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Aron Arabai: The Temne Mask of Chieftaincy

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Among the most interesting and visually striking of West African masks is *aron arabai* (pl. *eron arabai*), literally "the mask of chieftaincy," of the Temne people of northern Sierra Leone. Yet few outside of the Temne themselves know of its existence. There are scattered references by anthropologists to a masker who in Temne chiefdoms represents the chiefdom spirit *(kärfi)*,[1] but with one exception they have been very vague about the mask itself. The only photograph to have been published is more tantalizing than revealing, since it shows the masker with his back to the camera. No chieftaincy mask, so far as I can discover, is in any museum collection in Europe or the United States.

The earliest and still the only first-hand account of the mask and its function is in W. Northcote Thomas's 1916 *Anthropological Report on Sierra Leone:* "In some chiefdoms there is a man who represents the 'chiefship krifi'. At Mamaka he is called Sanko; Sanko and the chief, Satimaka, must be in separate houses; like the chief he must not go where Bundu implements are kept, nor where there is a new born child. It is significant that at the chief's death his Sanko retires and is replaced by another man after offering a sacrifice. Sanko wears a helmet of leather surmounted by a tuft; the face is of brass and there is a brass plate behind; strips of leopard skin are attached to the base, and over the skin is fibre that reaches to the waist. He has fibre ruffles around his wrists and net anklets with fibre tops. Four sticks tied together *(bönköloma)* are in his hand; they are the chief's staff" (1916, vol. 1: 28). Thomas took two photographs of *Sanko*, only one of which appeared in his report. Surprisingly, he chose to use the photograph that showed the masker from the rear rather than the front view in which the brass face is clearly visible. This latter, which I came across in the University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge, was my first visual evidence for the existence of brass masks in Sierra Leone.[2] Thomas's account stresses that *Sanko* is the chief's alter ego. Hence the significance of his observing the same taboo as the chief, carrying the chief's staff (*kabönkölma*—rendered by Thomas as *bönköloma*), and retiring at the chief's death, to be replaced by someone else. Of a similar mask at Magbile (presumably Magbile on the Rokel River in Marampa chiefdom), Thomas writes: "The chiefship mask of Magbile is known as *aron arabai*; like Sanko the wearer cannot come out when the chief is dead; the mask is kept in the chief's house. The dress is formed of skins and he has palm-fibre trousers. When he goes out to walk through the land he carries a broom and whips to flog people who do not come out when he dances. He can judge cases and pay the money received to the chief" (1916, vol. 1: 28).

Later writers add little, if anything, to Thomas's description. Butt-Thompson in *The Secret Societies of West Africa* (1929) simply lifts his description from Thomas's report and reprints the same photograph. McCulloch's *The Peoples of the Sierra Leone Protectorate* (1950) makes no claim to original research and acknowledges Thomas as its source on the "chiefship krifi."[3] In a review of McCulloch, Michael Banton gives the names by which the chiefdom masker is known in the Makari-Gbanti, Marampa-Masimera, and Yoni chiefdoms. But he points out that he is only repeating what he has been told, and does not seem to have seen any of the masks himself (1955:243).[4] Finally, Vernon Dorjahn, writing for *Africa*, records in passing what he learned of the chiefdom masker's activities in Kolifa Mayosso (1959, vol. 29; 1960, vol. 30).

The Temne institution of chieftaincy is distinctive. Among their Mende neighbors to the south, paramount chiefs are purely secular figures who exercise political powers. Temne paramount chiefs, by contrast, are set apart from their people (and perhaps more importantly, from their various subchiefs) by elaborate rituals and taboos that emphasize the sacred, quasi-priestly character of chieftaincy (see, in particular, Ture 1939, but also Biyi 1913 and Inga 1926). These taboos (*masäm*) are acquired during a period of retreat or religious seclusion (*kantha*) when the chief-to-be is ritually prepared for his new office. At the installation following *kantha* he is anointed and takes possession of the chiefdom regalia, including a box or basket with "the sacred things of chief," and the severed head of his predecessor. Henceforth, he is known by his dynastic title (Bai Koblo in Marampa, Bai Kafari in Tane, Bai Kurr in Kolifa Mabang), and it becomes a breach of his *masäm*, requiring redemption by a fine, to use his old name. The chiefdom remains his for life. (To this day the Temne have difficulty coming to terms with the Government's deposing paramount chiefs for any rea-

1 *PA ASERRY*. BOMBALI SEBORA CHIEFDOM.

