THE CITY AS BARRACKS: Freetown, Monrovia, and the Organization of Violence in Postcolonial African Cities

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The square block between Benson, Centre, and Lynch Streets in downtown Monrovia is the laboratory of the future of urban West Africa.[1] The Liberian Defense Ministry building sits at the north end of the block, a nondescript, decrepit concrete box. At the south end lies the Palm Grove Cemetery. Crammed between is the stuffing of Monrovia's urban fabric: wooden kiosks, concrete shops, and zinc covered houses stacked end to end around crowded and impossibly shaped yards.

From his third floor office, Joe Wylie, the Deputy Minister of Defense for Administration in the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) could look out on the barricades that close Benson Street to traffic. Only his Jeep Grand Cherokee and the imported SUVs of other ministers are allowed through by the Nigerian peacekeepers who secure the city. The morning I visited him, Joe's desk bore the universal trappings of an upper-level bureaucrat: flat-screen desktop computer, remote control for the wall unit air conditioner, Joe's two cell phones and his palm pilot. As various civilian and military personnel came to him with requests or documents, Joe briefed me on the security situation in the country, on his personal affairs since last we met, and on his plans to ask the NTGL budget office for $5,000 cash for a plane ticket to the United States and a rental car so he could visit the Pentagon.

A week later, I sat a few hundred feet from Joe's office in a metal hovel in the Alcatraz ghetto. Like any of the city's ghettos (as they are called in "Liberian English"), Alcatraz was a collection of makeshift dwellings inhabited mostly by underemployed young men. In the yard, a collection of youth played checkers, talked, and smoked cigarettes or marijuana. Inside a mostly bare room, I spoke with ex-combatants Abdul, Lansana, and George about life in former Liberian warlord-turned-president Charles Taylor's army, about their interest in mining diamonds, and about the ongoing war in neighboring Côte d'Ivoire. All three claimed to be tired of war and uninterested in recruitment for the Ivorian conflict. If they could find patrons, each would go to Greenville and the Sapo Forest Reserve, where it was rumored a large deposit of diamonds had recently been discovered.

There is without question a dystopic narrative in both the parallels and the contrasts of these two encounters. It is a narrative of crumbling infrastructure and failed governance, of the twin crises of neoliberalism and of neopatrimonialism. It is a narrative of the "worlding" of African cities (Simone 2001), in which urban Africa becomes a staging post for opportunities beyond its own borders. Joe Wylie and the youth in Alcatraz fought on opposite sides of the war, yet none found it noteworthy that they now all hustled on the same city block for opportunities to escape the city they once sought to control. It seemed just one more development in the absurd trajectory of the city of Monrovia and those who live there.

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African cities have always presented a challenge to the anthropology of Africa. As Sally Falk Moore recounts in her history of Africanist anthropology, it was southern Africa's mass urbanization that disrupted the functionalist and salvage narratives of much classic British social anthropology (1994). More recently, writers such as AbdouMaliq Simone (2001, 2002, 2004), Filip De Boeck with Marie-Françoise Plissart (2002), Achille Mbembe and Sarah Nuttall (2004) have again positioned urban spaces as crucial fields for the "project of defamiliarization" of postcolonial metanarratives; in this case, metanarratives of a continent in collapse (Mbembe and Nuttall 2004:352). In contrast to the African city as a negative space measured by its deviance from an abstract, properly functioning norm, recent works on the city privilege the creation of new types of urbanity through experimentation and creative bricolage.

Disrupting the imaginings of the African city as failure is difficult enough when the city from which one writes is Johannesburg, Dakar, Kinshasa, or Nairobi. It becomes an even greater challenge when the city in question is Luanda or Mogadishu, Kigali or Kisangani. These are cities in which the forces that "overpopulate" the

African urban—people, wealth, poverty, occult forces, uncertainty, death (Simone 2001:17)—include the literal forces of rebel movements, military insurrections, and militia mobilizations.

In this article, I am interested in what West African urban locations like this city block in Monrovia say about these other postcolonial African cities, and about how we conceptualize the future of the city in general. On the basis of the configuration of space, bodies, subjects, and violence within specific locations in Freetown, Sierra Leone, and Monrovia, Liberia, I suggest that these cities are best understood not in terms of destruction but as zones of excessive production. Like any space of capitalist production, the crucial element is the organization of labor. Inspired by Agamben's writing on the camp as the *nomos,* or organizing principle, of modernity, I suggest that the nomos of West Africa's postmodernity is the barracks. The barracks concentrate bodies (particularly male bodies) and subjects into formations that can be deployed quickly and efficiently to any corner of the empire.[2] They may be called up at any moment as laborers on the battlefield, workers on the plantation, or diggers in the mine. The barracks organizes male sociality itself around the exercise of violence and circulates that violence within an exchange economy. I trace these movements through two specific sites, Freetown's Brookfields Hotel and the Duala neighborhood of Monrovia. What we see from Brookfields and Duala, as well as from Joe Wylie's window and the checkers table at Alcatraz is the process of a city and its populace reorganized and reorganizing itself to service the united functions of a resource extraction economy and war.

THE MANO RIVER WAR

After a decade and a half of the Mano River War,[3] Freetown and Monrovia epitomized the African urban landscape as urban warscape. The populations of both cities swelled with refugees and internally displaced persons from throughout the region, placing enormous pressure on already fractured infrastructures. Direct military incursions on both capitals radically impacted the shape and future of these cities, and the postconflict period has seen very little improvement in basic services.

