that the flows of people, media, images, technologies, finance and ideas are ‘deeply perspectival constructs’ (Appadurai, 1996, p. 33) and are not entirely equal and immune to external influences and disruptions, such as existing power structures and imbalances and their modes and tools of regulation, control and oppression. Hence, while these flows and their effects are ‘vulnerable’ to translation and transformation, they also have significant determinative power.

Increasing levels of and exposure to change and globalisation (reinforced by new digital media and technologies) and an ensuing fear of cultural loss do enhance tendencies towards traditionalising, essentialism and localisation as well as a renewed search for local identity and meaning. But the perspective of a continuous seesaw between macrocosm and microcosm and the hybridity between ‘the local’ and ‘the global’ emphasise the duplicity and oversimplification of attempts to essentialise ‘the local’ and to fix notions such as ‘culture’, ‘tradition’ and ‘authenticity’ in an atemporal, never-changing state.

This thesis demonstrates that it is imperative to read the origins, history and development of contemporary Krio theatre through this continuous seesaw between macrocosm and microcosm as well as the hybridity between ‘local’ and ‘global’ flows. This particularly applies to its most recent incarnations in the context of the domination of developmental theatre over the past two decades, as well as to other more recent theatre productions and initiatives that seek to move beyond this circumscription of theatre and the narrow scope of developmental theatre, which also affects the potential for alternative types of and platforms for theatre (including political and activist theatre). Contemporary Krio theatre is a hybrid of a number of different elements, sourced from various indigenous African and European theatre heritages, integrating cultural expressions such as instrumental music, singing, choreographies, gestures, masquerades, rituals, storytelling, dance, chants and spiritual symbols as well as ‘modern’ sound, light and visual effects. As such, the development of contemporary Krio

theatre also illustrates the cultural, social, historical, economic and political context it evolves in and highlights not just the impact of indigenous theatre, the frictions and specific aesthetics introduced by colonialism, the global cultural flows accelerated by neoliberal globalisation, the commodification of culture and ICTs, but also the impact of local flows in terms of audiences, other art forms and the general political economy of theatre in Sierra Leone, which has led to the development industry being the biggest paying commissioner of current theatre productions.

Analysing the impact of the continuum of local and global flows on the aesthetics of contemporary Krio theatre in Chapter 4 identified the translation and localisation of 'global' methods and symbols and other strategies of 'glocalisation' (Robertson, 1992) and hybridisation; for example, in the way plays are created and performed or even in the type of stories that are told. New digital media and technologies play a significant, but also contradictory role within these dynamics by offering new and easier modes of digital transmission and thus the potential for more exchange, change and hybridisation, while at the same time preserving and fixing an otherwise ephemeral cultural experience.

The impact of the continuum of local and global flows, but also of the general political economy in Sierra Leone on theatre aesthetics is thus multifaceted and anchored at many different levels: such as the focus on developmental theatre favouring improvisation over well-polished scripts; the limited facilities in terms of stages, lighting and sound systems forcing playwrights to creatively adapt to what is available to them (for example, by building the story around one setting or using a storyteller to guide the *mise-en-scène*); using autochthonous elements not just for aesthetic, but also ethnic and practical reasons; employing stylisation, transposition, adaptation, and reinterpretation as key techniques to introduce autochthonous material while focusing more on strategies of transpositions and adaptations to integrate allochthonous material; and 'sterilising' indigenous and 'traditional' stories and performances for international audiences to suit their taste and level of understanding.

The development industry plays a particularly complicated and dualist role within the context of this research; *vis-à-vis* theatre in Sierra Leone, by both circumscribing and endorsing theatre, and *vis-à-vis* the hybridity between 'local' and 'global' flows and the power structures that guide them, as a result of being driven by global structures and agendas while needing to be sensitive to local contexts and accountable to local civil society. International NGOs occupy a particularly powerful position within these dynamics as they have the cultural, social and economic capital to shape public opinion, information, knowledge and agendas, set topics, mobilise people and thus create effects. Chapter 4 therefore also argued that the recruitment of local theatre by the 'international community' as infotainment for global development goals does not only affect its aesthetics in a narrower sense (such as its symbols, images and forms), but also in a wider Rancièrian sense – such as the relationships of

theatre, including the perceptions of its role, functionality and who it is for, as well as the wider connections between theatre practices and the communities, ways of life, discourses and epistemologies they are embedded in.

However, the development industry does not only impact the contemporary development of Krio theatre in terms of its aesthetics, but also at policy, structural and institutional levels, by focusing on strengthening the post-conflict state and on 'developing' the country through directing government priorities and budgets towards policy areas such as health, education, infrastructure, legal institutions and natural resource management. This does not only produce new forms of governance and governmentality and impact the relationship between the 'two publics', but also affects the perception of the general value (or non-value) of 'culture' and its importance for 'development', all of which also influences both the micro-level and the macro-level of cultural production.

The focus of interventions, driven by both local and global agents of development, on so-called core policy areas, while the global development industry celebrates culture as both an enabler and driver of sustainable development, also indicates a significant contradiction between current practice and theory or discourse. The Sierra Leonean state also celebrates and instrumentalises culture – at least in its discourse and governmentality as exemplified by the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone (2013)* – in terms of nation and identity-building, nation-branding and specific development goals (such as poverty alleviation). Supported by a focus on cultural heritage, folklore and various expressions of 'tradition', this illustrates another form of hybridisation between the two publics which represent different public realms: The 'modern', 'civil' forms of governance make use of the 'traditional' and 'primordial' for formal and institutionalised celebrations of nationhood, the commodification of heritage and global 'modern' development goals. But in practice, culture (in all its forms and expressions) is not given much attention and priority and there is only a very small amount of public support (both financial and non-financial) available for culture in Sierra Leone, which also affects the de jure authority and thought leadership of Sierra Leone's Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs. While this is certainly linked to competing demands on resources, it may also highlight the fact that development practice is still significantly influenced by and perpetuates outdated notions of 'development' and 'progress', based on Eurocentric ideas and ideologies of universal development, modernisation theories and economic paradigms – which in turn determines the allocation of resources.

This thesis therefore emphasises that analysing the impact of the continuum of local and global flows on the macro-level, in the case of this research on the policy, structural and institutional context for theatre production in Sierra Leone and by extension analysing the macro-level of cultural production in other postcolonies, also requires an understanding of the historical, cultural, social, political and economic factors and agents that have shaped and

continue to shape relevant policies, structures and institutions. In Sierra Leone, these factors include the context of a state classified by 'the international community' until recently as post-conflict, the ongoing 'development' of the Sierra Leonean state, its institutions and structures, the country's general socio-economic status and the relatively low average buying power of local audiences (which makes theatre depend on local elites, development agencies, NGOs and international cultural organisations), but also the wider historical context and legacy of colonialism, which – among many other issues – led to a bifurcation of the state and created 'two publics', as outlined in Chapter 3.

Following this perspective, Chapter 5 highlighted, for example, the impact of global ideoscapes and, more particularly, of the global discourse on 'culture and development', 'development' more broadly and the 'creative industries' (including policy ideas and approaches) on the concepts, language and strategies employed in the *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone* (2013). Chapter 5 also illustrated the legislative legacy of colonialism as well as the impact of the hybridisation between the two publics and its tensions on the general conception of 'culture' in Sierra Leone and on the governance structures and institutions that shape and regulate the ecology of theatre and culture more widely.

The impact of the continuum of local and global flows – especially within the context of contemporary globalisation, commodification and hegemonic systems – on the policy, structural and institutional framework for theatre and cultural production more broadly in Sierra Leone and the ensuing frictions are also visible on a number of other levels, such as the lack of education and training opportunities, which is to some degree addressed (or one might say capitalised on) by the private sector (which, however, excludes certain segments of society due to their socio-economic status); the fact that existing public financial support tends to focus on the promotion of cultural activities with branding or quick revenue-generating benefits, often as part of a wider heritage and tourism agenda; or the tendency towards ad-hoc support, both by the public and the private sector, which fosters patron-clientelism and neo-patrimonialism and also does not feed into the sustainable growth of artistic and creative practices, cultural organisations, or the ecology of culture in general. Furthermore, the impact of the continuum of local and global flows and of the political economy of culture is evident in the disproportionately large role that international institutions play in the current ecology of culture in Sierra Leone, which gives them significant political, economic and social capital to promote, for example, their notion of 'culture' and 'development' as well as normative global discourses (such as the current creative economy discourse) and to frame the 'development' of the CCIs in a certain institutionalised way (inspired by 'best practice' examples from the Global North). This in turn enhances their de facto policy-making authority based on their interventions, which challenges not only the democratic viability and authority of Sierra Leone's existing cultural

policy but also the democratisation, localisation and meaningfulness of future policy-making processes.

Hence, my research highlights not only the contradictions, tensions and frictions between global discourses, strategies, policies and finance in the fields of culture and international development on the one hand and the local, political and potentially subversive agency of culture in the postcolony on the other, but also the following important research, conceptual and political implications: (1) the need to interrogate the local and global historical, cultural, social, political and economic context within which the support and funding of culture is situated and what the current creative economy discourse in particular and its politicisation mean for culture in the Global South; (2) the continuing need for a critique of still-existing hegemonies within the development industry; (3) the need to conceive of culture in a more grounded, diverse and ambitious way as *the root of* development (rather than just as a *tool for* development), which also reinforces the realisation of a development value defined by local culture as well as the self-determination of imagination, and thus enables people to take charge of their own narratives and future; (4) the need to really invest (both financially and non-financially) in this approach in a sincere, substantial and sustainable way based on more syncretic, participative and holistic processes; (5) the need and importance for research, theory and policy to be more responsive and relevant to the actual challenges of cultural and creative practices in a specific locale, which can only be achieved by being based on a very detailed, nuanced and in-depth understanding of local contexts and complexities; (6) and – more broadly but equally critically – the importance and value of diverse epistemologies and the concomitant decolonisation of dominant discourses and practices in the fields of both culture and international development.

The analysis of the policy, structural and institutional context for the CCIs in Sierra Leone throughout this thesis, but particularly in Chapter 5, has shown that the CCIs are informal, fragmented and fragile outside the core national state-sponsored institutions (which are, however, also under-resourced). The wider cultural and creative sector thus exhibits key needs across the five core pillars of sector development (human resource, institutional, financial, legal and physical framework), but this is also tied to factors outside the sector, such as generally limited infrastructure, educational opportunities and access to finance, a challenging business and legislative environment as well as a relatively low average buying power. This weak enabling environment makes it difficult, on a macro-level, to enhance and grow the cultural and creative sector and, on a micro-level, for many individuals to translate their creative skills into a career that can provide a livelihood. Hence, many of Sierra Leone's artists and creative entrepreneurs increasingly call for a stronger legal framework and proper enforcement thereof as well as structural, institutional and operational improvements to foster a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector. Based on their insights and

experiences, this thesis thus also stresses the need for an enabling ecology founded on locally appropriate and meaningful policies, structures and institutions to enhance independent and diverse cultural production and support culture (in all its diverse forms and expressions) in attaining its rightful place not only at the core of international development strategies but also at the core of society as a whole.

6.3 Towards a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector

A thriving independent and diverse cultural and creative sector, supported by effective tangible and intangible structures that are rooted in a nuanced and holistic understanding of local complexities, and equitable access to it are crucial not only for the survival and future opportunities of individual artists and creative entrepreneurs as well as the stimulation of artistic quality and innovation, but also for the enhancement of a democratic, socially just and culturally pluralistic society. But this is of course easier said than achieved.

It is important to remember, again, that policy transfer in the field of CCIs – in the sense of a direct replication of policies without acknowledging diverse and locally specific cultural, social, political and economic realities – has proven to be problematic and often ineffective (Pratt, 2009) and that a full and nuanced understanding of and building upon the local context (and its opportunities and challenges) is more important than following global ‘best practice’ examples for the development of CCIs (De Beukelaer, 2015; Mbaye, 2013). Following these principles and based on the discussion throughout this thesis, informed by the practices, insights and views of local experts and practitioners in Sierra Leone, the following elements thus seem crucial to grow a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector: (1) to thoroughly question the normative global discourses on the creative economy and the CCIs and promote a discourse and its implementation that suit the already existing local cultural and creative practices; (2) to systematically collect reliable and comprehensive data on the various dimensions of the CCIs (including their cultural, social and economic values) – both to better understand their opportunities and challenges and to have powerful tools for advocacy at hand; (3) to consider local realities and include diverse voices in the development of policies; (4) to understand the local histories and contexts of cultural creation, production, distribution, consumption and regulation and respond to them adequately in terms of strategies for change, including legislation, recognition and statutory regulation of cultural professions (including their professional status and social and legal protection), infrastructure planning, institution building, finance mechanisms and the creation of professional networks and associations; (5) to follow a sub-sector specific approach given that each sub-sector has its own business models, value chain processes and requirements for support and intervention; (6) to develop locally appropriate standardisation across sub-sectors; and (7) to invest in

strategic audience and consumer research (for example: Who currently and potentially invests as a consumer in the CCIs? Which changes in consumption have digital technologies induced? How is this socio-economically segmented?).

Underpinning all these aspects is the need for a grassroots, bottom-up understanding and development of the sector, which means not just listening to practitioners, but also actively involving them in strategic planning, no matter which part of the value chain they are associated with, for example through representative or intermediary bodies. However, due to the often-conflicted relationship between policymakers and practitioners, driven by different priorities and perspectives, voices of those working at the grassroots and especially of those at the margins of a sector, and thus alternative discourses and challenges to institutionalised thinking, are many times left unheard. Hence, to be able to promote a grassroots and bottom-up approach for sector development one also needs political capital to gain government interest and trust and thus be in a position to influence policy. However, gaining political capital is typically challenging, especially in a context of neo-patrimonialism and patron-clientelism.