2 *PA ATHARRMA*. MAKARI-GBANTI CHIEFDOM.

son.)[5] The ceremonial dress and accoutrements of a Temne paramount chief vary from chiefdom to chiefdom but typically include a reddish-brown country cloth or scarlet robe, the distinctive cap (*anyirrma*) with attached charms (*esebe*, sing. *sebe*), a necklace made from the teeth of carnivorous animals (*kasanban*), the chief's staff (*kabönkölma*) and spear (*kasawurr*). Together these ceremonies and regalia have the twofold effect of separating the chief from the common people and linking him mystically with his chiefly predecessors.

This powerful mystique of chieftaincy is also fostered by the institution of the "chiefship krifi," the masked spirit known in Temne as *kärfi*, who appears in public wearing *aron arabai*. Although most Temne chiefdoms have societies or associations—Ramena, Ragbenle, and Poro—responsible for the installation of the paramount chief, the chiefdom masker does not seem to be regarded as a society "devil." It bears the name not of the society installing the chief, but of the chiefly clan itself, albeit usually in an archaic form. Thus, for example, in chiefdoms where the ruling clan is Kamara, the associated masked "devil" usually is named *Pa aMela*, "Father of the Melas"—"Mela" being an old form of "Kamara." But among the most interesting features of *aron arabai* and one that links it directly with chieftaincy is the use of brass. I was told that brass must be used because the mask of chieftaincy should be the finest of all masks.[6]

I have seen ten *eron arabai*—the first, of course, in Thomas's photograph of *Sanko*, two more in a New York gallery, and seven in the field during two recent visits to Sierra Leone.[7] The ten vary greatly. The current Tane chiefdom mask, called *Atara* or *Yatara* (I have heard both forms) is unique among them. It is not a brass mask in the strict sense, but a black sacking hood onto which have been sewn small strips of brass in different shapes so as to suggest the features of a face. Pierced eyeholes allow the wearer to see through. *Atara* is worn with a black European top hat.[8] Though I was not allowed to photograph it, I subsequently saw a picture of the masker with hood and top hat taken at the installation of a paramount chief in Kunike.[9]

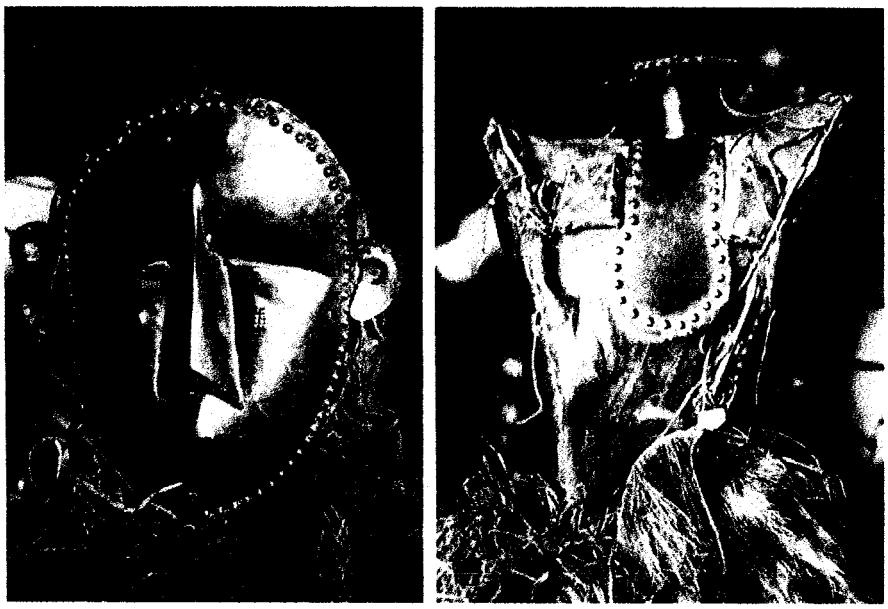
The others fall into two groups: those with one face and those with two. Janus-faced helmet masks with eyes to front and rear are to be found in Makari-Gbanti, Bombali Sebora, Buya-Romende, and Marampa-Masimera, the line of Temne chiefdoms north and west of the area I visited. As it happens, these are also chiefdoms where the Ramena society installs the chiefs, but I don't know if that is significant.

I saw a janus mask three years ago at the Merton Simpson Gallery in New York. I remember it as a cylindrical mask made up of five separate brass sheets secured together—two faces, two side panels, and a kind of oval lid. The brass was burnished and covered at the sides and across the top by animal hide including, I think, leopard or bush cat. It was known to have come from Sierra Leone, but had no other provenance. Unfortunately I was not able to get a photograph to compare it in detail with the chieftaincy masks seen later in Sierra Leone, but its general form would place it with the northwestern group.