Charles Taylor and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) began their war in late 1989, and by 1990 they had reached Monrovia. Fighting between various NPFL factions, government forces, and the Nigerian-led peacekeepers (ECOMOG)[4] damaged the city even further. The relative calm following Taylor's election in 1997 allowed for the resumption of limited city services, but the three "world wars" (the three major attacks by LURD forces on Monrovia that eventually

drove Taylor from power)[5] once again wrecked havoc on both the physical urban environment and on the everyday existence of its inhabitants.

Freetown faired little better during its phases of the war. Although the capital city's residents were famously ignorant of what was happening in the early period of the conflict, by 1995, fighting temporarily reached the Freetown environs. The 1997 coup d'état led to massive devastation as junta forces pillaged the city and ECOMOG first bombarded the city from air and sea and then (together with Sierra Leonean irregulars) fought a brutal urban ground war to reclaim the capital for the exiled government. The city was rocked by additional bouts of urban warfare, notably the January 6 1999 invasion of Freetown by the RUF,[6] and the May 8 2000 "incident" in which RUF leader Foday Sankoh's fighters opened fire in the city.

Beyond the overt destruction inflicted on the urban landscape, the city figured prominently in other ways in the conflict. For example, it was the bolstering of the Sierra Leonean army's ranks with untrained urban youth that is largely responsible for the "sobel" phenomenon, the predations of soldiers on local populations and the collaboration between soldiers and rebels to profiteer from the black market trade in diamonds (Kandeh 1996; Zack-Williams 1997). Ibrahim Abdullah and Patrick Muana (1998) have suggested that a lumpenproletariat class of underemployed urban youth made up the majority of the fighting forces. These were untrained youth drawn from Monrovia's ghettoes and the *potes* of Freetown.[7] Student leaders and faculty from Freetown's Fourah Bay College played an important role in the formation of both the RUF (see Abdullah 1998; Rashid 1997; Richards 1996) and the initial mobilizations of progovernment militias. The early leadership of the NPFL was drawn from cosmopolitan figures with connections to regional African leaders and transnational business interests. Caspar Fithen (1999) has argued that the exclusionary patronage networks of Freetown's urban elite helped give rise to an armed counter force structured around marginalized rural leaders (cf. Richards 1996).

Although both Sierra Leone and Liberia are officially at peace, they remain very much a part of the regional warscape. Sierra Leone's war ended in January 2002 with the disarmament of the fighting factions' leadership and the symbolic destruction of arms. The fact that the ceremony marking the end of hostilities took place near the national airport, an isolated spot far removed from the capital and easy to evacuate, suggests that faith in Sierra Leone's escape from its recent history did not run deep.

The end to Liberia's war was even more ambiguous. Charles Taylor was escorted from Monrovia into exile in Nigeria where he remained a factor in Liberian affairs and continued to pose a threat to the stability of the region until his arrest

in early 2006 (see Hoffman 2005a). Rather than rebuilding the country, the reign of the interim NTGL was an opportunity for the armed faction leaders placed in government ministries to glean what personal fortunes they could from their portfolios before the elected government took charge in January 2006.

For both countries, the fighting in Côte d'Ivoire, the possibility of war in Guinea, continued internal tensions, and the realities of everyday violence that blur the divide between war and peace make it difficult to think of the region in terms of conflicts past or settled political questions. Monrovia and Freetown are postconflict capitals for a region that is not yet postconflict.

PRODUCTION IN GENERAL AND WITHOUT DISTINCTION

Given this history, do we (to paraphrase Mbembe and Nuttall) "write the world" differently if the African metropolis from which we write is Freetown or Monrovia and not Johannesburg or Dakar? Although violence may be integral to the fabric of any African postcolonial metropole, do cities so thoroughly defined by overt warfare represent a different urban architecture altogether?

It is increasingly clear that the conceptual opposition of war and peace in postcolonial Africa is both unfixed and unhelpful. Too often, as Paul Richards notes, "war is foregrounded as a 'thing in itself' and not . . . one social project among many competing social projects" (2005:3). Armed conflict is not, in other words, the temporary suspension of the "normal" functioning of the city, but one manifestation of the way economies and governmentalities are organized in the contemporary period.[8] Such an approach shifts the burden of understanding the dynamics of postcolonial warscapes from an exclusive focus on what is destroyed. It seeks simultaneously to understand what is being produced. Anthropologists engaged in the study of violence have long been interested in its productive capacity. What interests me here is the extent to which the specific mode of production of this African war zone is increasingly indistinguishable from the mode of production of the postcolonial city itself.

Implicit in much of the new literature on African cities is some variation on what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari called "production in general and without distinction" (1983:302). In Marxian terms, what they refer to is the actualization of the real subsumption of labor, the point at which capital's logic of surplus value production is so totalizing that it no longer has any "outside." Social life itself is a space for the generation of exchange value and the production of profits.[9] Proceeding from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels's (1978:476) assertion that capital generates surpluses through constantly shifting the modes of production, Deleuze

and Guattari write that in its latest stages, capital generates profits through continuous movement. In their terminology, surpluses are realized through endless processes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. What is deterritorialized and reterritorialized may be relations of value, regimes of signification, commodities, or, as is increasingly the case in this region of West Africa, the very bodies of those who inhabit and move around the city.