Although following best practice examples from elsewhere is only useful to a limited degree, and only if they are properly translated to the context of a specific locale, this does not mean that it is necessary to reinvent the wheel every single time and that there is no potential for mutual learning. Answers to questions regarding the changes needed to foster a more independent and diverse cultural and creative sector, such as those outlined in Section 5.1.1 to guide the development of cultural policies, strategies and indicators, may thus be informed by lessons learned from other contexts; especially if these lessons come from contexts that have more in common with one's own. In the case of Sierra Leone, it is encouraging to see that awareness among artists and creatives about the initiatives of their peers in other African countries continues to grow, that there are more and more Pan-African connections linked not only to the CCIs but also more broadly to conversations about culture and identity, and that overall, there is an increasing number of South-South cultural collaborations.

Bibliography

- Abah, O.S. (2002). 'Creativity, Participation and Change in Theatre for Development Practice'. in Harding, F. (ed.) (2002) *The Performance Arts in Africa: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 158-173.
- Abdi, A. (2010). 'Globalization, Culture, and Development: Perspectives on Africa'. *Journal of Alternative Perspectives in the Social Sciences*, 2 (1), pp. 1–26.
- Abdullah, I. (2002). 'Space, culture, and agency in contemporary Freetown: the making and remaking of a postcolonial city'. in Enwezor, O. (ed.) *Under siege: Four African cities. Freetown, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Lagos*. Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, p. 201–212.
- Abraham, A. (1978). *Cultural Policy in Sierra Leone*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Abraham, A. (2003). *An Introduction to Pre-Colonial History of the Mende of Sierra Leone*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press.
- Abrahamsen, R. (2004). 'The power of partnerships in global governance'. *Third World Quarterly*, 25 (8), pp. 1453-1467.
- Acemoglu, D., Reedz, T., and Robinson, J.A. (2013). *Chiefs: Economic Development and Elite Control of Civil Society in Sierra Leone*. Available at: <http://economics.mit.edu/files/9074> (Accessed: 7 February 2014).
- Achebe, C. (1975). *Morning Yet on Creation Day*. Michigan: Heinemann Educational.
- Acuto, M., Morissette, M. and Tsouros, A. (2017). 'City Diplomacy: Towards More Strategic Networking? Learning with WHO Healthy Cities'. *Global Policy*, 8 (1), pp. 14-22.
- ACP Council of Ministers (2003). *Dakar Plan of Action on the Promotion of ACP Cultures and Cultural Industries*. Available at: https://ocpa.irmo.hr/resources/docs/Dakar_Plan_of_Action-en.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).
- Adejumobi, S. (2001). 'Citizenship, Rights and the Problem of Conflicts and Civil Wars in Africa'. *Human Rights Quarterly*, 23 (1), pp. 148-170.
- Adeyemi, S. (2007). 'Agony, Antigone and the Dialectics of Resistance in African Performance'. *African Performance Review*, 1 (1), pp. 25-33.
- Adeyemi, S. (2017a). 'Many Colours of an African Performative Ritual'. *Alarinjo: Oye Journal of Theatre and Media Arts*, 1 (2), pp. 16-30.
- Adeyemi, S. (2017b). 'Video Interview: Sola Adeyemi'. Freie Universität Berlin. Interview available at: <https://www.geisteswissenschaften.fu-berlin.de/en/v/interweaving-performance-cultures/fellows/video/Video-Interview-Sola-Adeyemi/index.html> (Accessed: 11 June 2021).

African Union (2005). *Nairobi Plan of Action for Cultural Industries in Africa*. Available at: https://ocpa.irmo.hr/resources/docs/AU_POA_Industries_2005-en.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

African Union (2006). *Charter for African Cultural Renaissance*. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37305-treaty-0032_-_charter_for_african_cultural_renaissance_e.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

African Union (2008). *Algiers Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries in Africa*. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/pages/32901-file-auc_plan_of_action-_def.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

African Union (2021a). *CFTA - Continental Free Trade Area*. Available at: <https://au.int/en/ti/cfta/about> (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

African Union (2021b). *Economic, Social & Cultural Council*. Available at: <https://au.int/en/about/ecosocc> (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

Ahmed, S. and Potter, D. M. (2006). *NGOs in International Politics*. London: Kumarian Press.

Akar, J. (1965). The Arts in Sierra Leone. *African Forum*, 1 (2), pp. 87-91.

Akashoro, O. G., Kayode, J. and Hussein, S. (2010). 'Theatre and Development: Opportunities and Challenges in a Developing World'. *Journal of Communication*, 1 (2), pp. 107-112.

Alasuutari, P. (2016). *The Synchronization of National Policies*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Albrecht, P. (2017). 'The Hybrid Authority of Sierra Leone's Chiefs'. *African Studies Review*, 60 (3), pp. 159-180. DOI: 10.1017/asr.2017.87.

Alie, J. A. D. (1990). *A New History of Sierra Leone*. New York: St. Martin's Press.

AllAfrica (2015) 'Sierra Leone: President Koroma Hosts National Tourist Board', *AllAfrica*, 26 January 2015. Available at <https://allafrica.com/stories/201501262006.html> (Accessed: 28 January 2015).

Amankulor, J. N. (1989). 'The Condition of Ritual in Theatre: An Intercultural Perspective'. *Performing Arts Journal*, 11/12 (3/1), pp. 45-58.

Amselle, J-L. (1998). *Mestizo Logics: Anthropology of Identity in Africa and Elsewhere*. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

Anderson, B. (2006). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. Rev. ed. London: Verso Books.

Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) (2008). *The Cultures and Globalization Series 1: Conflicts and Tensions*. London: SAGE.

Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) (2010). *The Cultures and Globalization Series 3: Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation*. London: SAGE.

Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) (2011). *The Cultures and Globalization Series 4: Heritage, Memory and Identity*. London: SAGE.

Appadurai, A. (1988). Putting Hierarchy in its Place. *Cultural Anthropology*, 3 (1), pp. 36-49.

Appadurai, A. (1990). 'Disjuncture and difference in the global cultural economy'. in Featherstone, M. (ed.) *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. London: SAGE, pp. 295-310.

Appadurai, A. (1996). *Modernity at Large. Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Appadurai, A. (2005). 'Commodities and the Politics of Value'. in Ertman, M. and Williams, J. (eds.) *Rethinking commodification. Cases and Readings in Law and Culture*. New York and London: New York University Press, pp. 34-43.

Appiah, K. A. (1993). *In My Father's House: Africa in the Philosophy of Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Appiah-Thompson, C. (2017). 'The Politics of Researching Africa: The Quality of Anthropo-Historical and Linguistic Data in African Studies'. *SAGE Open*, 7 (3), pp. 1-11.
DOI: 10.1177/2158244017719931.

ARIPO (2016). *Who we are & what we do*. Available at: https://www.aripo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ARIPO_Who_We_Are_What_We_Do_1-1.pdf (Accessed: 18 May 2020).

ARIPO (2018). *Consolidated Comparative Study on Copyright Laws of ARIPO Member States and their Adherence to International Instruments on Copyright and Related Rights*. Available at: <https://www.aripo.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ARIPO-Comparative-Study-Report-V-1-2-Proof-13.11.18-1.pdf> (Accessed: 18 May 2020).

Atteberry, J. (2010). 'Information/Knowledge in the Global Society of Control: A2K Theory and the Postcolonial Commons'. in Krikorian, G. and Kapczynski, A. (eds.) *Access to Knowledge in the Age of Intellectual Property*. New York: Zone Books, pp. 329–53.

Balme, C. B. (1999). *Decolonizing the Stage: Theatrical Syncretism and Post-Colonial Drama*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Bandarin, F., Hosagrahar, J. and Sailer Albernaz, F. (2011). 'Why development needs culture'. *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 1 (1), pp. 15-25.

Bangura, A. K. and Ganji, S. K. (2009). *Sierra Leone's Judiciary: Colonial Traditions and Post-Colonial Legality*. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/282786928_Sierra_Leone's_Judiciary_Colonial_Traditions_and_Post-colonial_Legality (Accessed: 16 November 2020).

Banham, M., Hill, E. and Woodyard, G. (eds.) (1994). *The Cambridge guide to African and Caribbean theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Banham, M., Gibbs, J. and Òsófisan, F. (1999). *African Theatre in Development*. Oxford: James Currey.

Banham, M., Gibbs, J. and Òsófisan, F. (2001). *African Theatre: Playwrights & Politics*. Oxford: James Currey.

Banham, M. (ed.) (2004). *A History of Theatre in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barber, K., Collins, J. and Ricard, A. (1997). *West African Popular Theatre*. Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.

Baron, R. (2010). 'Sins of Objectification?: Agency, Mediation, and Community Cultural Self-Determination in Public Folklore and Cultural Tourism Programming'. *Journal of American Folklore*, 122 (487), pp. 63-91.

Barrowclough, D. and Kozul-Wright, Z. (eds.) (2008a) *Creative Industries and Developing Countries: Voice, Choice and Economic Growth*. London: Routledge.

Barrowclough, D. and Kozul-Wright, Z. (2008b). 'Voice, choice and diversity through creative industries: towards a new development agenda'. in Barrowclough, D. and Kozul-Wright, Z. (eds.) *Creative Industries and Developing Countries: Voice, Choice and Economic Growth*. London: Routledge, pp. 3-36.

Basedau, M. (2020). 'Rethinking African Studies: Four Challenges and the Case for Comparative African Studies'. *Africa Spectrum*, 55 (2), pp. 194–206.
DOI: 10.1177/0002039720945328.

Basu, P. (2008). 'Confronting the Past? Negotiating a Heritage of Conflict in Sierra Leone'. *Journal of Material Culture*, (13) 2, pp. 233-247.

Basu, P. (2011). 'Object Diasporas, Resourcing Communities: Sierra Leonean Collections in the Global Museumscape'. *Museum Anthropology*, (34) 1, pp. 28-42.

Basu, P. (2012). 'A museum for Sierra Leone? Amateur enthusiasms and colonial museum policy in British West Africa'. in Longair, S. and McAleer, J. (eds.) *Curating Empire: Museums and the British Imperial Experience*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 145-167.

Basu, P. (2013). 'Recasting the National Narrative: Postcolonial Pastiche and the New Sierra Leone Peace and Cultural Monument'. *African Arts*, (46) 3, pp. 10-25.

Basu, P. (2015). 'Reanimating Cultural Heritage: Digital Curatorship, Knowledge Networks and Social Transformation in Sierra Leone'. in Coombes, A. and Phillips, R. (eds.) *International Handbooks of Museum Studies, Volume IV: Museum Transformations*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 337-364.

- Basu, P. and Modest, W. (eds.) (2015) *Museums, Heritage and International Development*. London: Routledge.
- Basu, P. and Zetterstrom-Sharp, J. (2015). *Complicating Culture for Development: Negotiating 'Dysfunctional Heritage' in Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://eprints.soas.ac.uk/21531/> (Accessed: 18 May 2020).
- Basu, P. and Sam, M. A. (2016). *Review of the Monuments and Relics Act and Development of Recommendations for New Heritage Legislation for Sierra Leone*. Consultation Report. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/42808860/Review_of_the_Monuments_and_Relics_Act_and_Recommendations_for_New_Heritage_Legislation_for_Sierra_Leone_Consultation_Report (Accessed: 18 May 2020).
- Battaglia, G., Clarke, J. and Siegenthaler, F. (2020). 'Bodies of Archives / Archival Bodies: An Introduction'. *Visual Anthropology Review*, 36 (1), pp. 8-16.
- Bayart, J.-F. (2000). 'Africa in the World: A History of Extraversion'. *African Affairs*, 99, pp. 217-267.
- Bayart, J.-F. (2009). *The State in Africa: The Politics of the Belly*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- BBC Media Action (2016). *Communication in Sierra Leone: An Analysis of Media and Mobile Audiences*. Available at: <http://downloads.bbc.co.uk/rmhttp/mediaaction/pdf/research/mobile-media-landscape-sierra-leone-report.pdf> (Accessed: 10 October 2020).
- BBC Media Action (2018). *Sierra Leone – Media Landscape Report*. Available at: https://www.communityengagementhub.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2019/09/Sierra-Leone-Media-Landscape-Report_BBC-Media-Action_January-2019.pdf (Accessed: 10 October 2020).
- Becker, S. L. (1966). 'The role of theatre in our society: Implications for school curricula'. *The Speech Teacher*, 15 (2), pp. 126-131. DOI: 10.1080/03634526609377507.
- Belfiore, E. (2015). 'Impact', 'value' and 'bad economics': Making sense of the problem of value in the arts and humanities'. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 14(1), 95–110. DOI:10.1177/1474022214531503.
- Benjamin, W. (1968). 'The Task of the Translator'. in Arendt, H. (ed.) *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, pp.69-82.
- Benjamin, W. (2008). *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Rev. ed. London: Penguin.
- Bennett, S. (2005). 'Theatre/Tourism'. *Theatre Journal*, 57 (3), pp. 407-428.
- Bertacchini, E., and Saccone, D. (2012). 'Toward a political economy of World Heritage'. *Journal of Cultural Economics*, 36 (4), pp. 327-352.
- Best, J. and Paterson, M. (2010). 'Understanding Cultural Political Economy'. in Best, J. and Paterson, M. (eds.) *Cultural Political Economy*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-25.

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bhabha, H. K. (1995) 'Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences'. in Ashcroft, B., Griffiths, G., Tiffin, H. (eds.) *The Post-Colonial Studies Reader*. London: Routledge, pp 206-209.

Bharucha, R. (1992). 'Memoirs of Africa – Performance/Text/Politics'. *Theater*, 23 (1), pp. 15-27.

Bharucha, R. (1993). *Theatre and the World. Performance and the Politics of Culture*. London: Routledge.

Bharucha, R. (2000). *The Politics of Cultural Practice. Thinking Through Theatre in an Age of Globalization*. London: The Athlone Press.

Bharucha, R. (2009). 'We have to re-imagine culture and development'. Interview available at: <http://www.krachtvancultuur.nl/en/specials/zam/bharucha-theatre/> (Accessed 17 December 2013).