In the field I photographed three such masks. The *Pa aSerry* mask of Bombali Sebora (Fig. 1) and the *Pa aTharrma* mask of Makari-Gbanti (Fig. 2) strongly resemble each other, notwithstanding differences of detail. In both cases the brass of the mask is badly tarnished and the leather fittings and decorations surrounding the basic helmet shape have deteriorated and hang loose. In fact, the differences between them are more in the leather fittings than in the brasswork. *Pa aTharrma* has a line of leather charms *(esebe)* running up the sides and across the top of the mask. If *Pa aSerry* ever had these they have long since disappeared. For its part *Pa aSerry* is topped by a flat cap of faded country cloth. The face is framed by what I would identify as *esebe* of a different kind—oblong with ornamented leather studs at either end. Both masks are flat topped and, like the Merton Simpson mask, consist of separate brass sections joined together. It is in the features of the face that the resemblance is most striking. Both have a slightly overhanging forehead—like most Temne *Bemba* masks—beneath which slanting eyes and a long thin nose with flaring nostrils give them a rather oriental appearance. The ears are similar—semicircular plates fixed with a stud high up on the side of the face. Eyebrows are etched into the surface of the mask with a sharp instrument, and a line of ornament runs across the middle of the forehead. The mouth of *Pa aSerry* is slightly raised, echoing the line of the nostrils, and one of its faces has a line of pimple marks running in a U shape from the base of the ears and across the chin (even the two faces on one mask differ a bit). My own overwhelming impression is that these are two works by the same hand or workshop—all the more probable since the two chiefdoms lie side by side.

The third of the two-faced masks I saw in the field is the *Pa aKenthi* mask of Buya-Romende (Fig. 3). Unlike the others it is not a full metal helmet mask but a leather helmet to which two oval-shaped brass masks have been attached front and back. There is a bobbin-like brass projection on top connected to brass epaulets that come half-way down the sides. The faces, more rounded than those of *Pa aTharrma* and *Pa aSerry*, are ornamented with a line of brass studs at the edge. The nose has more of a prism shape and is without the flaring nostrils. The ears are more naturalistic. The brass is slightly raised on both cheeks to suggest scarification marks. The folding together of the brass sheeting below the mouth creates a cleft chin effect. Like the other masks it has attachments of raffia, leather *esebe*, and strips of animal hide. The metal is largely untarnished.

The masks that come from the south and east have single faces. One of them is the *Sanko* photographed by Thomas, a leather mask with a brass face to the front and a brass plate to the rear. A second



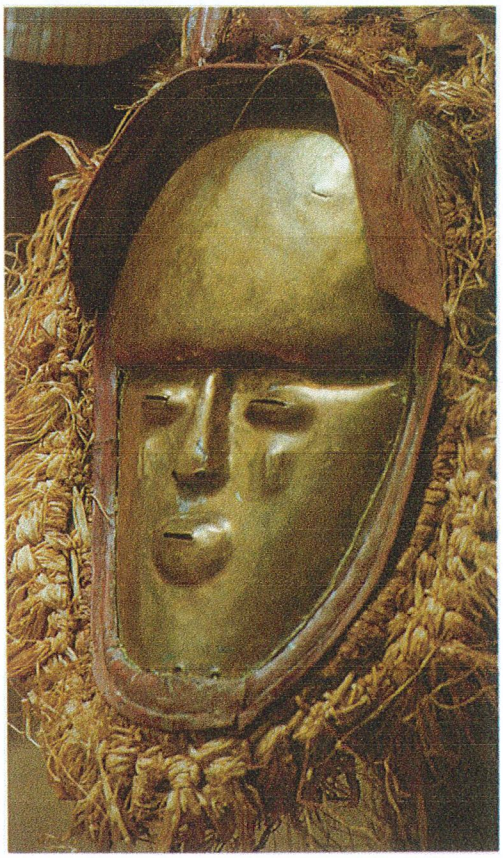
3. *PA AKENTHI* (FRONT AND SIDE VIEWS). BUYA-ROMENDE CHIEFDOM.

4. *(ABOVE AND RIGHT) NEMANKERA.* KOLIFA CHIEFDOM.

one seen in the Merton Simpson Gallery has much in common with Temne wooden masks, with its long straight nose, smiling mouth, and high domed forehead. An ornamented brass strip divides the forehead in two at the center, and another, serrated on the lower side, runs across the brows. A double row of cowrie shells runs around the rim of the mask. From it hangs a bib of red cloth decorated with strings of cowrie shells and, at the bottom, a row of tiny metal bells.