In other words, production in general and without distinction implies the very act of living is an engine for the production of profitable surpluses. One sees this, certainly, in the way an economy supported by NGOs makes the management of the basic functions of life its business (see Redfield 2005). But Simone suggests something similar when he writes that in African cities today, the logic of accumulation and expenditure is so pervasive, so thoroughly mystified, and so thoroughly connected to a world economy, that it generates its own social reality:

> In many respects . . . the operations of the global economy make it nearly impossible for many Africans to continue functioning "inside" their cities. A seemingly arbitrary circulation of the unknown has penetrated these cities. What makes people rich or poor, what accounts for loss and gain, and 'working assessments' of the identities of who is doing what to whom are viewed as more uncertain. As the "insides" of African cities are more differentially linked to proliferating networks of accumulation and circulation operating at also increasingly differentiated scales, this uncertainty is "materialized." In other words, it takes the forms of specific bodies and identities, in which parts of bodies, as well as part-objects, specific locations, and built environments, are seen to embody particular forces of wellbeing and success. [2001:17][10]

The result of this regime of production is the complete reconfiguration of the city and of those who live there. Life within that space is a process of constructing fragmented and often contradictory selves; it is an experience of being subjected to arbitrary, uncertain, and unpredictable forms of discipline, the demands of which may be for life itself (Mbembe 2003; Mbembe and Roitman 1995). Within the city are multiple "invisible cities," or what Simone calls the "product and practice" of making reality from incoherent assemblages of divergent and contradictory forces (2002:28–29; cf. De Boeck with Plissart 2002:243–244).

This is the space of a new Pentecostalism that blurs the boundaries between tithing and pyramid schemes, wealth in this world and salvation in the next. It is a space of the virtual production of internet 419 schemes and what Sierra Leonean

combatants came to call "419-ing": boasting of high military rank with enough conviction that someone would believe it and thereby make it real.[11] It is a space in which being a refugee or displaced person under the care of multinational corporate NGOs can be the most stable occupation and the only one that guarantees access to basic services once performed by the state, at least until the war ends or the contract runs out or a change in government of a distant European country leads to a shift in foreign aid priorities. Certainly this was the case in Freetown's fabled "amputee camps," set up to house those most brutalized by the war (civilians whose limbs were amputated as a terror tactic by the various fighting factions). Many of those who could no longer farm or function as manual or domestic laborers ironically became their family's sole profitable earners through the emergency assistance of international NGOs.

This is a form of urban organization in which movement is necessary for survival, both physical and social. For example, the Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) campaign officially ended the Sierra Leonean front in the war by exchanging the weapons of ex-combatants for cash, commodities, and jobs training. But to participate combatants had to physically (and as I take up below often violently) pass into encampments in urban centers to be registered and made available for the always uncertain next step in the process. Being an actual member of the militia was less significant than being able to force or barter one's way into the space of the DDR (see Hoffman 2003). The Krio term *dreg,* which combatants often used to describe the everyday processes of getting by, invokes this emphasis on profitable movement when it refers not only to the "hustle" of life at the margins but also to the act of moving about the city to get one's business done.[12]

The city as a machine of production of this type is not the modernist archetype of the city as rationalized instrument. "Urbanization conventionally denotes a thickening of fields, an assemblage of increasingly heterogeneous elements into more complicated collectives," writes Simone (2004:408). But in these African urban centers "the accelerated, extended, and intensified intersection of bodies, landscapes, objects, and technologies defer calcification of institutional ensembles or fixed territories of belonging" (Simone 2004:408). The city itself fails to solidify. The postconflict city fails to rebuild. The urban infrastructure is constructed from a more diffuse array of relationships between people, markets of exchange, occult imaginings, and temporary alliances and enmities. Movement replaces identification as the locus of production and political participation.

Chatterjee's distinction between the citizenry and the population group is instructive here. For most world cities, he suggests, the calculus of residency is not one of a "homogenous" citizenry able by rights to place demands on city

or state governments through appeal to the city's public institutions. Rather, the city comprises heterogeneous populations to be managed. Governments reach accommodation with population blocks based on a cost–benefit analysis. Services are provided here, compacts can be negotiated there, all in an effort to keep populations in check, deploy them when possible and contain their inevitable potential for disruption (Chatterjee 2004). Such accommodations certainly characterize many African postcolonial urban zones—although the governing structures with which these heterogeneous political populations reach accommodation are less likely to be the functioning government of the city or the state than multinational corporations, warlords, or NGOs. As I take up in greater detail below, what is key to these strategic alliances is the population's capacity for violence (Chatterjee 2004:139).

In sum, the biopolitics of contemporary West Africa is one in which sociality itself is reconfigured according to the inaccessible, and inescapable, logic of global capital. Everything is exchangeable for the realization of profitable surpluses. What this means for understanding postcolonial African cities cannot therefore be framed in terms of destruction, but needs to be conceptualized in terms of overproduction. It is an overproduction that leaves no space or time for the modernist project of fixed city spaces, services, institutions, or relations. In its place is an infrastructure of people predicated on continuous strategic, and often violent, movement.

BUILDING THE BARRACKS

A productive regime that generates surpluses from the very lives of its laborers must organize its labor force in particular ways. For Freetown and Monrovia, the nomos or organizing principal that facilitates the social world as a site of production in general and without distinction is the barracks.