Bharucha, R. (2010). 'Creativity: Alternative Paradigms to the 'Creative Economy''. in Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) *The Cultures and Globalization Series 3: Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation*. London: SAGE, pp. 21-36.

Blanton, R., Mason, T., and Athow, B. (2001). 'Colonial Style and Post-Colonial Ethnic Conflict in Africa'. *Journal of Peace Research*, 38 (4), pp. 473-491.

Boal, A. (2008). *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Rev. ed. London: Pluto Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1996). *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Bräutigam, D. and Knack, S. (2004). Foreign Aid, Institutions, and Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 52 (2), pp. 255-285.

Bräutigam, D. (2000) *Aid Dependence and Governance*. Available at: http://www.egdi.gov.se/pdf/20001pdf/2000_1.pdf (Accessed 15 January 2014).

Breitinger, E. (1994). *Theatre for development*. Bayreuth: Bayreuth African Studies.

Breitinger, E. (2003). *Theatre and Performance in Africa*. Bayreuth: Bayreuth African Studies.

Brickhill, P. (2010). 'The 'Creator' as Entrepreneur: An African Perspective'. in Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) *The Cultures and Globalization Series 3: Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation*. London: SAGE, pp. 113-123.

British Council (2015). *Art Connects Us*. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc013_arts_strategy.pdf (Accessed: 10 May 2018).

British Council (2017). *Sub-Saharan Africa. Arts and the UK*. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/bc_arts_strategy_ssa_digital.pdf (Accessed: 10 May 2018).

British Council (2020). *Welcome to the British Council*. Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.org/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

British Council Sierra Leone (2020a). *Our work in the arts*. Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.sl/programmes/arts> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

British Council Sierra Leone (2020b). *Creative Economy Programme*. Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.sl/programmes/arts/creative-economy-programme> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

British Council Sierra Leone (2020c). *Connecting Programme*. Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.sl/programmes/arts/connecting-programme> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

British Council Sierra Leone (2020d). *Den Old Bod Ose*. Available at: <https://www.britishcouncil.sl/programmes/arts/creole-architecture-freetown> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

Byam L. D. (1999). *Community in Motion: Theatre for Development in Africa*. Westport: Bergin & Garvey.

Bydler, C. (2004). *The Global ArtWorld Inc. On the Globalization of Contemporary Art*. Uppsala: Uppsala University Press.

Cammack, P. (2004). 'What the World Bank means by poverty reduction, and why it matters'. *New Political Economy*, 9 (2), pp. 189–211.

Carroll, N. (2007). 'Art and Globalization: Then and Now'. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 65 (1), pp. 131-143.

Cartwright, John R. (1970). *Politics in Sierra Leone 1947-67*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Caves, R. (2000). *Creative industries: Contacts between art and commerce*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2019). *2014-2016 Ebola Outbreak in West Africa*. Available at: <https://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/history/2014-2016-outbreak/index.html> (Accessed: 6 June 2020).

Charry, E. (2000). *Mande music: traditional and modern music of the Maninka and Mandinka of Western Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Christensen, M. J. (1995). *Re-Narrating Nation: Nationalist Discourse in Late 1980s Sierra Leonean Drama and Fiction*. Los Angeles: University of California.

Christensen, M. J. (2005). 'Cannibals in the Postcolony: Sierra Leone's Intersecting Hegemonies in Charlie Haffner's Slave Revolt Drama *Amistad Kata-Kata*'. *Research in African Literatures*, 36 (1), pp. 1-19.

Christensen, M. J. (2008). 'Enslaving Globalization: Slavery, Civil War, and Modernity in Sierra Leone'. *The Global South*, 2 (2), pp. 54-74.

Christensen, M. J. (ed.) (2019). *Staging the Amistad: Three Sierra Leonean plays*. Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press.

Clammer, J. (2015). *Art, Culture and International Development. Humanizing social transformation*. New York: Routledge.

Clifford, J. (1997). *Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Collins, J. (2004). 'The Impact of African-American Performance on West Africa from 1800'. in *19th International Biennial Conference of the African Studies Association of Germany (VAD) on Africa in Context: Historical and Contemporary Interactions with the World*. 2-5 June 2004. Hannover: University of Hannover.

Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. (1992). *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. (eds.) (1993). *Modernity and its Malcontents. Ritual and power in postcolonial Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, J. (1996). 'Ethnicity, Nationalism, and the Politics of Difference in an Age of Revolution'. in Wilmsen, E. and McAllister, P. (eds.) *The Politics of Difference. Ethnic Premises in a World of Power*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 162-183.

Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. (1997). *Of Revelation and Revolution (Volume 2): The Dialectics of Modernity on a South African Frontier*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. (eds.) (2001). *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Comunian, R. and England, L. (2020). 'Creative and cultural work without filters: Covid-19 and exposed precarity in the creative economy'. *Cultural Trends*, 29 (2), pp. 112-128. DOI: 10.1080/09548963.2020.1770577.

Conteh-Morgan, J. (1994). *Theatre and Drama in Franco-phone Africa: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Conteh-Morgan, J. (2004). 'Francophone Africa south of the Sahara'. in Banham, M. (ed.) *A History of Theatre in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 85-137.

Conteh-Morgan, J. and Dixon-Fyle, M. (1999). *Sierra Leone at the End of the Twentieth Century: History, Politics, and Society*. New York: Peter Lang.

Copyright Act, 2011 (Sierra Leone) Available at: <https://wipolex.wipo.int/en/text/328521> (Accessed: 21 February 2021).

Cosentino, D. (1980). 'Lele Gbomba and the Style of Mende Baroque'. *African Arts*, 13 (3), pp. 54-92. DOI: 10.2307/3335702.

Cowen, T. (2002). *Creative Destruction: How Globalization Is Changing the World's Cultures*. Chichester: Princeton University Press.

Crane, D., Kawashima, N. and Kawasaki, K. (ed.) (2002). *Global Culture: Media, Arts, Policy and Globalization*. London: Routledge.

Crossick, G. and Kaszynska, P. (2016). *Understanding the value of arts & culture. The AHRC cultural value project*. Available at: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report/> (Accessed: 7 November 2020).

Cubitt, P. C. (2010). *Sierra Leone's post-conflict reconstruction: a study of the challenges for building long term peace*. PhD Thesis. University of Bradford. Available at: https://bradscholars.brad.ac.uk/bitstream/handle/10454/4859/Cubitt_PhD_Thesis_FS.pdf?sequence=4 (Accessed: 10 February 2013).

Culture Radio (2020). *About Us*. Available at: <http://www.cultureradiosl.org/index.php/about-us-2/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

Cunningham, S. (2002). 'From Cultural to Creative Industries: Theory, Industry and Policy Implications'. *Media International Australia*, 102 (1), pp. 54–65. DOI: 10.1177/1329878X0210200107.

Cunningham et al. (2008). 'Financing creative industries in developing countries'. in Barrowclough, D. and Kozul-Wright, Z. (eds.) *Creative Industries and Developing Countries: Voice, Choice and Economic Growth*. London: Routledge, pp. 65-110.

D'Azevedo, W. (1962). 'Some Historical Problems in the Delineation of a Central West Atlantic Region'. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 96 (2), pp. 512-538.

Da Costa, D. (2016). *Politicizing Creative Economy. Activism and a Hunger Called Theater*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Dalberg (2016). *Cultural and Creative Industries Incubators*. Concept Note. Unpublished.

De Beukelaer, C. (2012). 'The Cosmopolitan Homo Economicus and the Global Creative Economy: Some Remarks from a Postcolonial Perspective'. in Hagoort, G., Thomassen, A. and Kooyman, R. (eds.) *Pioneering Minds Worldwide: The Entrepreneurial Principles of the Cultural and Creative Industries*. Delft: Eburon, pp 19-24.

De Beukelaer, C. (2013). 'Culture and Development in Burkina Faso: Social and Economic Impacts Explored'. *Cultural Trends*, 22 (3-4), pp. 250–58. DOI:10.1080/09548963.2013.819651.

De Beukelaer, C. (2014). 'Creative industries in "developing" countries: Questioning country classifications in the UNCTAD creative economy reports'. *Cultural Trends*, 23 (4), pp. 232-251.

De Beukelaer, C. (2015). *Developing Cultural Industries: Learning from the Palimpsest of Practice*. Amsterdam: European Cultural Foundation.

De Beukelaer, C. (2017). 'Toward an 'African' take on the cultural and creative industries?'. *Media, Culture & Society*, 39 (4), pp. 582–591. DOI: 10.1177/0163443716664856.

De Beukelaer, C., Pyykkönen, M. and Singh, J. P. (eds.) (2015). *Globalization, Culture and Development: The UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

De Beukelaer, C. and Freitas, R. (2015). 'Culture and Sustainable Development: Beyond the Diversity of Cultural Expressions'. in De Beukelaer, C., Pyykkönen, M. and Singh, J. P. (eds.) *Globalization, Culture and Development: The UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 203-221.

De Beukelaer, C. and O'Connor, J. (2017). 'The Creative Economy and the Development Agenda. The Use and Abuse of 'Fast Policy''. in Stupples, P. and Teaiwa, K. (eds.) *Contemporary perspectives on Art and International Development*. London: Routledge, pp. 27-47.

De Beukelaer, C. and Fredriksson, M. (2018). 'The political economy of intellectual property rights: the paradox of Article 27 exemplified in Ghana'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 46 (161), pp. 459-479. DOI: 10.1080/03056244.2018.1500358.

De Beukelaer, C. and Spence, K. M. (2019). *Global Cultural Economy*. Abingdon: Routledge.

De Beukelaer, C. (2021). 'Friction in the Creative City'. *Open Cultural Studies*, 5 (1), pp. 40-53.

De Sousa Santos, B., Nunes, J. A. and Meneses, M. P. (2007). 'Introduction: Opening Up the Canon of Knowledge and Recognition of Difference'. in De Sousa Santos, B. (ed.) *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. London: Verso, pp. xix-lxii.

De Voldere, I. et al. (2017). *Mapping the Creative Value Chains. A study on the economy of culture in the digital age*. European Commission, Brussels. Available at: <https://eusea.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Mapping-the-value-chain.pdf> (Accessed: 31 October 2020).

Death, C. (2011). *Africa, governmentality, and the international: Reflections on agency and the climate change negotiations*. Paper prepared for the BISA-Africa and International Studies ESRC seminar series #4. Available at: <https://www.open.ac.uk/socialsciences/bisa-africa/files/africanagency-seminar4-death.pdf> (Accessed: 21 February 2021).

Diouf, M. (1999) 'The French Colonial Policy of Assimilation and the Civility of the Originaires of the Four Communes (Senegal): A Nineteenth Century Globalization Project'. in Meyer, B. and Geschiere, P. (eds.) *Globalization and Identity. Dialectics of Flow and Closure*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 71-96.

- Diouf, M. (2003). 'Engaging postcolonial cultures: African youth and public space'. *African Studies Review*, 46 (2), pp. 1–12.
- Dixon-Fyle, M. and Cole G. R. (eds.) (2006). *New perspectives on the Sierra Leone Krio*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Dovey, L. (2002). 'Towards an Art of Adaptation: Film and the New Criticism-as-Creation'. *Iowa Journal of Cultural Studies*, 2 (1), pp. 51-61.
- Dovey, L. (2009). *African Film and Literature: Adapting Violence to the Screen*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Dovey, L. (2016). 'On the Matter of Fiction: An Approach to the Marginalization of African Film Studies in the Global Academy'. *Black Camera*, 7 (2), pp. 159-173.
- Dowu Horton, C. (1984). 'Popular Bands of Sierra Leone: 1920 to the Present'. *The Black Perspective in Music*, 12 (2), pp. 183-192.
- Echeruo, M.J.C. (1973). 'The dramatic limits of Igbo ritual'. *Research in African Literatures*, 4 (1), pp. 21-31.
- Edmondson, L. (2007). 'TDR Comment: Of Sugarcoating and Hope'. *The Drama Review*, 51 (2), pp. 7-10.
- Edwards, M. (1999). 'International Development NGOS: Agents of Foreign Aid or Vehicles for International Cooperation?'. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 28 (1), pp. 25–37. DOI: 10.1177/089976499773746410.
- Ekeh, P. (1975). 'Colonialism and the Two Publics in Africa: A Theoretical Statement'. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 17 (1), pp. 91-112.
- Election Guide (2020). *Republic of Sierra Leone: Election for President 2018*. Available at: <https://www.electionguide.org/elections/id/2713/> (Accessed: 12 December 2020).
- Eltis, D. and Richardson, D. (2010). *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Ertman, M. and Williams, J. (2005). 'Preface: Freedom, Equality, and the Many Futures of Commodification'. in Ertman, M. and Williams, J. (eds.) *Rethinking commodification. Cases and Readings in Law and Culture*. New York and London: New York University Press, pp. 1-7.
- Etherton, M. (1982). *The Development of African Theatre*. London: Hutchinson.
- Evans, G. (2009). 'Creative cities, creative spaces, and urban policy'. *Urban Studies*, 45 (5/6), pp. 1003–1040. doi:10.1177/0042098009103853.
- EY (2015). *Cultural times. The first global map of cultural and creative industries*. Available at:

https://en.unesco.org/creativity/sites/creativity/files/cultural_times_the_first_global_map_of_cultural_and_creative_industries.pdf (Accessed: 10 October 2020).

Fabian, J. (1990) *Power and Performance: Ethnographic Explorations Through Proverbial Wisdom and Theater in Shaba, Zaire*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press.

Fadlu-Deen, K. (2014). *Milo and All That Jazz*. London: Sondiata Global Media.

Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.

Fanthorpe, R. (1998). 'Locating the Politics of a Sierra Leonean Chiefdom'. *Africa*, 68 (4), pp. 558-584.

Fanthorpe, R. (2001). 'Neither Citizen Nor Subject? "Lumpen" Agency and the Legacy of Native Administration in Sierra Leone'. *African Affairs*, 100, pp. 363-386.