I saw three single-faced masks in the field as well. *Nemankera* (Fig. 4), the chieftaincy mask in Kolifa, is the best preserved of those currently in use. The brass, which is highly polished, seems especially thick and heavy. It has the characteristic domed forehead, its eyes and mouth protrude, and there are scarification marks on the cheeks. It is edged with leather to which undyed raffia and *esebe* are attached, the latter inside. I was fortunate to be able to photograph the complete costume of *Nemankera*. The mask is worn high up on the head facing at an angle toward the sun, rather than in front of the face. The masker wears a raffia skirt, and raffia from the mask covers the upper part of the body. In his left hand, he carries a broom and ornamental sword, both with plated handles; in his right hand, a long staff and a plier-like contrivance for picking objects up from the ground.[10]

In Yoni I photographed two chieftaincy masks. *Pa aMela* (Fig. 5) is only a fragment. It consists of a roughly rectangular plate with the molded outline of a head and face. The proportions and positions of forehead, eyes (almond shaped), nose and mouth are naturalistic, and eyebrows are represented. Wire runs around the underside of the eyes and nose and is fastened in position by tiny clamps. There are small vertical metal strips on either side of the cheeks that correspond to the leather *esebe* of the two-faced *Pa aSerry* mask. We can only speculate about what the remainder of the mask was like. Probably it was similar to the second chieftaincy mask I saw in Yoni, *Pa aYalu* (Fig. 6), which also consists of a brass plate hammered into the shape of a face and sewn onto a domed headpiece of red fabric in the shape of a tea cosy. It has a crest of straw-like raffia across the top and raffia around the base. In appearance *Pa aYalu* is less naturalistic than its companion mask. The noses are not dissimilar, although *Pa aYalu's* is slightly dented, giving him the suggestion of a broken nose. But his eyes and mouth are reduced to slits in the metal, the cheeks are raised and rounded, and the forehead is squarer, with a decorative strip across the eyebrows. There is a good deal of surface decoration around the edges of the mask and it has two semicircular plates attached to the sides for ears (an echo of the Bombali masks). Like *Nemankera* it was highly burnished when I saw it and showed signs of recent use.



How widely are *eron arabai* distributed in the Temne area? Thomas speaks only of *some* chiefdoms with a chiefdom masker. My own findings indicate that, at least in the Temne heartland, *all* chiefdoms have, or have had in living memory, a masker of the kind he describes. On my two recent trips I visited eleven chiefdoms: Maforki, Tinkatupa-Makama-Safroko, Buya-Romende, Bombali Sebora, Makari-Gbanti, Paki-Masabong, Kolifa, Tane, Bonkolenken, Kolifa Mabang, and Yoni. I was able to obtain information about *eron* in two additional chiefdoms, Marampa-Masimera and Malal.[11] J.S. Lenga-Kroma's "History of the Southern Temne" (1978) was also helpful. Of the abovementioned chiefdoms only Maforki in the west had no tradition of a chiefdom masker. In neighboring Tinkatupa-Makama-Safroko (or T.M.S. as it is familiarly known), there was a chieftaincy mask in the Makama section, but not apparently in Tinkatupa. In place of *aron arabai* in Maforki and T.M.S. there was something described as "the mask of the *Yelibas*" (*Yelibas* being professional itinerant musicians and praise singers). This was said to come out at installations and to be made of brass, but my informants did not see it as pertaining to chieftaincy as such. Lenga-Kroma says that there was no chiefdom masker in Koya (1978:app. III). I have no information on the two Kunike chiefdoms in the east, nor on the westernmost Temne chiefdoms, where Temne traditions have for some time been exposed to Muslim influences.

In a number of chiefdoms there are, or have been, two chieftaincy masks. This was the case in Makari-Gbanti, Marampa-Masimera, Malal, and Yoni. Banton, who was the first to mention this phenomenon, gave the following account: "The official who represents the chiefship *krifi* is in Makari-Gbanti known as *Pa Tharrma* when the Tarawali are ruling, and *Pa Kenthi* when a Kenthi (Kanu) is chief" (1955:243). In order to understand this it helps to know something of the history and traditions of the different chiefdoms. In a typical Temne chiefdom, the old Kolifa Mayosso for example, there is one ruling clan or family (in this case the Kamaras) but a number of lineages from which the paramount chief is selected in rotation. In Kolifa Mayosso, according to Dorjahn, there were four such lineages. Since only one clan is involved, the chiefdom *kärfi* naturally bears the name, in archaic form, of that clan: Mela or Kamara. However, over the years, partly in response to pressure within chiefdoms, more often at the behest of Government anxious for larger, more efficient units, two or more existing chiefdoms have been amalgamated; where there is only one clan involved there is no need for more than one mask. The only difference would be an increase in the number of lineages from which the paramount chief is drawn. One or other of the existing *eron arabai*, probably the one in the better state of preservation, would then become the mask for the combined chiefdom. It is a different matter where amalgamation brings together chiefdoms ruled by different clans, which was the case in Makari-Gbanti, Marampa-Masimera, and Yoni. Depending on the circumstances *different* clans will take turns to provide the paramount chief. A chief chosen from one clan cannot be represented by a masker bearing the name of another clan. Therefore, two are needed to represent the chiefdom *kärfi* in turns, depending on which clan is supplying the paramount chief at the time—exactly the situation Banton describes.