Agamben suggested that the camp stands as the nomos of modernity. Auschwitz, he argues, is the logical extension of the spatialization of biopolitics and represents the modern form of sovereignty (see Agamben 1998). The camp is the instantiation of the point at which the state of emergency becomes the norm— the moment when the police, rather than the law, are allowed to decide fundamental matters of life and death without review or fear of sanction. It is the moment when what Agamben calls "the care of the nation's biological life" (1998:175) becomes a political task.

The camp is therefore above all an institution with the capacity to effectively police and manage its borders and internal functions—indeed, this is its primary purpose. It is a machine for the processes of classification, containment, and if necessary efficient extermination. Yet its efficacy relies on a very particular, hegemonic

configuration of the modern institution.[13] What we find in West African urban centers, however, is not the perfection of the modernist institution as manifested in the asylum, factory, clinic, school, or prison.

I find the barracks a more fitting spatial model for the nomos of Africa's postmodernity. In a very literal sense, this is evident as we look around contemporary, cosmopolitan Africa. The barracks has become a complete social space. In addition to its security functions, in cities from Freetown to Monrovia to Brazzaville barracks are becoming important economic and social locations, as security service offers one of the few stable sources of income and as a wage earner's dependents crowd these structures. They are becoming important locations for political life, as the question of whether the armed forces remain barracked is increasingly the determining factor in the success or failure of any transition in government.

Yet the barracks is not simply becoming more important as a site on the urban landscape. It is becoming the model of that landscape itself. Unlike the camp's logic of classification of bodies and subjects, the barracks represents a shift in emphasis to the body's capacity for overconsumption and violence. To participate in the various overlapping economies of West African postcolonial urban life is increasingly to work out a technique for the strategic performance of violence and its exchangeability with other tasks. The barracks, literally and figuratively, is the spatial arrangement by which violence is alternately contained and deployed. The barracks historically represented the point of intersection of violence, sovereignty, and economy. The barracks guaranteed the colonial project's entwined motives of resource extraction and political rule. Its reservoir of legitimate violence was the most powerful tool in building the neopatrimonial postcolonial African state. And in the new age of empire, the barracks has not only become the engine of a dramatically expanded service and production economy, but also the police force for securing the neoliberal market.

The movement of bodies into and out of the barracks, and the relationship between that movement and the deployment or restraint of violence, is its organizing principal. The barracks is designed for rapid assembly and rapid deployment. At its most effective, the barracks makes the speed of movement a weapon. And what is increasingly evident as private security contractors become more visible on the world stage, efficiency of the violence/movement nexus is also the locus of the barrack's form of profit (cf. Virilio and Lotringer 1997).

For example, the process of disarming combatants through the DDR campaign ended Sierra Leone's war, but it replicated in many ways the habitus out of which it developed. In Bo, the stronghold of the progovernment kamajor militia, this was

done at the grounds of the town soccer stadium. For many ex-combatants, the small cash payment and the promise of some level of skills training were the only viable economic opportunity available, and it was predicated entirely on their ability to pass physically into the DDR space. For days, young men gathered outside the gate with their weapons, knowing that there were a limited number of slots in the disarmament centers and that only the proven capacity for violence (the possession of a weapon, withstanding the riot conditions at the gate) would earn them entry into the process. Some who managed to break through the heavy UN security cordon were allowed to stay, whereas others were violently evicted, illustrating the extent to which strategies of economic accumulation, and therefore social standing and political influence, were predicated on which physical spaces could be crossed and how violence facilitated that crossing.[14]

The same dynamic was at work in an extremely perverse way in the amputee camps. Most of the estimated 20,000 victims of the RUF's apparently random attacks on civilians, in which they used machetes to amputate the limbs of noncombatants, died. Of the few thousand who managed to survive, many ended up in camps in Freetown. The largest of these, the Aberdeen Road camp, became a required stop for visiting journalists, NGO workers, and dignitaries. No single space became more synonymous with the horrors of the war in Sierra Leone. Consequently, no space received more assistance than the camp. Relief organizations and charitable donors targeted the camp for funding projects or brought cash donations, and it soon became clear that being one of the war's most tragic victims had ironically become one of the few guaranteed means of generating an income. The population of the camp swelled as destitute extended family members showed up in the capital to live with their mutilated relations. Despite the fact that a number of organizations not only donated artificial limbs to residents of the camp but also showed them how to cheaply and effectively manufacture their own, almost no one within the camp chose to use them. Instead, the amputees developed a mode of narrating and displaying their violations prominently (see Figure 1).

Here, it was not the body's capacity to inflict violence that opened the door into economic life but a related willingness to make constantly visible the evidence of past violence. The effectiveness of this strategy was largely predicated on the easy localizability of these bodies in one place. A variation, but a consistent one, on the barracks logic of the postmodern postcolony.

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I turn now to two more extensive examinations of West African barracks spaces. In the first, Freetown's Brookfields Hotel, I am particularly interested in

FIGURE 1. *Amputee Camp.* **The Aberdeen Road Amputee Camp in central Freetown was perhaps the single most identifiable space in the global representation of the war in Sierra Leone. Those who lived in the camp exemplified how violence became the determining element of entry and exclusion from the barracks's peculiar mode of economic life. The ability to display the wounds of the body became a means to sustain not only the amputees themselves but often extended networks of dependents through access to aid and relief funds. Photograph by the author.**

what Simone has identified as the way postcolonial African cities "operate as a platform to engage in processes and territories elsewhere" (2001:18). In other words, my concern here is with the process of deterritorialization, or how the barracks organizes immediately and effectively deployable laborers—whatever the particular task may be, and wherever within the reach of the Empire they may be needed.