Fanthorpe, Richard (2005). 'On the Limits of the Liberal Peace: Chiefs and Democratic Decentralization in Post-War Sierra Leone'. *African Affairs*, 105, pp. 1-23.

Fanthorpe, R. (2007). *Sierra Leone: The influence of the Secret Societies, with special reference to Female Genital Mutilation*. Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/46cee3152.pdf> (Accessed: 15 January 2014).

Featherstone, M. (ed.) (1990). *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. London: SAGE.

Featherstone, M. (1990). 'Global Culture: An Introduction'. in Featherstone, M. (ed.) *Global Culture: Nationalism, Globalization and Modernity*. London: SAGE, pp. 1-14.

Featherstone, M. (1991). *Consumer culture and postmodernism*. London: SAGE.

Featherstone, M. (1995). *Undoing Culture: Globalization, Postmodernism and Identity*. London: SAGE.

Featherstone, M. and Venn, C. (2006). 'Problematizing Global Knowledge and the New Encyclopaedia Project: An Introduction'. *Theory, Culture and Society*, 23 (2-3), pp. 1-20.

Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017). *Economic Recovery and Growth Plan 2017-2020*. Available at: <https://nipc.gov.ng/ViewerJS/?#../wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Economic-Recovery-Growth-Plan-2017-2020.pdf> (Accessed: 16 October 2020).

Ferguson, J. (2006). *Global Shadows: Africa in the Neoliberal World Order*. London: Duke University Press.

Ferme, M. (2001). *The Underneath of Things: Violence, History and the Everyday in Sierra Leone*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fiebach, J. (1999). 'Dimensions of Theatricality in Africa'. *Research in African Literatures*, 30 (4), pp. 186-201.

Fischer-Lichte, E. (ed.) (1990). *The dramatic touch of difference: Theatre, own and foreign*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.

Figueira, C. (2013). *Languages at war : External language spread policies in Lusophone Africa: Mozambique and Guinea-Bissau at the turn of the 21st century*. New York: Peter Lang.

Figueira, C. (2015). 'Cultural Diplomacy and the 2005 UNESCO Convention'. in De Beukelaer, C., Pyykkönen, M. and Singh, J. P. (eds.) *Globalization, Culture and Development: The UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 163-181.

Florida, R. (2002). *The rise of the creative class*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Florida, R. (2004). *Cities and the creative class*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Florida, R. (2005). *The flight of the creative class*. New York, NY: HarperCollins.

Florida, R. (2017). *The new urban crisis: How our cities are increasing inequality, deepening segregation, and failing the middle class – And what we can do about it*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Fofanah Bellah, A. D. (2016). *Statement by the Hon. Deputy Minister of Tourism and Cultural Affairs at the Sensitization Workshop on Mainstreaming Culture & Creative Industries' Interest into the Trade Policy of Sierra Leone*. Internal document. Unpublished.

Foreign and Commonwealth Office (2019). *British Council Tailored Review 2019*. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/785297/British_Council_Tailored_Review.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

Foucault, M. (1979). 'On Governmentality'. *Ideology and Consciousness*, 6, pp. 5–21.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972–1977*. Edited by C. Gordon. Brighton: Harvester.

Freire, Paulo (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Rev. ed. London: Continuum International Publishing Group. Inc.

Fuchs, A. (ed.) (1999). *New Theatre in Francophone and Anglophone Africa*. Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Fyfe, C. (1962). *A History of Sierra Leone*. London: Oxford University Press.

Gainor, J. E. (ed) (1995). *Imperialism and Theatre: Essays on World Theatre, Drama and Performance*. London: Routledge.

Garcia dos Santos, L. (2007). 'High-Tech Plundering, Biodiversity, and Cultural Erosion: The Case of Brazil'. in De Sousa Santos, B. (ed.) *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. London: Verso, pp. 151-181.

Garnham, N. (2005). 'From Cultural to Creative Industries'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 11 (1), pp. 15–29. DOI:10.1080/10286630500067606.

Gbomba, L. (1987). *The Bossy Wife*. Freetown: People's Educational Association of Sierra Leone.

Geord, O. (1998). 'From Hill Station (Freetown) to downtown Conakry (first ward): Comparing French and British approaches to segregation in colonial cities at the beginning of the twentieth century'. *Canadian Journal of African Studies*, 32 (1), p. 1–31.

Geschiere, P. and Nyamnjoh, F. (2001). 'Capitalism and Autochthony: The Seesaw of Mobility and Belonging'. in Comaroff, J. and Comaroff, J. (eds.) *Millennial Capitalism and the Culture of Neoliberalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 159-190.

Geschiere, P. (2009). *The Perils of Belonging. Autochthony, Citizenship and Exclusion in Africa & Europe*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Gilbert, H. and Tompkins, J. (1996). *Post-Colonial Drama: Theory, Practice, Politics*. London: Routledge.

Gilroy P. (1992). 'The end of anti-racism'. in Donald J. and Rattansi A. (eds.) *Race, Culture and Difference*. London: SAGE, pp. 49–61.

Gilroy, P. (1993). *The black Atlantic: modernity and double consciousness*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Glissant, E. (1997). *Traite du Tout-Monde*. Paris: Editions Gallimard.

Gómez-Peña, G. (2001). 'The New Global Culture: Somewhere between Corporate Multiculturalism and the Mainstream Bizarre (a border perspective)'. *The Drama Review*, 45 (1), pp. 7-30.

Gordon, C. (1991). 'Governmental Rationality: An Introduction'. in Burchell, G., Gordon, C. and Miller, P. (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Government of Sierra Leone (1991). *The Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991*. Available at: <https://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/sl/sl003en.pdf> (Accessed: 19 February 2021).

Government of Sierra Leone (2008). *An Agenda for Change: Second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP II) 2008-2012*. Available at: http://www.sl.undp.org/content/dam/sierraleone/docs/frameworkdocuments/agenda_for_change.pdf (Accessed: 18 April 2020).

Government of Sierra Leone (2013a). *The Agenda for Prosperity: Road to middle income status. Sierra Leone's Third Generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (2013 – 2018)*.

Available at:

https://www.undp.org/content/dam/sierraleone/docs/projectdocuments/povreduction/undp_sl_e_The%20Agenda%20for%20Prosperity%20.pdf (Accessed: 18 April 2020).

Government of Sierra Leone (2013b). *Annex 2 – Non Salary, Non Interest Recurrent Budgetary Allocations for FY 2015-2017*. Available at: https://www.cabri-sbo.org/uploads/bia/SierraLeone_2013_Approval_External_EnactedBudget_MinFin_CEN-SADECOWAS_English.pdf (Accessed: 18 February 2021).

Government of Sierra Leone (2019a). *Sierra Leone's Medium-Term National Development Plan 2019-2023*. Available at: https://www.slurc.org/uploads/1/0/9/7/109761391/sierra_leone_national_development_plan.pdf (Accessed: 18 April 2020).

Government of Sierra Leone (2019b). *Government budget and statement of economic and financial policies: For the financial year 2020*. Available at: <https://mof.gov.sl/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/FY-2020-Budget-Speech-and-Profile-1.pdf> (Accessed: 18 February 2021).

Guest, S. (2002). 'The Value of Art'. *Art, Antiquity and Law*, 7 (4), pp. 305-316.

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (1992). 'Beyond "Culture": Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference'. *Cultural Anthropology*, 7 (1), pp. 6-23.

Hall, S. (1996). 'When was 'the post-colonial'? Thinking at the limit'. in Chambers, I. and Curti, L. (eds.) *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*. New York: Routledge, pp. 242-260.

Hall, S. and Jefferson, T. (eds.) (1976). *Resistance through Rituals: Youth subcultures in post-war Britain*. London: HarperCollins.

Hamilton, M. A. (1997). 'The TRIPS Agreement: Imperialistic, Outdated, and Overprotective'. in Moore, A. D. (ed.) *Intellectual Property: Moral, Legal, and International Dilemmas*. Lanham, MD: Rowmand & Littlefield, pp.243-264.

Hammad, L. and Morton, B. (2011). *Greater Influence, Greater Responsibility: Are INGOs' Self-Regulatory Accountability Standards Effective?* Available at: <http://www.nsi-ins.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/2011-Greater-Influence-Greater-Responsibility-are-INGOs-Self-Regulatory-Accountability-Standards-Effective.pdf> (Accessed: 21 January 2021).

Hampel, A. (2017). 'Fair Cooperation? Partnership-Based Cooperation in Cultural Policy & Cultural Management'. in Dragičević Šešić M. (ed.) *Cultural Diplomacy: Arts, Festivals and Geopolitics*. Belgrade: Creative Europe Desk Serbia and Ministry of Culture and Media Republic of Serbia, pp. 89-105.

Harding, F. (ed.) (2002). *The Performance Arts in Africa: A Reader*. London: Routledge.

Harris, J. (ed.) (2011). *Globalization and Contemporary Art*. Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.

Harris, D. (2013). *Sierra Leone. A Political History*. London: Hurst & Company.

- Hart, W.A. (1988). 'Limba Funeral Masks'. *African Arts*, 22 (1), pp. 60–67.
- Hedetoft, U. (1999). 'The Nation-state Meets the World: National Identities in the Context of Transnationality and Cultural Globalization'. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 2, pp. 71-94.
- Herath, D. (2008). 'Development Discourse of the Globalists and Dependency Theorists: Do the Globalisation Theorists Rephrase and Reword the Central Concepts of the Dependency School?'. *Third World Quarterly*, 29 (4), pp. 819-834.
- Herbst, J. (2000). *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2010). 'User-Generated Content, Free Labour and the Cultural Industries'. *Ephemera*, 10 (3/4), pp. 267–84.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. (2019). *The Cultural Industries*. 4th ed. London: SAGE.
- Hesmondhalgh, D. and Pratt, A. C. (2005). 'Cultural industries and cultural policy'. *International journal of cultural policy*, 11 (1), pp. 1-14. DOI: 10.1080/10286630500067598.
- Hesmondhalgh, D., Nisbett, M., Oakley, K. and Lee, D. (2015). 'Were New Labour's Cultural Policies Neo-Liberal?'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 21 (1), pp. 97-114. DOI: 10.1080/10286632.2013.879126.
- Hewison, R. (2014). *Cultural Capital: The Rise and Fall of Creative Britain*. London: Verso.
- Hindman, J. (1976). 'Developmental Approaches to Theatre'. *TDR: The Drama Review*, 20 (1), pp. 75-78.
- Hivos (2016). *The status of the creative economy in East Africa*. Available at: https://hivos.org/assets/2018/09/ubunifu_report_1.pdf (Accessed: 23 May 2018).
- Holden, J. (2004). *Capturing Cultural Value. How culture has become a tool of government policy*. London: Demos.
- Holden, J. (2006). *Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy. Why culture needs a democratic mandate*. London: Demos.
- Holden, J. (2015). *The ecology of culture*. Available at: <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/project-reports-and-reviews/the-ecology-of-culture/> (Accessed: 5 August 2020).
- Holden, P. (2005) 'Other Modernities: National Autobiography and Globalization'. *Biography*, 28 (1), pp. 89-103.
- Horkheimer, M. and Adorno, T. W. (1969). *Dialektik der Aufklärung. Philosophische Fragmente*. Frankfurt a. Main: S. Fischer.

- Huggan, G. (2001). *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins*. London: Routledge.
- Hughes, L. (2007). *A Brief Overview of Heritage in Kenya and Africa. Museums and Heritage Research Workshop, 20-21 July 2007, USIU*. Available at: <https://www.open.ac.uk/arts/research/ferguson-centre/projects/managing-heritage/events-21> (Accessed: 5 February 2019).
- Hull City Council (2020). *Twining*. Available at: <http://www.hullcc.gov.uk/pls/portal/url/PAGE/HOME/COMMUNITY%20AND%20LIVING/ABOUT%20HULL/TWINNING/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).
- Hutchinson, Y. and Breitinger E. (eds.) (2000). *History and theatre in Africa*. Bayreuth: Bayreuth African Studies.
- International Labour Organization (2017). *SWTS Country Brief – Sierra Leone*. Available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_emp/documents/publication/wcms_542024.pdf (Accessed: 5 May 2020).
- International Theatre Institute (2020). *About ITI*. Available at: <https://www.iti-worldwide.org/iti.html> (Accessed: 15 October 2020).
- Internet World Stats (2020). *Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://www.internetworldstats.com/africa.htm#sl> (Accessed: 16 October 2020).
- Isar, Y. R. and Anheier, H. (2010). 'Introduction'. in Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) *The Cultures and Globalization Series 3: Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation*. London: SAGE, pp. 1-16.
- Isar, Y. R., Viejo-Rose, D. and Anheier, H. (2011). 'Introduction'. in Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.) *The Cultures and Globalization Series 4: Heritage, Memory and Identity*. London: SAGE, pp. 1-20.
- Jalloh, A. (2008). 'Sierra Leoneans in America and Homeland Politics'. in Jalloh, A. and Falola, T. *The United States and West Africa. Interactions and Relations*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press.
- Jalloh, A. (2019). *Cultural practices and the transmission of Ebola in Sierra Leone: Lessons learned from a medical anthropology perspective*. PhD Thesis. University of Northern Iowa. Available at: <https://scholarworks.uni.edu/etd/944> (Accessed: 15 June 2020).
- Jegade, O. J. (2020). *IP in Sierra Leone – Status, Prospects and Policy Recommendations*. Available at: <https://www.dsti.gov.sl/dsti-policy-brie-intellectual-property-in-sierra-leone-status-prospects-policy-recommendations/> (Accessed: 21 January 2021).
- Jeyifo, B. (1985). *The Truthful Lie: Essays in a Sociology of African Drama*. London: New Beacon Books.
- Jeyifo, B. (2000). 'In the Wake of Colonialism and Modernity'. *Anglophonia/Caliban*, 7, pp. 71-84.