Certain important subchiefs also seem to have had their own *aron arabai*. These include the Bai Suba of Magbile in Marampa chiefdom and the Sathimaka of Mamaka in what is now Yoni, whose masked spirits were described by Thomas. According to Lenga-Kroma, powerful chiefs in the nineteenth century such as Bai Koblo Sankolo of Marampa and Bai Simera Kamal of Masimera extended their patronage through the creation of dependent "crowns," presenting them with their own chiefly regalia, including the dress for their own masked spirit. In time some of these became the nucleus of new independent chiefdoms. This happened with Malal. In other cases they were quietly reabsorbed into the chiefdom, and their chiefly title and honors lapsed.[12]

Although, for convenience, I have used the term *aron arabai* or "mask of chieftaincy" as a general name for this kind of mask, it would be fair to say that there are certain chiefdoms—Yoni, for example—where it was the names of the individual masks, *Pa aMela* and *Pa aYalu*, that produced the first smiles of recognition. In other places they were triggered by my mention of brass: the material itself was enough to identify to most Temne the kind of mask I had in mind.

Each mask has its own personal name. This is not a peculiarity of chieftaincy masks in Sierra Leone. Ruth Phillips found this to be the case with the well-known *sowei* masks of the women's Sande society—the name, as a rule, summing up the character of the spirit the mask represents (Phillips 1979:chap. 6). What is distinctive about chieftaincy masks is that the names they bear link them directly with the ruling clans in different chiefdoms. Thus, the masker in Marampa represents not chieftaincy in the abstract, but specifically the chieftaincy of the ruling clan in Marampa, the Kabias. He is *Pa aSonke:* Father or Head of the Kabias. His counterpart in the former Masimera chiefdom before amalgamation was *Pa aThale:* Father of the Banguras (the paramount chiefs in Masimera being Banguras). The use of older forms of the clan name rather than those in common use today is one way in which the masker and the spirit he represents are symbolically identified with the earliest origins of the chiefdom and the establishment of its ruling house. A number of my informants insisted that the correct form of the name is *Pa aSonke* or *Pa aMela* and not *Pa Sonke* or *Pa Mela* (that is, "Father of the Kabias/Kamaras" and not "Father Kabia/Kamara").[13] An apparent exception to the general pattern of names is the chieftaincy masker in Tane chiefdom, called *Atara* or *Yatara*, which—so far as I can discover—is not a form of Turay, the chiefly clan in Tane. The masker known as *Nemankera* in Kolifa chiefdom is also an exception.

I tried to find out if what Thomas said about *Sanko* and the Magbile mask applies to other *eron arabai*.[14] In Magbile, according to Thomas, the mask was kept in the chief's house. But this is the exception rather than the rule. Only in Tane and Makari-Gbanti chiefdoms is the mask even in the same town where the paramount chief has his residence (Matotoka and Panlap, respectively). In Kolifa Mabang the mask is kept at Mabang along with the other articles of chieftaincy, but the chief Bai Kurr lives at Kumrabai Mamila. When I was in Yoni, the two chieftaincy masks were kept in Yonibana, the main town of the chiefdom, rather than in Petifu, where the present paramount chief lives. In Bombali Sebora the mask is kept neither at Makeni, the home and office of the paramount chief, nor at Makama, the ceremonial center where the present chief was installed, but at a tiny village off the main Makeni-Magburaka road. This is by no means atypical. I know of no case where the paramount chief is custodian of *aron arabai*. If anything, the pattern seems to be for the chief himself to have little to do with the mask representing his chieftaincy; he even relies on his Kaprs for knowledge of its whereabouts.

In my experience the custodian of the mask is either one of the ceremonial chiefs, Pa Kapr Kuma or Pa Kapr Masäm, or the actual wearer of the mask. Custodian and wearer may, of course, be quite different people. The custodian, where he is a ceremonial chief, would normally change on the death of the paramount chief, since each new chief appoints his own Kaprs. Hence, perhaps, Thomas's claim that when the chief dies his *Sanko* retires (1916, vol. 1: 28). The mask wearer, on the other hand, continues as such until his own death when, generally speaking, he is succeeded by his son or other close relative. This is how it was in Kolifa and in Tane, and I was told it was the same in Marampa. Pa Kwambai, who performs as *Nemankera* in Kolifa, told me

that after his father's death it had come to him in a dream that he was to take his place.