In the case of the Duala neighborhood of Monrovia, I focus on the corollary processes of assembly (or reterritorialization). For the barracks city to deploy laboring bodies for work on the battlefields and resource extraction industries of West Africa, it must also be able to effectively assemble them. This is a relatively simple matter in a space such as the Brookfields Hotel that literally housed hundreds of combatants. But even in less literal barracks spaces, the rapid call-up of laborer–warriors is written into the very logic of life in the city.

FREETOWN'S BROOKFIELDS HOTEL

Located in the Brookfields neighborhood of downtown Freetown, the Brookfields Hotel's approximately 150 rooms are spread over eight 2 and 3 story buildings. Before the war the hotel boasted a swimming pool, a well-regarded bar, and a decent restaurant, and it was a favored hangout for both local elites and international tourists. Brookfields was also the site of the government's hotel

FIGURE 2. *Vendor at gates of Brookfields Hotel.* **The Brookfields Hotel in Freetown, Sierra Leone housed the Civil Defense Forces militia from early 1998 until mid-2002. The hotel exemplified how spaces throughout the city were reconfigured on the model of the barracks. The central parking area served a number of public functions, among them hosting petty trade stalls for hawkers and combatants peddling the minor commodities of everyday existence. Photograph by the author.**

and tourism training school, through which the state was working to expand an increasingly important sector of its economy.

The hotel was first used as a barracks by the forces of the RUF in 1997. When the junta was driven out of town and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) government restored to power, the progovernment kamajor militia took over the hotel as their own barracks. They remained until August 2002, eight months after the official end of the war and four years from when they first took control of Freetown (see Figure 2).[15]

Until their forced removal, several hundred male combatants lived or temporarily resided at the hotel along with their dependents. The latter included wives, girlfriends, children, friends, and extended family. Most residents were young, with a majority under 30 years old. Individual rooms were nominally assigned to specific combatants, although in practice the population of the hotel was highly transient. The infrastructure was in extremely poor condition. Although there was surprisingly reliable electric current, there was no running water and the septic system had long since overflowed. None of the rooms contained their original furnishings, and many had been burned out or at least partially destroyed. On average, each of

the rooms housed four to six people, often sleeping in shifts throughout the day and night.

The hotel was more than the backdrop against which the story of the kamajors unfolded. It seemed to exemplify, rather, what Allen Feldman describes as the way in which "bodily, spatial, and violent practices" form a "unified language of material signification" (1991:1). The hotel concentrated the labor force of a violent economy into a single space and oriented it toward deployment throughout the city, the country, and the region as necessary.

During the latter war years, Brookfields was the largest single space in which kamajor combatants gathered anywhere in the country. From the restoration of the SLPP government in 1998 until the kamajors were evacuated in mid-2002, the occupation of the hotel was posited as insurance against both a renewed rebel incursion in the city and a second coup by the state's armed forces. It housed frontline troops and commanders temporarily in the capital for meetings with the organization leadership. Units waiting for redeployment elsewhere in the country frequently cycled through Brookfields. The hotel hosted the vanguard forces meant to protect the leadership and served as the base of the Special Forces, the most professionalized contingent within the militia. The compound served as a weapons cache, a meeting spot, and as a housing unit for wounded combatants unable or unwilling to return to families or homes outside the capital.

As the war drew to a close and combatants were less frequently sent from Brookfields to frontlines throughout Sierra Leone, the hotel became the major transit point for combatants moving into Liberia with the LURD forces. Two operatives, one a midlevel commander in the Special Forces and the other the wife of a prominent LURD supporter, recruited combatants to join the new movement in its effort to overthrow Liberian president Charles Taylor. Recruits living at the hotel or traveling there from outside came to the hotel room of one of the two operatives. They received a small cash payout for travel expenses and instructions on how to take the ferry from Freetown to Conakry, Guinea and then how to proceed by land to the LURD rear base at Macenta on the border between Guinea and Liberia. Among combatants and ex-combatants this underground railroad was an open secret. Fighters throughout the country knew to make the trek to Freetown and Brookfields and whom to ask for once they arrived. Many lodged at the hotel while waiting for arrangements to be made for their transport. In a sign of the extent to which becoming a "regional warrior" (Human Rights Watch 2005) represented a vocation rather than a sectarian affiliation, at least some of those who passed through Brookfields en route to Liberia were former AFRC junta

soldiers and occasionally former RUF rebels (the ostensible opponents of the hotel's occupants).

These deployments to the region's frontline spaces were at least in part dependent on the infrastructure, physical and bureaucratic, of the capital city. The leader of the kamajor militia, Sam Hinga Norman, was made Deputy Minister of Defense in the SLPP government, meaning that the organization was a quasi-state organ of governance.[16] The movement of combatants across international borders required that combatants, few of whom possessed passports, be issued government ID cards and travel documents. Recruitment required the relative anonymity of a chaotic urban environment and the various registers of "invisibility" that make it possible for marginal youth to circulate and congregate without attracting the gaze of the police, the military, or international peacekeepers.

Similarly, when the disarmament campaign was instituted to collect weapons and register combatants for benefits and future jobs training, rather than deploying DDR personnel to the bush, the program relied on local commanders to assemble their troops in urban centers, often for extended periods while the slow and haphazard process of registration was carried out. Brookfields provided a location within the city in which all of these activities could be coordinated. Combatants without financial or relational resources could sustain themselves while awaiting the next stage in their deployment. In short, there was a marked shift in the divide between city and bush that characterized the earliest phase of the war, when residents of the capital were largely unaware and uninterested in the encroaching fighting. By the latter stages of the conflict, the city and its functions were critical to this "bush war."