- Joffe, A. (2013). The cultural and creative economy in Africa: challenges and innovations. Available at: http://www.academia.edu/6504258/The_Cultural_and_Creative_Economy_in_Africa?auto=download (Accessed: 14 January 2021).
- Joffe, A. (2020). 'Covid-19 and the African cultural economy: an opportunity to reimagine and reinvigorate?'. *Cultural Trends*, DOI: 10.1080/09548963.2020.1857211.
- Joffe, A. and Jacklin, N. (2003). Promoting the Culture Sector through Job Creation and Small Enterprise Development in SADC Countries: The Film and Television Industry. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/238712095_Promoting_the_Culture_Sector_through_Job_Creation_and_Small_Enterprise_Development_in_SADC_Countries_The_Film_and_Television_Industry (Accessed: 6 May 2020).
- Joffe, A. and Newton, M. (2008). The Creative Industries in South Africa. Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/261875016_Human_Sciences_THE_CREATIVE_INDUSTRIES_IN_SOUTH_AFRICA (Accessed: 6 May 2020).
- Joseph, J. (2010). 'The limits of governmentality: Social theory and the international'. *European Journal of International Relations*, 16 (2), pp. 223–246.
- Jones, E. (1976). *Drama in Africa*. Portsmouth: Heinemann.
- Kabbah, H. (2021). *Sierra Leone Legal System and Legal Research*. Available at: https://www.nyulawglobal.org/globalex/Sierra_Leone1.html#Section_7 (Accessed: 16 May 2021).
- Kandeh, J. D. (1992). 'Politicization of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone'. *African Studies Review*, 35 (1), pp. 81-99.
- Kandeh, J. D. (1999). 'Ransoming the State: elite origins of subaltern terror in Sierra Leone'. *Review of African Political Economy*, 26 (81), pp. 349-366.
- Kandeh, S. (2008). 'Poverty Alleviation in Sierra Leone and the Role of U.S. Foreign Aid: An Institutional Trap Analysis'. in Jalloh, A. and Falola, T. *The United States and West Africa. Interactions and Relations*. Rochester: University of Rochester Press.
- Kane, M. et al. (2004). *Sierra Leone. Legal and Judicial Sector Assessment*. Available at: <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/ru/269701468304851925/pdf/321460SL0Legal010judicial0assessment.pdf> (Accessed: 16 November 2020).
- Keen, D. (2003). 'Greedy elites, dwindling resources, alienated youths: the anatomy of protracted violence in Sierra Leone'. *Internationale Politik und Gesellschaft*, 2, pp. 67–94.
- Kennedy, R. (2018). 'Reparative transnationalism: The friction and fiction of remembering in Sierra Leone'. *Memory Studies*, 11 (3), pp. 342-354.
- Kerr, D. (1995). *African Popular Theatre*. London: James Currey Ltd.

Kershaw, Baz (1992). *The Politics of Performance: Radical Theatre as Cultural Intervention*. London: Routledge.

Kessi, S., Marks, Z. and Ramugondo, E. (2020). 'Decolonizing African Studies'. *Critical African Studies*, 12 (3), pp. 271-282. DOI: 10.1080/21681392.2020.1813413.

Kidd, R. (1980). 'People's Theatre, Conscientisation and Struggle'. *Media Development*, 27 (3), pp. 10-14.

King, B. (1992). *Post-colonial English Drama*. New York: St Martin's Press.

Klees, S. J. (2017). 'Beyond neoliberalism: Reflections on capitalism and education'. *Policy Futures in Education*, 18 (1), pp. 9–29. DOI: 10.1177/1478210317715814.

Kong, L. (2010). 'Creative Economy, Global City: Globalizing Discourses and the Implications for Local Arts'. in Anheier, H. and Isar, Y. R. (eds.). *The Cultures and Globalization Series 3: Cultural Expression, Creativity and Innovation*. London: SAGE, pp. 166-175.

Koroma, A. K. (1996). *Sierra Leone: The Agony of a Nation*, Freetown: Andromeda.

Kreutzinger, H. (1966). *The Eri Devils in Freetown, Sierra Leone*. Wien: Verlag Österreichische Ethnologische Gesellschaft.

Kup, A. P. (1975). *Sierra Leone: A Concise History*. London: David & Charles.

Kyule, M. (2016). 'Assessment of legislation on cultural heritage resources in Kenya', in Deisser A. and Njuguna M. (eds.) *Conservation of Natural and Cultural Heritage in Kenya: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach*. London: UCL Press, pp. 30-44.

Lagos Theatre Festival (2020). *About*. Available at: <http://lagostheatrefestival.com/about/> (Accessed: 16 November 2020).

Lakhani, N. (2010). 'At a ceremony in Sierra Leone, a sudden jolt of violence, and a bloody 'corpse''. *The Independent*. 30th May 2010. Available at: <http://www.easybib.com/reference/guide/mla/newspaper> (Accessed: 3 April 2013).

Lambert, D. (2007). 'Sierra Leone and Other Sites in the War of Representation over Slavery'. *History Workshop Journal*, 64 (1), pp. 103-132.

Land, I. and Schocket, A. M. (2008). 'New Approaches to the Founding of the Sierra Leone Colony, 1786–1808'. *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History*, 9 (3), pp. 1-15.

Landry, C. (2000). *The Creative City. A Toolkit for Urban Innovators*. London: Earthscan Publications.

Langan, M. (2018). *Neo-colonialism and the Poverty of 'Development' in Africa*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lancaster, C. (2007). 'We Fall Down and Get Up: State Failure, Democracy and Development in Sierra Leone'. *Centre for Global Development*. Available at:

http://www.cgdev.org/files/14314_file_Lancaster_Sierra_Leone.pdf (Accessed: 7 February 2014).

Larner, W. (2011). 'Economic geographies as situated knowledges'. in Pollard, J., McEwan, C. and Hughes, A. (eds.) *Postcolonial economies*. London: Zed Books, pp. 81-106.

Lash, S. and Urry, J. (1987). *The End of Organized Capitalism*. Cambridge: Polity Books.

Lash, S. and Lury, C. (2007). *Global Culture Industry: The Mediation of Things*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lavali, A. (2005). 'The Reliable Route to Poverty Reduction in Sierra Leone: NGOs or Secret Societies?' *Concord Times*, 31 October. Available at: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200510310704.html> (Accessed: 7 February 2014).

Lee, A. and Schultz, K. A. (2012). 'Comparing British and French Colonial Legacies: A Discontinuity Analysis of Cameroon'. *Quarterly Journal of Political Science*, 7, pp. 1–46.

Ley, G. (1999). *From Mimesis to Interculturalism: Readings of theatrical theory before and after 'modernism'*. Exeter: University of Exeter Press.

Limkokwing University (2020). *Courses*. Available at: https://www.limkokwing.net/sierra_leone/academic/courses/ (Accessed: 16 October 2020).

Lipietz, A. (1992). *Towards a New Economic Order: Postfordism, Ecology and Democracy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Little, K. L. (1965). 'The Political Function of the Poro. Part I'. *Africa*, 35:4, pp. 349-365.

Little, K. L. (1966). 'The Political Function of the Poro. Part II'. *Africa*, 36:1, pp. 62-72.

Liu, J. (2018). 'Measuring the Value and Impact of Culture: Why and How? A Literature Review of Academic and Practical Works'. *Cultural Management: Science and Education*, 2(1). Available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/326090192_Measuring_the_value_and_impact_of_culture_why_and_how_A_literature_review_of_academic_and_practical_works (Accessed: 1 December 2020).

Lo, J. and Gilbert, H. (2002). 'Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis'. *The Drama Review*, 46 (3), pp. 31-53.

Lobato, R. (2010). 'Creative Industries and Informal Economies: Lessons From Nollywood'. *International Journal of Cultural Studies*, 13 (4), pp. 337–354. DOI: 10.1177/1367877910369971.

Logan, C. (2009). 'Selected chiefs, elected councillors and hybrid democrats: Popular perspectives on the coexistence of democracy and traditional authority'. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 47, pp. 101-128.

Lukowski, A. (2016). *The Globe goes global: behind the scenes of the biggest tour in theatre history*. Available at: <https://www.timeout.com/london/theatre/the-globe-goes-global-behind-the-scenes-of-the-biggest-tour-in-theatre-history> (Accessed: 7 June 2020).

MacCannell, D. (1973) 'Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings'. *American Journal of Sociology*, 79 (3), pp. 589-603.

Macharia, K. (2015). *Visiting Africa: A Short Guide for Researchers*. Available at: <https://www.pambazuka.org/resources/visiting-africa-short-guide-researchers> (Accessed: 7 March 2015).

Maddy, Y. A. (2008). *Music, Masks and Maestros*. Freetown: Ballanta Academy of Music.

M'cleod, H. and Ganson, B. (2018). *The underlying causes of fragility and instability in Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://www.theigc.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Sierra-Leone-Report-v2.pdf> (Accessed: 10 December 2020).

Malamah-Thomas, D. H. (1987). 'Theatre Development in Sierra Leone. A study of Care's Project Learn'. *Africa Media Review*, 1 (3), pp 81-94.

Mamdani, M. (1996). *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Maraña, M. (2010). *Culture and Development: Evolution and Prospect*. Available at: https://www.ehu.eus/documents/3120344/3356415/Culture_Development.pdf/837c2fac-4627-4a29-a21b-f41ddb52ab2 (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

Matarasso, F. (1997). *Use or Ornament? The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*. Stroud: Comedia.

Matarasso, F. and Landry, C. (1999). *Balancing Act: Twenty-one Strategic Dilemmas in Cultural Policy*. Cultural Policies Research and Development Unit, Policy Note No.4. Strasbourg: Council of Europe Publishing.

Maxwell, R. (ed.) (2001). *Culture Works: The Political Economy of Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Mbakogu, I.A. (2004). 'Is there really a relationship between culture and development?'. *The Anthropologist*, 6(1), pp. 37-43.

Mbaye, J. (2011). *Reconsidering cultural entrepreneurship: hip hop music economy and social change in Senegal, francophone West Africa*. PhD thesis. The London School of Economics and Political Science. Available at: <http://etheses.lse.ac.uk/201/> (Accessed: 15 June 2020).

Mbaye, J. (2013). 'On the rogue practices of West African musical entrepreneurs'. in Pieterse, E. and Simone, A. (eds.) *Rogue urbanism: Emergent African cities*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media and African Centre for Cities, pp. 253–263.

Mbaye, J. and Dinardi, C. (2019). 'Ins and outs of the cultural polis: Informality, culture and governance in the global South'. *Urban Studies*, 56 (3), pp. 578–593. DOI: 10.1177/0042098017744168.

Mbaye, J. and Pratt, A. C. (2020). 'Cities, Creativities and Urban Creative Economies: Re-descriptions and Make+Shifts from Sub-Saharan Africa'. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 44 (5), pp. 781-792. DOI: 10.1111/1468-2427.12887.

Mbembe, A. (1992). 'The Banality of Power and the Aesthetics of Vulgarity in the Postcolony'. *Public Culture*, 4 (2), pp. 1–30.

Mbembe, A. (2001). *On the Postcolony*. Berkley: University of California Press.

Mbembe, A. (2007). Interviewed by Christian Höller for Springerin Magazine, 17 March. Available at: <https://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/africa-motion-interview-post-colonialism-theoretician-achille-mbembe#> (Accessed: 29 April 2021).

Mbembé, J.-A. and Rendall, S. (2002). 'African Modes of Self-Writing'. *Public Culture*, 14 (1), pp. 239-273.

McCarthy, K. F., Ondaatje, E. H., Zakaras, L. and Brooks, A. (2004). *Gifts of the Muse. Reframing the Debate About the Benefits of the Arts*. Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation. Available at: https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG218.pdf (Accessed: 05 May 2014).

McConachie, B. (2011). 'An Evolutionary Perspective on Play, Performance, and Ritual'. *TDR: The Drama Review*, 55 (4), pp. 33-50.

McGuigan, J. (2005). 'Neo-Liberalism, Culture and Policy'. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 11 (3), pp. 229-241. DOI: 10.1080/10286630500411168.

McKercher, B. and du Cros, H. (2002). *Cultural Tourism: The Partnership Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management*. London: Routledge.

McNee, L. (1998). 'Le cadastre de la tradition: Propriété intellectuelle et oralité en Afrique occidentale'. *Mots Pluriels*, no. 8. Available at: <http://motspluriels.arts.uwa.edu.au/MP898lmn.html> (Accessed: 07 March 2014).

Mda, Z. (1993). *When people play people: Development Communication through Theatre*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Meskill, L. (2013). 'UNESCO's World Heritage Convention at 40: Challenging the Economic and Political Order of International Heritage Conservation'. *Current Anthropology*, 54 (4), pp. 483-494.

Meyer, B. and Geschiere, P. (eds.) (1999). *Globalization and Identity. Dialectics of Flow and Closure*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Meyer, S. (2007). 'Sierra Leone: Reconstructing a Patrimonial State'. *Fride – Development "In Perspective"*. Available at: http://www.fride.org/descarga/BGR_SierrLeo_ENG_may07.pdf (Accessed 07 February 2014).

Mignolo, W. D. (2011). *The Darker Side of Western Modernity. Global Futures, Decolonial Options*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Miller, B. (2010). 'Skills for sale: what is being commodified in higher education?'. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 34 (2), pp. 199-206. DOI: 10.1080/03098771003695460.

Milton, J. (2009). 'Translation Studies and Adaptation Studies'. in Pym, A. and Perekrestenko, A. (eds.) *Translation Research Projects 2*. Tarragona: Intercultural Studies Group, pp. 51-58.

Mitchell, J. M. (1986). *International cultural relations*. London: Allen & Unwin.

Mlama, P. M. (1991). *Culture and Development: The Popular Theatre Approach in Africa*. Uppsala: Scandinavian Institute of African Studies.

Mlama, P. M. (2002). 'Popular theatre and development-challenges for the future: The Tanzanian experience'. *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 12 (1-2), pp. 45-58. DOI: 10.1080/10486800208568651.