I was unable to corroborate Thomas's claim that the chiefdom masker—in this case the chief's alter ego—was subject to the same taboos as the chief himself. Nor could I verify that there is a specific taboo on his being in the same house as the chief. None of those I talked to could see any problem in the chief and his masked devil meeting face to face, nor did any chief express reluctance to view the mask in my presence. As for Thomas's claim that the masker tries cases on the chief's behalf, one should not perhaps take the notion of his "representing" the chief too literally. In Marampa, I was told, villagers would try to keep their chickens and such out of the way when *Pa aSonke* was dancing, in case he confiscated them for his own use. But all my informants rejected the suggestion that he could exercise quasi-judicial functions or levy fines. In fact their comments tended to bear out Banton's description of the chiefdom masker as a "semi-comical figure." While the *kärfi* was of course to be treated with respect, his presence was seen as adding to the color and gaiety of an occasion, and faces lit up when his name was mentioned.

There seem to be wide differences between chiefdoms regarding the frequency of *aron arabai's* appearances in public. All of those I talked to spoke of him as performing at the installation of the paramount chief. In some chiefdoms he is seen for four days preceding the chief's emergence from *kantha:* he goes around the chiefdom to announce that the waiting period is nearly over, and is the central figure in the "buying" of the chiefdom, carrying presents from the chief to groups within the chiefdom and to visiting dignitaries. Finally, he acts as a kind of master of ceremonies, leading the dancing and festivities that accompany the chief's emergence from *kantha.* There were some chiefdoms where, so far as I could discover, this was the one and only occasion when he performed in public. *Pa aSerry* in Bombali Sebora had not appeared publicly since the installation of the present paramount chief in the mid-fifties, and the mask itself was in a sorry state of neglect. This was also the case with the *Pa aMela* mask in Kolifa Mabang, although the paramount chief did say that it was brought out from time to time to be viewed by the ceremonial chiefs. In Buya-Romende chiefdom the chieftaincy mask also appeared for the installation of the Kaprs, and in Makari-Gbanti *Pa aKenthi* acted as a messenger whenever the Kaprs and section chiefs had to be called together. The appearances of *aron arabai* in Marampa seemed not to be restricted in any way; any occasion of general festivity would suffice. And the *Pa aYalu* mask of Yoni Mabanta, with its bright burnished surface, looked well used. It came out, I was told, at times other than the chief's installation, "but people have forgotten how to play with it."

It's difficult to say how old the masks might be. There is no scientific way of dating brass objects. We know that there were chieftaincy masks at Magbile and Mamaka during the First World War and, if the oral traditions Lenga-Kroma draws upon are correct, there were masked spirits in Marampa, Masimera, and Yoni chiefdoms in the mid-nineteenth century.[15] It is perfectly conceivable, therefore, that some of the masks still in use today date back to that period, if not earlier. There is in the Sierra Leone National Museum a Temne paramount chief's "crown" made entirely of brass and collected in Kafei chiefdom. It is said in the acquisition notes to be around one hundred and twenty years old. That information, too, if reliable, would point to the nineteenth century as the most likely period for the manufacture of other brass objects, including the masks of chieftaincy.

I am no expert on metal work and can only offer my very uninformed opinion that the brass masks I have seen were produced by beating—perhaps, as Frank Willett has suggested, over a mold—or by folding, rather than casting. Additional features, such as the ears on certain masks, had been attached to the main part of the mask by brass nails or studs. Some of the surface decoration suggested that a punch had been used, and some could have been cut directly into the metal with a pointed instrument. There may have been some simple welding.

I was not able to learn the names of any living blacksmiths working in brass with whom I could discuss the techniques involved. The paramount chief of Kolifa Mabang told me that Pa Kapr Kuma of Rokankar in his chiefdom, now an old man in his seventies, had repaired *Pa aMela* for his own installation as chief in 1963. But it wasn't clear whether the repairs had involved any work upon the brass itself. This mask, the chief told me, had been made originally by Pa Kapr Kuma's "grandfather." In 1965 the Sierra Leone Museum was presented with a brass mask (single-faced)[16] and some brass figures by the paramount chief of Paki-Masabong. The registers give the maker's name as Mode Lania, a Fula blacksmith, who lived in Mapaki around 1928. Unfortunately, both the mask and the figures appear to have been lost, so it is not possible to compare them with the other brass works I have described. We cannot even be sure that this was a mask of chieftaincy. When I visited Mapaki in 1984, I asked about the blacksmith. People remembered there having been a Fula who worked in brass, but they came up with a different name, Pa Dauda Conteh. It's possible there were two blacksmiths. The masks in Yoni, though different, were both made, I was told, by Pa Sedu Kabi. *(Kabi* is the Temne word for blacksmith.) He had been dead a long time. In the village where it was kept, *Pa aSerry* of Bombali Sebora was said to have come from Yoni and to have been the work of Pa Yemba Kabi. Elsewhere people were unable to name the makers of the chieftaincy mask and contented themselves with saying that they had been made "long ago" by men whose names were unknown. It was never suggested that they were other than man-made.