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Within the city, the concentration of kamajor combatants into a single, fortified space (or, to return to Chatterjee's formulation, their constitution as a political populace) made it a zone of legal exception with which the state had reached an ambiguous, and ambivalent, accommodation. No one paid rent for residence at Brookfields and the city's provision of electricity was free of charge. The kamajors were barracked at Brookfields to protect the city, yet they were widely understood throughout Freetown to simultaneously represent its greatest threat. Residents of Freetown, and even government officials, spoke of the hotel and its occupants as the most likely flashpoint for violence in the capital.[17]

For the Sierra Leone police and military forces the hotel was largely a no-go area. This was illustrated to me by a midlevel commander living at Brookfields. Sitting together on the low wall bordering the parking lot of the hotel, I mentioned to him that I had been invited to visit another commander at a guest house up

the road. This commander suggested that I be careful. This could, he said, be a "black money" scheme, a trap under which I would be arrested by the police or the Criminal Investigations Division (CID) for attempted counterfeiting and forced to bribe my way out of jail. Or it could be an ambush, with thugs waiting to rob me, or worse. Meet anyone you want on the hotel grounds, he suggested, but be careful anywhere else in the city. The police and CID are corrupt, but they do not dare enter the hotel.

The hotel seemed to occupy a double status "beyond the reach of the law," safer to those inside because the police dared not enter, more lawless and threatening to those outside for the same reason. Similarly, there was a rumor among former Sierra Leone Army personnel that soldiers who entered the hotel grounds were being eaten by the kamajors, a discourse that seemed to underscore the complex relation of the kamajors as the state's surrogate organ of violence to the conventional state apparatus for controlling and exercising violence.

As a reservoir of extralegitimate violence, Brookfields simultaneously constructed and threatened the state. Even those leaders who bridged the gap between leadership of the militia and elite status within government found themselves only partly in control of the violence contained there. When public office holders deployed kamajor combatants in their security capacity to generate private resources, these deployments frequently exceeded their intended purpose and generated excessively violent encounters.

For example, Bobo Sau, who was responsible for driving one of the four wheel drive pickup trucks the kamajors used during attacks, liked to tell the story of an "operation" in the eastern part of the city. Chief Norman ordered a group of kamajors to clear out a house that he claimed was being used by rebel collaborators, although it was also well-known that Norman was involved in a business dispute with the owner of the residence. As the militiamen herded people from the building, a crowd of local residents gathered and threw stones at the kamajors, creating enough of a confrontation that a contingent of Nigerian peacekeepers was deployed to secure the area. In the meantime, Bobo Sau told me, he facilitated the kamajor unit's escape by running the pickup truck back and forth through the crowd. "We damaged a lot of people that day," he concluded.

Bobo Sau's narrative underscores the extent to which the postcolonial African state is constituted by the uncertain legitimacy of its organs of violence and by the way it organizes that violence. The very presence of the kamajors in the city was predicated on the inability of the state to trust its own military. Yet as a surrogate organ of violence, it erased the distinction between the public security functions of

a state army and the private accumulation efforts of its commanders. The militia could be deployed as efficiently against the residents of the city as in their defense—although always with the potential for excess. Outside of the capacity of their own bodies or the intervention of an exterior force (such as the ECOMOG troops), the residents of the city had no recourse or appeal against the activities of a military institution able to claim the mantel of the state regardless of its actual functioning.

A single space within the hotel compound illustrates the import of the barrack's organization of violence to the capital. Jah Kingdom was the name a few dozen residents and regular visitors gave to the utility rooms, bathrooms, and storage areas beneath the Brookfields Hotel's swimming pool (see Figures 3 and 4). A Nigerian ex-patriate fighter named King operated a small bar in Jah Kingdom, and a group of kamajors and their dependents lived in the shower stalls. Jah Kingdom was rumored to be at the center of an extensive drug ring and the city's network of armed criminal gangs. Despite its reputation as a criminal haven, the occupants of Jah Kingdom were among those chosen for training by British military advisors for the new Sierra Leone armed forces, an amalgamation of fighters from each of the warring factions. And Jah Kingdom also provided young men to canvass and rally on behalf of the SLPP before the 2002 elections—a deployment of youth in what often become quite violent political contests (see Ferme 1999).

On a visit to Freetown in late 2003, I stopped by the Brookfields Hotel once again. The CDF combatants had been evacuated, and ironically the UN-sponsored Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) had set up shop in Block A. In the very same room in which I had stayed with Bobo Sau and a half dozen other combatants, I spoke with an investigator in charge of coordinating the testimony of CDF "perpetrators" of abuse. File drawers inside the room contained narratives of the war's violence taken across the country. Like any TRC, its intended purpose was to offer testimonies told purely in the interest of national healing. Yet even under the TRC the hotel was a site inscribed by the logic of violence and its strategic, profitable deployment. As the investigator explained, the TRC was having a difficult time convincing both CDF combatants and victims to testify. Among the chief concerns from both sides was an inability to accept that public testimony of their narratives of violence did not mean that they would receive benefits or eventually be paid.[18]

DUALA, MONROVIA

The Duala neighborhood on the western edge of Monrovia straddles the main route out of the city in the direction of the Sierra Leone border. Duala was occupied by LURD forces during each of the three "world wars" and was the target of

FIGURES 3 and 4. *"Good News" at Jah Kingdom.* **CDF combatants who lived in the shower stalls and utility rooms under the Brookfields Hotel's empty swimming pool named the subterranean complex "Jah Kingdom." The Rastafarian reference tied this decidedly local context to a global iconography of black, predominantly male marginality. Other inscriptions in the complex offered similar commentaries on the configuration of space and sociality: "No Job, No Respect," "Liberia Boys' Room." Photograph by the author.**

reprisals by Taylor's militias when the first two attacks failed. It is a densely packed neighborhood, sloppy with mud in the rainy season and thick with dust in the dry.