Montgomery, J. (2005). 'Beware 'the creative class': Creativity and wealth creation revisited'. *Local Economy*, 20 (4), pp. 337–343. DOI: 10.1080/02690940500298706.

Morton, B. (2013). *An Overview of International NGOs in Development Cooperation*. Available at: https://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/documents/partners/civil_society/publications/2013_UNDP-CH-Working-With-Civil-Society-in-Foreign-Aid_EN.pdf (Accessed: 21 January 2021).

Mudimbe, V.Y. (1988). *The Invention of Africa: Gnosis, Philosophy and the Order of Knowledge*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Mudimbe, V.Y. (ed.) (2012). *Contemporary African Cultural Productions*. Dakar: CODESRIA.

Mukhopadhyay, B. (2012). *The Rumor of Globalization. Desecrating the Global from Vernacular Margins*. London: C. Hurst & Co.

Musa, B. A. (1998). 'Popular theatre and development communication in West Africa: Paradigms, processes and prospects'. in Salhi, K. (ed.) *African Theatre for Development*. Exeter: Intellect Books, pp. 135-154.

National Electoral Commission (2018). *7 March 2018 Elections in Sierra Leone by Numbers*. Available at: https://web.archive.org/web/20180315070525/http://necsl2018.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Election-Figures_1403.pdf (Accessed: 7 November 2020).

Nayyar, D. (2006). 'Globalisation, history and development: A tale of two centuries'. *Cambridge Journal of Economics*, 30 (1), pp. 137-159.

- Ndulu, B., O'Connell, S., Bates, R. H., Collier, P. and Soludo, C. (eds.) (2007) *The Political Economy of Economic Growth in Africa, 1960-2000*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ndoro, W. and Kiriama, H. (2009). 'Management mechanism in heritage legislation', in Ndoro, W., Mumma, A. and Abungu, G. (eds.) *Cultural Heritage and the Law: Protecting Immovable Heritage in English Speaking Countries of Sub-Saharan Africa*. Rome: ICCROM.
- Nederveen Pieterse, J. (1995). 'Globalization as hybridization'. in Featherstone, M., Lash, S. and Robertson, R. (eds.) *Global modernities*. London: SAGE.
- Nederveen Pieterse, J. (2009). *Globalization and Culture*. 2nd ed. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.
- Nederveen Pieterse, J. (2010). *Development Theory. Deconstructions / Reconstructions*. London: SAGE.
- Ngaboh-Smart, F. (1986). *Mende Story-Telling*. Freetown: People's Educational Association.
- Nkrumah, K. (1965). *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism*. London: Thomas Nelson & Sons.
- Nnaemeka, O. (2003). 'Nego-feminism: Theorizing, Practicing and Pruning Africa's Way'. *Signs*, 29 (2), pp. 357-385.
- Nunley, J. (1985). 'The Lantern Festival in Sierra Leone'. *African Arts*, 18 (2), pp. 45-49.
- Nunley, J. (1987). *Moving with the Face of the Devil: Art and Politics in Urban West Africa*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Nunley, J. (1988). 'Purity and Pollution in Freetown: Masked Performance'. *The Drama Review*, 32 (2), pp. 102-122.
- Nurse, K. (2016). *Study on alternative and innovative funding mechanisms for ACP Cultural Industries*. Available at: https://www.acp-ue-culture.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/etude_financements_-_rapport_final_en-NURSE.pdf (Accessed: 9 November 2020).
- Nwosu, C. and Uchegbu, D. (2015). 'Between Adaptation and Appropriation: Re- Reading Albert Camus' Absurdism in Sonny Sampson-Akpan's Found and Lost'. *International Journal of Art and Art History*, 3 (2), pp. 31-45. DOI: 10.15640/ijaah.v3n2p3.
- Nyamanga, P. O. (2008). *The Impact of Tourism on the Conservation of the Cultural Heritage in the Kenyan Coast*. MA Thesis. University of Nairobi. Available at: http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/20788/Nyamanga%20Philemon%20_The%20Impact%20of%20Tourism%20on%20the%20Conservation%20of%20the%20Cultural%20Heritage%20in%20the%20Kenyan%20Coast.pdf?sequence=3 (Accessed: 31 March 2019).
- Nzeza Bunketi Buse, R. (2020). *Covid-19 and culture in Africa. A comparative analysis of economic impact studies*. Available at: <https://www.artsmanagement.net/Articles/COVID-19->

and-culture-in-Africa-A-comparative-analysis-of-economic-impact-studies,4184 (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

O'Connor, J. (2000). 'The definition of the 'Cultural Industries''. *The European Journal of Arts Education*, 2 (3), pp. 15-27.

O'Connor, J. (2010). *The Cultural and Creative Industries: A Literature Review*. 2nd ed. Newcastle: Creativity, Culture and Education.

O'Connor, J. (2019). 'Resources of Hope: Creative Economy and Development in the Global South'. *Ifa Input*, 2, pp. 1-12. Available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/non-official-document/J.O%27Connor_Resources%20of%20Hope_Creative%20Economy%20and%20Development%20in%20the%20Global%20South.pdf (Accessed: 5 December 2020).

Oakley, K. (2009). 'Getting out of place: the mobile creative class takes on the local. A UK perspective on the creative class'. in Kong, L. and O'Connor, J. (eds.) *Creative economies, creative cities: Asian-European Perspectives*. New York: Springer Media, pp. 121–134.

Obafemi, O. (1996). *Contemporary Nigerian Theatre: Cultural Heritage and Social Vision*. Bayreuth: Bayreuth African Studies.

Ogunbiyi, Y. (1981). *Drama and Theatre in Nigeria: A Critical Source Book*. Lagos: Nigeria Magazine.

Okagbue, O. (1998). 'Product or Process: Theatre for Development in Africa'. in Salhi, K. (ed.) *African Theatre for Development*. Exeter: Intellect Books, pp. 23-41.

Okagbue, O. (2007). *African theatres and performance*. London: Routledge.

Okagbue, O. (2009). *Culture and Identity in African and Caribbean Theatre*. London: Adonis & Abbey.

Okagbue, O. (2016). *The margin in the centre: Of Diaspora, Betrayal and Homelessness*. [Lecture] Goldsmiths College, 16 June.

Okpewho, I. (2003). 'Oral Tradition: Do Storytellers Lie?'. *Journal of Folklore Research*, 40 (3), pp. 215-232.

Omanufeme, S. (2016). 'Runaway Success: Nigeria's film industry is taking off'. *Finance & Development*, 53 (2). Available at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2016/06/omanufeme.htm> (Accessed: 5 January 2021).

Omotoso, K. (2004). 'Concepts of history and theatre in Africa'. in Banham, M. (ed.) *A History of Theatre in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 1-12.

Opala, J. A. (1994). 'Ecstatic Renovation: Street Art Celebrating Sierra Leone's 1992 Revolution'. *African Affairs*, 93 (371), pp. 195–218.

Oram, J. (1998). 'Float Traditions in Sierra Leone and the Gambia'. *African Arts*, 31 (3), pp. 50-57.

Organization of African Unity (1991). *Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (Treaty of Abuja)*. Available at: https://au.int/sites/default/files/treaties/37636-treaty-0016_-_treaty_establishing_the_african_economic_community_e.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

Osagie, I. F. (ed.) (2009). *Theater in Sierra Leone: Five Popular Plays*. London: Africa Research & Publications.

Ositola, K. (1988). 'On Ritual Performance: A Practitioner's View'. *The Drama Review*, 32 (2), pp. 31-41.

Òsófisan, F. (1999). 'Theater and the Rites of "Post-Negritude" Remembering'. *Research in African Literatures*, 30 (1), pp. 1-11.

Ottenberg, S. (1988). 'The Bride Comes to the Groom: Ritual and Drama in Limba Weddings'. *The Drama Review*, 32 (2), pp. 42-64.

Owomoyela, O. (1985). 'Give Me Drama or... The Argument on the Existence of Drama in Traditional Africa'. *African Studies Review*, 28 (4), pp. 28-45.

Palmer, E. and De'Souza George, R. (1997). 'Sierra Leone'. in Rubin, D. (ed.) *The World Encyclopaedia of Contemporary Theatre. Volume 3: Africa*. London: Routledge, pp. 256-267.

Payne Daniel, Y. (1996). 'Tourism dance performances, authenticity and creativity'. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 23 (4), pp. 780-797.

Peck, J. (2005). 'Struggling with the creative class'. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Affairs*, 29 (4), pp. 740-770. DOI: 10.1111/j.1468-2427.2005.00620.x.

Peck, J. and Theodore, N. (2015). *Fast Policy: Experimental Statecraft at the Thresholds of Neoliberalism*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Peters, K. (2011). *War and the Crisis of Youth in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peterson, R. A. (1990). 'Audience and industry origins of the crisis in classical music programming: Towards world music'. in Pankratz, D. B. and Morris, V. B. (eds.) *The future of the arts*. New York: Praeger, pp. 207-227.

Phillips, R. B. (1978). 'Masking in Mende Sande Society Initiation Rituals'. *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, 48 (3), pp. 265-277.

Phillips, R. B. (1995). *Representing Woman: Sande Masquerades of the Mende of Sierra Leone*. Los Angeles: UCLA Fowler Museum of Cultural History.

Polanyi, K. (2001). *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Rev. ed. Boston: Beacon Press.

Posey, D. and Dutfield, G. (1996). *Beyond Intellectual Property*. Ottawa: International Development Research Center.

Posthumus, B., Ashcroft, E. and Trillo, R. (2006). 'Sierra Leone – from palm wine to

- Protest'. in Broughton, S., Ellingham, M., Lusk, J. and Clark, D. (eds.) *The Rough Guide to World Music. Vol. 1: Africa & the Middle East*. London: Rough Guides, p. 345-350.
- Pratt, A. C. (2002). 'Understanding the cultural industries: is more less?'. in Mercer, C. (ed.) *Culturelink, Special issue: Convergence, creative industries and civil society: the new cultural policy*. Geneva: UNESCO/Council of Europe, pp. 51-68.
- Pratt, A. C. (2004). *The music industry in Senegal: the potential for economic development. A report prepared for UNCTAD*. Available at: https://www.academia.edu/27754211/The_music_industry_in_Senegal_the_potential_for_economic_development (Accessed: 21 February 2021).
- Pratt, A. C. (2008). 'The music industry and its potential role in local economic development: the case of Senegal'. in Barrowclough, D. and Kozul-Wright, Z. (eds.) *Creative Industries and Developing Countries: Voice, Choice and Economic Growth*. London: Routledge, pp. 130-145.
- Pratt, A. C. (2009). 'Policy transfer and the field of the cultural and creative industries: learning from Europe?' in Kong, L. and O'Connor, J. (eds.) *Creative economies, creative cities: Asian-European Perspectives*. New York: Springer Media, pp. 9-23.
- Pratt, A. C. (2015). 'Creative Industries and Development: Culture in Development, or the Cultures of Development?'. in Jones, C., Lorenzen, M. and Sapsed, J. (eds.) *Handbook of creative industries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Prentice, C., Devadas, V. and Johnson, H. (eds.) (2010). *Cultural Transformations: Perspectives on Translocation in a Global Age*. New York: Rodopi.
- Radcliffe, S. A. (ed.) (2006). *Culture and Development in a Globalizing World*. London: Routledge.
- Radcliffe, S. A. and Laurie, N. (2006) 'Culture and Development: Taking Culture Seriously in Development for Andean Indigenous People'. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 24 (2), pp. 231–248. DOI: 10.1068/d430.
- Radin, M. J. and Sunder, M. (2005). 'Introduction: The Subject and Object of Commodification'. in Ertman, M. and Williams, J. (eds.) *Rethinking commodification. Cases and Readings in Law and Culture*. New York and London: New York University Press, pp. 8-29.
- Rancière, J. (2010). *Dissensus. On Politics and Aesthetics*. Edited and translated by Steven Corcoran. London: Continuum.
- Rancière, J. (2013). *The Politics of Aesthetics. The Distribution of the Sensible*. Edited and translated by Gabriel Rockhill. London: Bloomsbury.
- Rapley, T. (2004). 'Interviews'. in Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J. F., and Silverman, D. (eds.) *Qualitative research practice*. London: SAGE.
- Rebellato, D. (2009). *Theatre & Globalization*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

- Reno, W. (1995). *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Reno, W. (2000). 'Clandestine economies, violence and states in Africa'. *Journal of International Affairs*, 53 (2), pp 433–459.
- Richards, P. (1996). *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Richards, P. (2005). 'War as Smoke and Mirrors: Sierra Leone 1991-2, 1994-5, 1995-6'. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 28, pp. 377-402.
- Richardson, H. (2016). 'Jacques Lecoq, Ariane Mnouchkine and le Théâtre du Soleil'. in Evans, M. and Kemp, R. (eds.) *The Routledge Companion to Jacques Lecoq*. London: Routledge, pp. 307-315.
- Ritzer, G. (2007). *The Globalization of Nothing*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge.
- Robertson, R. (1992). *Globalization: Social Theory and Global Culture*. London: SAGE.
- Rodney, W. (1970). *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Rogerson, A. and Steensen, S. (2009). *Aid Orphans: Whose Responsibility?*. OECD Development Co-operation Directorate. Available at: https://www.oecd.org/dac/financing-sustainable-development/OECD_Development_Brief_on_Aid_Orphans.pdf (Accessed: 30 September 2021).
- Rowe, S. E. (1975). 'Sierra Leone's Newly-Born Theatre'. *African Arts*, 9 (1), pp. 56-59.
- Roy, A. (2014). *The NGO-ization of resistance*. Available at: <http://massalijn.nl/new/the-ngo-ization-of-resistance/> (Accessed 20 November 2014).
- Rubin, D. (ed.) (1997). *World Encyclopaedia of Contemporary Theatre. Volume 3: Africa*. London: Routledge.
- Rubin, D. (2016). 'A Brief Introduction to Fémi Òsófisan', *Critical Stages, The IATC journal*, 14. Available at: <http://www.critical-stages.org/14/prof-don-rubins-brief-introduction-to-femi-osofisan/> (Accessed: 7 July 2020).
- Ryan, B. (1992). *Making capital from culture: The corporate form of capitalist cultural production*. New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Said, E. (1993). *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Vintage.
- Saint-Denis, M. (2009). *Theatre: The Rediscovery of Style and Other Writings*. Edited by Jane Baldwin. New York: Routledge.
- Salhi, K. (ed.) (1998). *African Theatre for Development*. Exeter: Intellect Books.
- Sanders, J. (2006). *Adaptation and Appropriation*. London: Routledge.