Further information from scholars or collectors who might have encountered *eron arabai* would be most welcome. Before these rare and beautiful Temne masks of chieftaincy disappear altogether, it is hoped that we can see and learn more of them. □

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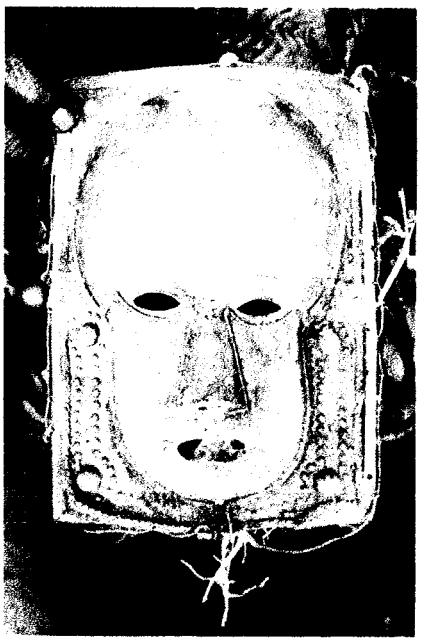

5. *PA AMELA.* YONI CHIEFDOM.

6. *PA AYALU.* YONI CHIEFDOM.

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1. Information supplied by Sharon Patton, Department of Art, University of Maryland.
2. Correspondence, Feb. 6, 1952. Murray's comments are based on seeing photographs of a number of the museum's objects.
3. Correspondence, Feb. 6, 1952.
4. In his detailed article, on which I have leant heavily here, Dark acknowledges the information supplied by K.O. Dike and the Benin History Scheme of the Department of History, University College, Ibadan.
5. For recent research on the Wellcome collection, see articles by Georgina Russell and by John Symons, in *Museum Ethnographers Group Newsletter* (Centre for South East Asian Studies, University of Hull), forthcoming; and by Georgina Russell in *Museums Journal*, forthcoming.
6. Compare the discussion of Sande society symbolism in Lamp 1985.
7. Catalogue by Tess Gower, *Art of the Mende from Sierra Leone*, Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries, 1980.
8. A very similar mask, in the collection of Katherine Coryton White, is illustrated in Thompson 1974:176.
9. This is also the conclusion (after much discussion with W.B Fagg and Frank Willett) of Ezio Bassani, Università Internazionale dell'Arte, Florence (correspondence, August 8, 1984).
10. Christie's, London, Sept. 16, 1979.
11. Sotheby's, London, Nov. 26, 1979.

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1. For technical reasons, *African Arts* is unable to use the International Phonetic Alphabet in type. Therefore the following substitutions are used here: *ə* = the schwa sign, pronounced like the *u* in "untie," although more rapidly; *ȯ* = the open *o*, pronounced like the *au* in "author."
2. The back view of *Sanko* appears in Thomas's report (1916: pl. IV). The photograph showing the face is numbered 5856 in the Cambridge Museum's collection of Thomas's photographs. Information about the location of the original plates would be welcome.
3. In my experience the Temne always say *kərfi* ("spirit") and never *krifi*, which is a Krio corruption of the Temne word.
4. His description of *aron arabai* in Makari-Gbanti as a "fine carved mask" shows the extent of his reliance on informants.
5. For example, in Marampa-Masimera, the paramount chief appointed to replace P.C. Bai Koblo Pathbana III, deposed by the present A.P.C. Government, has been unable to proceed through *kantha*. His difficulties in gaining acceptance as paramount chief throughout the chiefdom were the subject of a recent court case. See *Daily Mail*, February 1985.
6. Conversation with P.C. Bai Kurr Kanasaky II, April 18, 1984. As elsewhere in Africa, brass rather than gold is the material usually associated with chieftaincy.
7. It is just possible that some of the wooden masks embellished with brass strips collected in Sierra Leone around the turn of the century are chieftaincy masks, and not what they seem to me, *Bemba* masks used in initiation of adolescent boys.
8. It was common for chiefs and their wives in the nineteenth century to wear European top hats as a mark of status.
9. Both *Yatara* and *Nemankera* seem to travel to neighboring chiefdoms for the installation of paramount chiefs and subchiefs.
10. Vernon Dorjahn, who tells us that *Nemankera* used to perform with *Pa aMela* in Kolifa Mayosso, is mistaken, I think, in assuming this to be the *Nemankera* pictured in Thomas's report—who wears a wooden mask. Almost certainly it was *Nemankera* of Makump, whose mask is of brass.
11. Political troubles in Marampa-Masimera made it inopportune to visit, and the chief in Malal was in *kantha* and therefore inaccessible throughout the period of my research. He has since been ceremonially installed.
12. Interestingly the brass mask *Nemankera* of the chiefs of Makump in Kolifa has become *aron arabai* for the amalgamated Kolifa chiefdom.
13. *Pa aSonke* is an elided form of *Pa ka-aSonke*, which sounds overharsh to Temne ears. Personal communication, Dr. A.K. Turay.
14. It may be significant that the masks Thomas was allowed to see were in Magbile and Mamaka, places whose political importance was in eclipse by the second decade of the twentieth century.
15. Lenga-Kroma says that, according to oral tradition, *Pa aThale* led the dancing before Governor Hay at Maconteh in 1857 (1978: 551-52).
16. This couldn't be found when I inquired at the museum. It was Mrs. Cummings, the Curator, who told me that it had only one face.