Johnson Yard lies just off the main road, a well thrown stone away from the main Duala market and the taxi ranks for up-country transport. The half dozen buildings surrounding a central courtyard are all owned by the Johnson family and rented to a mix of Mandingo, Grebo, Vai, and Mende families and single youth.

Mohammed rented rooms in two of the buildings. His two wives and two children occupied some of the space, as did two unmarried men who had fought under Mohammed when he was a commander in the CDF and later in LURD. One of Mohammed's wives shared quarters with a well-known female LURD combatant and her boyfriend, a veteran of Charles Taylor's "Small Boys' Unit" bodyguards. Behind Johnson Yard stood a small ghetto, frequented mostly by members of one of Taylor's militias. As in so many other contexts, the factionalism that divided combatants during the war made no difference to where and how individuals inhabited the city, even this early in the postconflict period.

Like Brookfields, Johnson Yard was a site for the "material signification" of laboring bodies in an economy of fungible violence, resource extraction and the machinery of the United Nations and global NGOs. Here, too, the logic of assembly, containment, and deployment was one of putting violence and other labors of the body into circulation. On most days since he moved into Johnson Yard, Mohammed received a steady stream of visitors. The majority were young men who had served under him in the CDF and/or LURD and who were now living in Monrovia. They came to Mohammed regularly to beg small favors, offer patronage payments, pass along greetings and news of the city or of Sierra Leone and often simply stopped to check in. I had seen this same cycle of visitations during the war years, when Mohammed lived at Brookfields, and in southeastern Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Liberia when he helped rally troops for LURD. As a relative "big man" in the neopatrimonial system by which sovereignty is exercised in African postcolonies (see Bayart 1993; Bratton and van der Walle 1997) Mohammed effectively controlled the labor of these youth. In the CDF recruitment of Liberian veterans to recapture Freetown or the mobilization of fighters in 2001 for LURD, this was a process of assembling combatants for labor on the battlefield. At other times these same youth might be "called up" for smaller operations, such as when Mohammed required the assistance of a few ex-combatants to retrieve a vehicle from someone who had not properly paid him for it. And at still other times they might be needed for work in the region's mines or plantations—or in one instance, which I describe below, simply to profitably stand in line.

* * *

During the summer of 2005 Monrovia was awash in rumors of a massive deposit of high quality diamonds discovered outside of Greenville in Liberia's southeastern Sinoe County. Diamond diggers from the capital and across the western half of the country, many of them ex-combatants, undertook the long and relatively expensive trip east to stake a claim in the forest. Because local officials charged a digging fee

per plot, rather than per digger, most went in crews, their expenses paid for by patrons who held rights of first refusal and a guaranteed low purchase price on any diamonds the digger might find.

Prior to the war Mohammed spent a few months in the diamondiferous regions of western Liberia as a go-between for diamond crews and buyers in the capital. Ibrahim, one of the two ex-combatants living in his compound, was a commander on the eastern border of Sierra Leone during the war, where his men served double duty as a mining crew and border guard unit. And Ray, the other youth living at Johnson Yard, had for years been a diamond digger in the Zimmi area of Sierra Leone.

When the Greenville rumors began to circulate, Mohammed, Ibrahim, and Ray drew up plans for their own entry into the competitive (and by all accounts highly lucrative) field. Ray would lead a crew of approximately 25 in the diamond fields. Ibrahim would courier diamonds between Greenville and Monrovia, and Mohammed would liaise with the crew's patrons and other diamond buyers in the capital. A second former commander from Sierra Leone's CDF had reliable contacts with Eastern European buyers. He was willing to finance the crew's transport to Greenville and its basic provisions for the first weeks.

With the logistics of moving diamonds worked out, the simplest aspect of the project was locating and assembling a crew of laborers. On the designated morning an excess of young men gathered in the center of Johnson Yard, where they performed a quick sacrifice to bless the operation and then waited for prearranged transport.

Mohammed and Ibrahim sent out their call for laborers through an overlapping network of social and military ties. Most of those who gathered that morning were of Sierra Leonean or mixed origins. Although Mohammed and Ibrahim knew few of the men previously, they could claim kinship ties to the majority, generally via Sierra Leonean villages of origin. Some were ex-combatants responding as word circulated among former commanders of opportunities in Greenville; in most of these cases, the connections between kinship and command were embodied in the same persons.