- Sassen, S. (1991). *The Global City*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Sayer, R. A. (2003). '(De-)Commodification, consumer culture and moral economy'. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 21 (3), pp. 341-357.
- Schech, S. and Haggis, J. (2000). *Culture and Development: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Schechner, R. (1973). 'Drama, Script, Theatre, and Performance'. *The Drama Review*, 17 (3), pp. 5-36.
- Schechner, R. (1976). 'From Ritual to Theatre and Back'. in Schechner, R. and Schuman, M. (eds.) *Ritual, Play, and Performance: Readings in the Social Sciences/Theatre*. New York: Seabury Press, pp. 196-222.
- Schechner, R. (1985). *Between Theater and Anthropology*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Schechner, R. (1993). *The Future of Ritual*. London: Routledge.
- Schechner, R. (2003). *Performance Theory*. Rev. ed. London: Routledge.
- Schechner, R. and Appel, W. (eds.) (1990). *By Means of Performance: Intercultural Studies of Theatre and Ritual*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Schechter, J. (2003). 'Back to the popular source: Introduction to Part I'. in Schechter, J. (ed.) *Popular Theatre: A Sourcebook*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 3-11.
- Scott, A. (2001). 'Dance'. in Maxwell R. (ed.) *Culture Works: The Political Economy of Culture*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 107-130.
- Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence (2014). *Persuasion and Power in the Modern World*. Available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201314/ldselect/ldsoftpower/150/15002.htm> (Accessed: 21 January 2021).
- Senghor, L. S. (1974). *Prose and Poetry*. London: Heinemann.
- Senghor, L. S. (1993). 'Negritude: A Humanism of the Twentieth Century'. in Williams, P. and Chrisman, L. (eds.) *Colonial Discourse and Post-colonial Theory*. London: Longman. pp. 27-35.
- Sensi Tech Hub (2020). *Sensi Impact Fund*. Available at: <https://sensi-sl.org/impact-fund/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).
- Sesay, M. (2019). 'Informal institutional change and the place of traditional justice in Sierra Leone's post-war reconstruction'. *African Affairs*, 118 (470), pp. 1-23. DOI: 10.1093/afraf/ady038.

- Shaheed, F. (2014). *Copyright policy and the right to science and culture*. Available at: <https://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2015/02/2015UNESCO--Copyright-right-science-culture.pdf> (Accessed: 7 November 2020).
- Shaw, R. (2005). Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. Lessons from Sierra Leone. Available at: <https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/resources/sr130.pdf> (Accessed: 9 April 2015).
- Shepler, S. (2010). 'Youth music and politics in post-war Sierra Leone'. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 48 (4), pp. 627-642.
- Sheriff, M. (2004). 'Sierra Leone'. in Banham, M. (ed.) *A History of Theatre in Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 171-180.
- Shiva, V. (2007). 'Biodiversity, Intellectual Property Rights, and Globalization'. In De Sousa Santos, B. (ed.) *Another Knowledge is Possible: Beyond Northern Epistemologies*. London: Verso, pp. 272–87.
- Shusterman, R. (2007). 'Entertainment Value: Intrinsic, Instrumental, and Transactional'. In Hutter, M. and Throsby, D. (eds.) *Beyond Price: Value in Culture, Economics, and the Arts*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 41–59.
- Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (2013). *National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone 2013*. Freetown: Government Printing Department.
- Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (2020a). *About us*. Available at: <https://tourism.gov.sl/about/#1533825675400-3d2b661d-865e> (Accessed: 15 October 2020).
- Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs (2020b). *Mandates & Functions*. Available at: <https://tourism.gov.sl/mdas/> (Accessed: 15 October 2020).
- Silverman, D. (2007). *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book about Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE.
- Singh, J. P. (2015). 'Cultural Globalization and the Convention'. in De Beukelaer, C., Pyykkönen, M. and Singh, J. P. (eds.) *Globalization, Culture and Development: The UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 29-42.
- Singh, J. P. (2019). *Culture And International Development: Towards An Interdisciplinary Methodology*. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/final_manuscript_cultureintldev.pdf (Accessed: 7 June 2020).
- Skelt, J. K. (2014). *The social function of writing in post-war Sierra Leone: poetry as a discourse for peace*. PhD Thesis. University of Birmingham. Available at: <https://etheses.bham.ac.uk/id/eprint/4990/> (Accessed: 31 October 2020).
- Slovan, A. (2012). 'Using participatory theatre in international community development'. *Community Development Journal*, 47 (1), pp. 42-57.
- Smith, M. (2003). *Issues in Cultural Tourism Studies*. London: Routledge.

Stephenson, M. (2020). *A new online commission: How do you have a happy life?*. Available at: <https://www.visithull.org/discover/new-online-commission-happy-life/> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

Spencer, J. (1988). 'A Historical Background to the Contemporary Theatre in Sierra Leone'. *International Journal of Sierra Leone Studies*, 1, pp. 26-35.

Spencer, J. (1990). 'Storytelling Theatre in Sierra Leone: The Example of Lele Gbomba'. in Harding, F. (ed.) (2002) *The Performance Arts in Africa: A Reader*. London: Routledge, pp. 189-197.

Spiegel, A. D. (2011). 'Categorical difference versus continuum: Rethinking Turner's liminal-liminoid distinction'. *Anthropology Southern Africa*, 34 (1-2), pp. 11-20.

Statistics Sierra Leone (2017). *Sierra Leone 2015 Population and Housing Census. National Analytical Report*. Available at:

https://www.statistics.sl/images/StatisticsSL/Documents/Census/2015/2015_census_national_analytical_report.pdf (Accessed: 18 May 2021).

Statistics Sierra Leone (2019). *Sierra Leone Integrated Household Survey (SLIHS). Report 2018*. Available at:

https://www.statistics.sl/images/StatisticsSL/Documents/SLIHS2018/SLIHS_2018_New/sierra_leone_integrated_household_survey2018_report.pdf (Accessed: 23 November 2020).

Stepakoff, S. (2008). 'Telling and Showing: Witnesses Represent Sierra Leone's War Atrocities in Court and Onstage'. *The Drama Review*, 52 (1), pp. 17-31.

Strand, H. and Dahl, M. (2010). *Defining Conflict-Affected Countries*. Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2011 'The hidden crisis: Armed conflict and education'. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000190711> (Accessed: 5 December 2020).

Strathern, M. (1995). 'The Nice Thing About Culture is that Everyone Has It'. in Strathern, M. (ed.) *Shifting Contexts: Transformation in Anthropological Knowledge*. London: Routledge, pp 153-176.

Stupples, P. and Teaiwa, K. (eds.) (2017). *Contemporary perspectives on Art and International Development*. London: Routledge.

Stupples, P. and Teaiwa, K. (2017). 'Introduction: On Art and International Development', in Stupples, P. and Teaiwa, K. (eds.) *Contemporary perspectives on Art and International Development*. London: Routledge, pp. 1-24.

Tavares, R. (2016). *Paradiplomacy - Cities and States as Global Players*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Taylor, T. D. (2007). *Beyond Exoticism: Western Music and the World*. London: Duke University Press.

Taylor, P., Davies, L., Wells, P. Gilbertson, J. and Tayleur, W. (2015). *A review of the Social Impacts of Culture and Sport*. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416279/A_review_of_the_Social_Impacts_of_Culture_and_Sport.pdf (Accessed: 1 May 2015).

Thompson Drewal, M. (1988). 'Ritual Performance in Africa'. *The Drama Review*, 32 (2), pp. 25-30.

Throsby, D. (2001). *Economics and culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Throsby, D. (2010). *The economics of cultural policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tian M. (2018) *The Use of Asian Theatre for Modern Western Theatre: The Displaced Mirror*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy (2019). *Developing Creative Economies in ODA Countries*. Available at: https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/british_council_creative_economy_development_in_four_countries_summary_report_tfcc.docxx_.pdf (Accessed: 20 May 2020).

Traore, B. (1972). *The Black African Theatre and Its Social Functions*. Ibadan: Ibadan University Press.

Translators without Borders (2020). *Language Map of Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Sierra-Leone-Language-Map-Static-EN-3-3.pdf> (Accessed: 18 May 2021).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act, 2000 (Sierra Leone). Available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/3fbcee4d4.html> (Accessed: 7 February 2014).

Tsing, A. (2005). *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Turner, V. (1968). *Drums of Affliction: A Study of Religious Processes Among the Ndembu of Zambia*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Turner, V. (1974). *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Turner, V. (1982) *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.

Turner, V. (1986). *The Anthropology of Performance*. New York: PAJ Publications.

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2015). *Youth population trends and sustainable development*. Available at: <https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/YouthPOP.pdf> (Accessed: 3 December 2020).

UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2021). *The 17 Goals*. Available at: <https://sdgs.un.org/goals> (Accessed: 11 May 2021).

UN General Assembly (1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our common future*. Available at: <http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf> (Accessed: 30 September 2021).

UNCTAD (2018). *Creative Economy Outlook. Trends in international trade in creative industries 2002-2015. Country Profiles 2005-2014*. Available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditcted2018d3_en.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

UNCTAD and UNDP (2008). *Creative Economy Report 2008. The challenge of Assessing the Creative Economy: towards Informed Policy-making*. Available at: http://unctad.org/en/Docs/ditc20082cer_en.pdf (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNCTAD and UNDP (2010). *Creative Economy Report 2010. Creative Economy: A Feasible Development Option*. Available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditctab20103_en.pdf (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNCTAD and ECOWAS (2020). *Services Policy review II*. Available at: https://unctad.org/system/files/official-document/ditctncd2020d2_en.pdf (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

UNESCO (1998). *World Culture Report: Culture, Creativity and Markets*. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000112074> (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2000). *World Culture Report: Cultural Diversity, Conflict, and Pluralism*. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000121058> (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2003). *Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage*. Available at <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00006> (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2005). *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001429/142919e.pdf> (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2009). *World Culture Report: Investing in cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue*. Available at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000185202> (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2010). *The power of Culture for Development*. Available at: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001893/189382e.pdf> (Accessed 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2012). *Culture: a driver and an enabler of sustainable development. Thematic Think Piece*. Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/post2015/sites/post2015/files/Think%20Piece%20Culture.pdf> (Accessed: 27 January 2014).

UNESCO (2013). *Creative Cities Network Mission Statement*. Available at: http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/CLT/pdf/Mission_statement_Bologna_creative_cities_meeting.pdf (Accessed: 27 January 2015).

UNESCO (2020). *Culture and Development*. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/culture-and-development/> (Accessed: 10 December 2020).

UNESCO (2021a). *UNESCO governance*. Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/about-us/governance> (Accessed: 21 January 2021).

UNESCO (2021b). *Regional Perspectives | Africa*. Available at: <https://en.unesco.org/news/regional-perspectives-africa-2> (Accessed: 3 February 2021).

UNESCO Transparency Portal (2020). *Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://opendata.unesco.org/country/SL> (Accessed: 2 November 2020).

UNESCO Section for Diversity of Cultural Expressions (n.d.). *An introduction to the value chain by UNESCO's Section for Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. Available at: <https://eusea.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Mapping-the-value-chain.pdf> (Accessed: 31 October 2020).

UNESCO and UNDP (2013). *Creative Economy Report 2013. Special Edition. Widening Local Development Pathways*. Available at: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/pdf/creative-economy-report-2013.pdf> (Accessed: 3 May 2020).

UNWTO (2021). *Sierra Leone Country Profile – Inbound Tourism*. Available at: <https://www.unwto.org/country-profile-inbound-tourism> (Accessed: 21 January 2021).

Utudjian Saint-Andre, E. (2007). *Le Théâtre Anglophone du Nigeria, du Ghana et de la Sierra Leone*. Paris: Karthala.

Van Graan, M. (2014). 'African creative industries: The sleeping giant'. *African Business*, 405. Available at: <http://africanbusinessmagazine.com/special-reports/african-creative-industries-the-sleeping-giant/> (Accessed 20 November 2014).

Venn, C. (2000). *Occidentalism: Modernity and Subjectivity*. London: SAGE.

Venn, C. (2006). *The postcolonial challenge: Towards alternative worlds*. London: SAGE.

Venn, C. (2009). 'Neoliberal Political Economy, Biopolitics and Colonialism: A Transcolonial Genealogy of Inequality'. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 26 (6), pp. 206–233. DOI: 10.1177/0263276409352194.

Vlassis, A. (2017). 'UNESCO, Cultural Industries and International Development Agenda: Between Modest Recognition and Reluctance', in Stupples, P. and Teaiwa, K. (eds.) *Contemporary perspectives on Art and International Development*. London: Routledge, pp. 48-63.

Wa Thiong'o, N. (1986). *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London and Nairobi: Heinemann and James Currey.