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HINCKLEY, notes, from page 77

Fieldwork was conducted in Ouagadougou during the 1981, 1982, and 1983 Ramadan seasons. I have in my collection sketches of the Dodo masqueraders that can be photocopied. For information please write Priscilla Hinckley, 251 Central Street, Concord, MA 01742.

1. The investigation of children's play as a source of societal regeneration is recent. Brian Sutton-Smith (1971, 1976) also suggested that the ability to adapt is tested in play, and Edward Norbeck proposed that play, which includes "games and sports, theatrical performances and other forms of mimicry; painting, music, dance and the entire range of arts," is important to the survival of the human species (Norbeck 1973: 1-2).
2. The story of early Dodo was reconstructed by Karim Dakambari, an elder in Ouagadougou, as reported in the local newspaper *Dunia* (no. 4, Aug. 27, 1979).
3. There is evidence that Ramadan is still marked by a variety of children's entertainments in other Moslem areas of the world; Toumani Triande saw an example in Libya (personal communication, June 1982).
4. Before the moon is full, boys dance under the city street lights, but this is a recent addition to the traditional courtyard performance, as boys try to capitalize on Dodo's money-making potential.
5. A local proverb meaning good things don't happen without danger and excitement.
6. Name of the head of the government in 1982.
7. Words from a traditional song sung on joyous occasions.
8. This study is largely based on questionnaires completed by seventy-two people from ten *quartiers*, and on ten focused interviews.
9. However, some Christian children don't participate, as their parents still understand Dodo to be a strictly Moslem affair. A few respondents forbade their sons to join because they felt the urban troupes were unruly gangs.

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1. I want to express my appreciation to the many people who have contributed to the development of this collection over the years: former Dean Ralph Pruitt, Professor Curtis Wilson, Head of the Black Studies Program, Mwatabu Okantah, current Director of the Afro-American Cultural Center, and especially Dillard M. Poole, former Director of the Center and co-author of grant proposals for the expansion of the collection, for their support both material and spiritual; Margaret Thompson Drewal for her help with the initial installation and collection catalogue; my colleagues in the Art Department for advice and encouragement; my students who prepared catalogue entries and assisted in the installation; the various persons who have lent and donated objects to the collection, and those who facilitated such gifts; the Cleveland State University administration and the Development Foundation for grants in support of acquisitions; the Black Studies Program, the Art Department, the College of Graduate Studies, the Publications Office, and the former Center for Effective Learning for assistance in the publication of the catalogue of the collection; Instructional Media Services for the fine photographs of the objects; and most especially the countless, often unknown or unheralded, African artists whose creativity and vision have touched us all.

2. Works by Nzuki, Onobrakpeya, Olatunde, and Buraimoh demonstrate the continuing vitality and diversity in contemporary African art. Afro-Brazil is represented in Yoruba-derived Candomble ritual objects such as dance wands for the thunder god Sango, a mirror-fan for the river goddess Osun, and an iron staff for Osanyin, god of herbal medicines. Examples of Afro-American art, especially those inspired by the ancestral arts of Africa, include a sculpture by G. Martin-Geindo, a cloth collage from Evelyn Mitchell, and paintings by Isabelle Winfield.

A catalogue and addendum of the full collection, entitled *Dimensions in Black Art: African, Afro-Brazilian, and Afro-American Art at CSU*, contains edited entries researched and writ-

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