- Walmsley, B. and Oliver, J. (2011). 'Assessing the value of the arts', in Walmsley, B. (ed.) *Key Issues in the Arts and Entertainment Industry*. Oxford: Goodfellow.
- Ware, N. (1978). 'Popular Music and African Identity in Freetown Sierra Leone'. in Nettl, B. (ed.) *Eight Urban Cultures: Tradition and Change*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, pp. 196-319.
- Warwick Commission (2015). *Enriching Britain: Culture, creativity and growth. The 2015 Report by the Warwick Commission on the Future of Cultural Value*. Available at: https://warwick.ac.uk/research/warwickcommission/futureculture/finalreport/warwick_commission_final_report.pdf (Accessed: 7 November 2020).
- Watts, S. (2014). 'User Skills for Qualitative Analysis: Perspective, Interpretation and the Delivery of Impact'. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 11 (1), pp. 1-14.
- Shiple, J. W. (2009). 'Aesthetic of the Entrepreneur: Afro-Cosmopolitan Rap and Moral Circulation in Accra, Ghana'. *Anthropological Quarterly*, 82, No. 3, pp. 631-668.
- Weber, S. (2004). *Theatricality as Medium*. New York: Fordham University Press.
- Werbner, R. (ed.) (2002). *Postcolonial Subjectivities in Africa*. London: Zed Books.
- Werker, E. and Ahmed, F.Z. (2008). 'What do non-governmental organizations do?'. *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 22 (2), pp. 73-92.
- West, K. R. (2007). *Theatre of the Mind, Live on Stage: Radio Theatre Production for Theatre Practitioners*. PhD Thesis. Texas Tech University. Available at: https://ttu-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2346/20209/west_keith_diss.pdf?sequence=1 (Accessed: 15 June 2020).
- Whiteley, P. (2002). 'Archaeology and Oral Tradition: The Scientific Importance of Dialogue'. *American Antiquity*, 67 (3), pp. 405-415. DOI:10.2307/1593819.
- Whittlesey, H. (ed.) (2013). *From Wahnsinnig to the Loony Bin: German and Russian Stories Transposed to Modern-Day America*. New York: Peripatetic Media LLC.
- Wiktor-Mach, D. (2019). 'Cultural heritage and development: UNESCO's new paradigm in a changing geopolitical context'. *Third World Quarterly*, 40 (9), pp. 1593-1612.
- Williams, R. (1976). *Keywords. A Vocabulary of Culture and Society*. London: Fontana.
- Williams, S. and Butler, E. (eds.) (2005). *Den Ol Bod Ose. Creole Architecture in Sierra Leone*. London: British Council.
- World Bank (1999). *Culture and Development: A Framework for Action*. Unpublished paper, No. 34671, Washington, DC: World Bank.
- World Bank (2013). *Africa Tourism Report 2013*. Available at: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/region/afr/publication/africa-tourism-report-2013> (Accessed: 10 December 2020).

World Bank (2017). *Sierra Leone Sustainable Development Tourism Project*. Available at: https://ewdata.rightsindevelopment.org/files/documents/12/WB-P164212_AluYZYP.pdf (Accessed: 10 December 2020).

World Bank (2020a). *Literacy rate, adult total (% of people ages 15 and above) – Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?end=2018&locations=SL&start=2004&view=chart> (Accessed: 2 December 2020).

World Bank (2020b). *Personal remittances, received (% of GDP) – Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.ADT.LITR.ZS?end=2018&locations=SL&start=2004&view=chart> (Accessed: 2 December 2020).

World Bank (2021a). *GDP per capita (current US\$) – Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=SL> (Accessed: 17 February 2021).

World Bank (2021b). *GDP per capita (current US\$) – Sub-Saharan Africa*. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.PCAP.CD?locations=ZG> (Accessed: 17 February 2021).

World Bank (2021c). *Life expectancy at birth, total (years) – Sierra Leone*. Available at: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.DYN.LE00.IN?locations=SL> (Accessed: 17 February 2021).

World Economic Forum (2019). *The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019*. Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/the-travel-tourism-competitiveness-report-2019> (Accessed: 3 December 2020).

World Travel and Tourism Council (2020). *Sierra Leone 2020 Annual Research: Key Highlights*. Available at: <https://wtcc.org/Research/Economic-Impact> (Accessed: 10 December 2020).

Worman, D. A. (2006). 'The Metapragmatics of Saying in Sierra Leone Krio Theatre'. in Mugane, J. et al. (eds.) *Selected Proceedings of the 35th Annual Conference on African Linguistics*. Somerville, MA: Cascadilla Proceedings Project, pp 34-43.

Wyse, A. (1991). *The Krio of Sierra Leone: An Interpretative History*. Washington, DC: Howard University Press.

Young, G. (2013). 'Transitional Justice in Sierra Leone: A Critical Analysis'. *United Nations Peace and Progress*, 1 (1), pp. 3-17.

Young, R. (1995). *Colonial Desire. Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. London: Routledge.

Young, R. (2014). 'Colonia and imperium'. In Cassin, B. (ed.) *Dictionary of Untranslatables: A Philosophical Lexicon*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 1056–1058.

Yúdice, G. (2003). *The Expediency of Culture. Uses of Culture in the Global Era*. Durham: Duke University Press.

Zetterstrom-Sharp, J. (2013). *Encounters of Culture, Heritage and Development: Exploring Global Connection in Sierra Leone*. PhD Thesis. University College London. Available at: <https://discovery.ucl.ac.uk/id/eprint/1403579/> (Accessed: 15 June 2020).

Zetterstrom-Sharp, J. (2015). 'Heritage as Future-Making: Aspiration and Common Destiny in Sierra Leone'. *International Journal of Heritage Studies*, 21 (6), pp. 609-27.

Zhang, X., Wasserman, H. and Mano, W. (2016). 'China's expanding influence in Africa: projection, perception and prospects in Southern African countries'. *Communicatio*, 42 (1), pp. 1-22.

Zeitlyn, D. (2012). 'Anthropology in and of the Archives: Possible Futures and Contingent Pasts. Archives as Anthropological Surrogates'. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 41 (1), pp. 461-480.

Appendices

Appendix A – List of interviewees

INTERVIEWEE REFERENCE	ROLE	PLACE, TIME AND FORM OF COMMUNICATION
#1	Musician	Freetown, 16/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#2	Filmmaker	Freetown, 17/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#3	Theatre professional	Freetown, 17/06/2016 & 29/06/2016, face-to-face interviews; 27/09/2020, written interview (preferred form of communication by the interviewee due to unreliable internet connectivity); follow-up via WhatsApp in October 2020 & January and May 2021
#4	Theatre and media professional	Freetown, 20/06/2016, face-to-face interview; 14/08/2020, written interview (preferred form of communication by the interviewee due to unreliable internet connectivity); follow-up emails in September and October 2020 & April 2021
#5	Academic and theatre professional	Freetown, 20/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#6	Academic and theatre professional	Freetown, 20/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#7	Arts manager	Freetown, 21/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#8	Civil servant	Freetown, 22/06/2016 & 30/06/2016, face-to-face interviews
#9	Theatre and media professional	Freetown, 22/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#10	Arts manager	Freetown, 22/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#11	Civil servant	Freetown, 23/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#12	Theatre and media professional	Freetown, 23/06/2016, face-to-face interview; 01/09/2020, written interview (preferred form of communication by the interviewee due to unreliable internet connectivity); follow-up emails in April and May 2021
#13	Theatre professional	Freetown, 23/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#14	Theatre professional	Freetown, 24/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#15	Theatre professional	Freetown, 24/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#16	Civil servant	Freetown, 27/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#17	Development professional and music producer	Freetown, 27/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#18	Theatre professional and teacher	Freetown, 28/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#19	Theatre professional	Freetown, 28/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#20	Musician	Freetown, 28/06/2016, face-to-face interview
#21	Producer	Freetown, 30/06/2016, face-to-face interview

INTERVIEWEE REFERENCE	ROLE	PLACE, TIME AND FORM OF COMMUNICATION
#22	International organisation staff member	Freetown, 17/06/2016 & 01/07/2016, face-to-face interviews
#23	Writer	Freetown, 01/07/2016, face-to-face interview
#24	Theatre professional	06/07/2016, interview via Skype
#25	Producer	06/07/2016, interview via Skype; follow-up email in October 2020
#26	Arts manager	11/07/2016, written interview (preferred form of communication by the interviewee due to unreliable internet connectivity)
#27	Theatre professional	13/07/2016, interview via Skype
#28	International organisation staff member	19/08/2020, interview via MS Teams; follow-up email in October 2020
#29	International organisation staff member	03/09/2020, interview via MS Teams

Appendix B – Interview templates

As explained in Chapter 1, the semi-structured, co-constituted and interactional nature of my interviews led to each interview being unique in terms of its exact content, length and formality, but they all followed the same guidelines and core template questions.

The following two lists of questions were used as a template for interviews with theatre practitioners, policy makers and other experts during my research in Freetown in 2016. These questions were, however, amended for each interviewee and additional individual questions were added, depending on their position and background.

Theatre practitioners

1. What is your background? How did you get into the arts / theatre?
2. How does your profession / success affect your position within society?
3. Please describe the development of your plays. E.g., which techniques do you use in the development of plays? What do you base your aesthetic choices on?
4. What is the content of current local theatre? Is it anchored in the local daily life or in the global/universal?
5. How would you describe the influence of other media, such as radio, TV and cinema, on your theatre-making?
6. Do you consciously choose the language of your plays? Are there specific linguistic manipulations?
7. Is there a rift / gap between literary and popular theatre in Sierra Leone?
8. Can current theatre be called Krio theatre?
9. Is there flexibility and mobility of theatrical forms? Synthesis?
10. Is the integration of 'traditional' elements into 'modern' African theatre more of an aesthetic and ethic choice than a religious or ethnic one? (ref: Eliane Utudjian)
11. How would you describe your audiences?
12. How do you fund your theatre-making? Do you receive any public funding / support from the state?
13. Do artists and theatre makers collaborate a lot and support each other?
14. What do you think about the recently passed cultural policy?
15. Do you think that the Copyright Act / existing intellectual property laws work for Sierra Leone and you? Is there a different notion for artistic copyright / ownership of cultural production?
16. What would be the ideal environment, in terms of infrastructure, policy and funding, to support your work best?

17. How can culture and 'artistic literacy', and theatre more specifically, involve wider parts of society into the discourse of societal change and development? Should theatre play this role?

Policy makers and other experts

1. Please describe existing support structures (both tangible and intangible) and funding for the arts sector, in particular theatre?
2. Are plays currently being published / recorded?
3. Who controls the distribution of cultural products in Sierra Leone?
4. How does Sierra Leone invest in its cultural life?
5. How is culture valued / undervalued in Sierra Leone?
6. What is the background of local artists? How does their profession / success affect their position within society?
7. Please describe the infrastructure for cultural and creative education in Sierra Leone. How important is cultural and creative education to the development of talent and participation in theatre?
8. How are international trends impacting Sierra Leone's theatre and culture more broadly?
9. Do you think that the Copyright Act / existing intellectual property laws work for Sierra Leone and its artists? Is there a different notion for artistic copyright / ownership of cultural production?
10. Is there social mobility in the cultural sector?
11. Do artists and theatre makers collaborate a lot and support each other?
12. How did early-independence playwrights survive? Did they receive any governmental funding or structural support?
13. How can culture and 'artistic literacy', and theatre more specifically, involve wider parts of society into the discourse of societal change and development? Should theatre play this role?

The following template was used for the series of interviews I conducted in 2020 to receive further insights and updates on recent developments, this time also in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Policy

1. Has the 2013 cultural policy been fully implemented now? If yes, please give some details.
2. Has the National Council for Arts and Culture been established? If yes, is it fully operational and how has it impacted the creative sector in Sierra Leone?
3. Do you think that the existing Copyright Act / intellectual property laws work for Sierra Leone?
4. Is there a different notion of artistic copyright and ownership of cultural products / productions in Sierra Leone, compared to, for example, the Anglophone model in the UK or the USA?
5. Is the copyright collection society fully operational now? If yes, does it have a positive impact for artists?
6. Have culture and creative industries been mainstreamed into other policies (e.g., the trade policy)?

Theatre

1. How would you describe the types of theatre that are currently produced in Freetown and the whole of Sierra Leone?
2. Please briefly describe the theatre activities since 2016 you are aware of.
3. Please list the existing theatre groups you are aware of.
4. What is the content of current theatre in Sierra Leone? Is it anchored in the local daily life or in the global/universal?
5. How do you fund your theatre-making? Do you receive any public funding / support from the state?
6. How have existing theatre activities been affected by Covid-19?
7. How have other art forms / creative industries been affected by Covid-19?

Ecology

1. Has the new performing arts centre in Aberdeen been built, as planned in 2016?
2. Has the National Dance Troupe been moved to its new location at Mile 6, as planned in 2016?
3. How are current international trends impacting Sierra Leonean arts?

4. Please describe existing support structures (both tangible and intangible) and funding for the creative industries, in particular theatre?
5. Please describe existing structures / organisations / initiatives for cultural and creative education in Sierra Leone.
6. What would be the ideal environment – in terms of infrastructure, policy, funding and other aspects of the whole ecology – to best support your artistic / creative work and grow the sector as a whole?

Appendix C – National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone (2013), page 41

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the published copy of the National Cultural Policy for Sierra Leone 2013 leaves Section 1.3 on the definition of culture blank, showing no text at all under this section (Sierra Leone Ministry of Tourism and Cultural Affairs, 2013, p. 41). While this probably happened by mistake, one cannot help but interpret this as an example of the lack of clarity about the government's notion of 'culture'.

1.2 NATIONAL VISION

United people, progressive nation, attractive country

1.3 THE DEFINITION OF CULTURE

1.4 THE MISSION OF THE POLICY

To preserve, protect and promote cultural diversity, with a view to reviving and strengthening national consciousness, understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage and artistic creativity, and enhance its contribution to poverty reduction and overall national development.

1.5 THE RATIONALE FOR A POLICY ON CULTURE

1.5.1 Linguistic Heritage

Sierra Leone comprises about sixteen ethno-linguistic groupings which together represent a rich and diverse cultural heritage. Despite this heterogeneity, there is nevertheless a remarkable degree of similarity in the socio-cultural institutions and values which gives Sierra Leone a distinctive character that enables it to uphold its unity in diversity. This valuable heritage must be nurtured, preserved, protected and promoted vigorously to foster a stronger sense of national identity, pride and unity and to become a catalytic force for the attainment of Sierra Leone's development goals and aspirations.