What was striking about the assembled youth is that most did not fit the stereotype of the *dreg man,* or the lumpenproletariat at the margins of the law and economy, surviving on just this sort of borderline criminal physical labor (see Abdullah 1998; Abdullah and Muana 1998). Rather, many were secondary school children temporarily unable to pay fees or in the midst of yet another extended school holiday. They represented a kind of *population flottante* (Roitman

FIGURE 5. *Portrait of young men in Duala, Monrovia waiting to dig diamonds.* **The image of the lumpen youth awaiting employment in the Mano River region's diamond mines did not fit the call up of miners in the Duala neighborhood of Monrovia in 2005. Instead, those who showed up for deployment to the Greenville area were secondary school youth waiting for the new term to begin.**

1998, 2005:139–146) because of their ability to quickly cross the divide between city and bush, and to profit from their mobility between spheres (see Figure 5). They seemed also to represent a demographic fluidity: their movements undid a class and social distinction between students as citizens in the making, on the one hand, and lumpen manual laborers, on the other hand, working largely outside the purview and protection of the state. They typified the social dynamics of labor fully subsumed by erasing the necessity for distinct institutional identities—the student distinct from the soldier distinct from manual laborers distinct from prisoners, patients, or the mentally insane. In the regime of production in general and without distinction (what Deleuze 1995 referred to as the "society of control"), policing such classifications is no longer necessary. What these youth suggest is life in the city as an impossibility. There is no social category that signifies or guarantees stable habitation, and everyone is potentially on the market.[19]

As with the Brookfields Hotel, the logic of assembly here is not incidental to Johnson Yard as a physical space. Like most of Duala, Johnson Yard existed in a state of uneasy accommodation with the Liberian government and with the UN institutions that functionally operated the state. For example, the well-known discontent over the handling of Liberia's disarmament proceedings led to a series of mandates which prohibited large groups of LURD or other factional combatants from assembling in one place. In smaller towns such as Voinjama and Tubmanburg, this generated considerable anxiety and did serve to police the behavior of ex-combatants, at least

to a degree. In Monrovia itself, however, the "lines of sight" that would have made such surveillance possible were obstructed by the city itself.

The politics of visibility generated an interesting misreading on the part of UNMIL,[20] at least as far as Monrovia residents were concerned. On the basis of their reputation for corruption and trafficking on the black market, the Nigerian peacekeeping contingent was posted in the capital where their activities could theoretically be monitored by UNMIL authorities. However such a posting meant unfettered access to the port and to major roadways, the prime conduits for profiteering. Indeed, these activities went on as though they were invisible from the perspective of the cloistered UN hierarchy.

* * *

Not long after the Greenville operation was scratched, Mohammed received a phone call requesting a meeting at Johnson Yard. The request came from a former Special Forces commander living on a large rubber plantation just west of Monrovia. Since the end of the war the profitable plantation had been occupied by LURD combatants. Despite threats by the government and UNMIL, the fighters living there refused to leave the grounds of the plantation. Charles, who requested the meeting, was part of the plantation leadership. In exchange for a cut of the proceeds, he granted combatants a plot within the plantation to tap rubber and sell it to brokers who traveled from Monrovia and in turn sold the rubber to Firestone or to the domestic rubber company. Although the owners of the plantation had vigorously petitioned the NTGL and UNMIL to remove the illegal tappers, kickbacks and the fear of an armed resistance had generated little government activity.

Charles's visit to Mohammed was prompted by an UNMIL initiative to check the disarmament registration of the occupants of the plantation. Having argued that the occupation of the plantation was no more than a survival strategy in the face of a slow payout from the disarmament program, Charles and the other squatter leadership publicly called for benefits for what they said were 3,000 registered fighters. When he met with Mohammed in Duala, Charles admitted that he had no more than a few hundred ex-combatants under his command. Unless he could quickly produce 2,000 previously registered fighters, he risked a forcible evacuation from the plantation and in all likelihood a squatter rebellion as the plantation dwellers accused him of stealing the benefits of these fictitious ex-combatants.

Although Mohammed refused the request (he had previously been excluded from an arrangement to share the profits from the plantation), the very fact that it was made is instructive. The UN logic of disarmament programs meant that profits could be culled from the very bodies of fighters if they could be properly assembled.

Their "labor" would be their presence. As with the Sierra Leone disarmament, the UN system set up a regime of profitable production based on the body's mere potential for violence. Charles recognized that assembling such a large number of ex-combatant youth, quickly and without much notice, was not in itself a significant problem. The same well-tarred roads required for transporting rubber to the international market made deployment from Monrovia, Tubmanburg, or Ganta a question of hours. With so few ex-combatants having returned to rural areas after the war, and with so few ex-combatants employed or living in stable physical or social circumstances, the call-up would take no longer than it would take to spread the news word of mouth. And Mohammed, operating from his space within the city, had the capacity to mobilize these numbers if he chose to.

For the same reason, when Pa Tito, a local businessman from Grand Cape Mount County, decided to make a run for the House of Representatives in the 2005 elections, he, too, paid a visit to Mohammed at Johnson Yard. The business of campaigning in the region's elections is as much a matter of assembling the spectacles of power (see Mbembe 1992; Piot 1999:44–49), including the bodies of supporters capable of violence, as it is amassing the financial resources to campaign. Mohammed's capacity to bring together "supporters" from the capital made him an indispensable ally.

CONCLUSION: A LABORATORY OF THE FUTURE

Not long before I left Monrovia in mid-2005, I had a late night meeting with Samuel, a young Sierra Leonean man I had first met at the Brookfields Hotel in 2000. Samuel was scheduled to leave the next day for government held territory in southern Côte d'Ivoire. After serving with LURD in Liberia, Samuel briefly crossed the Ivorian border where he fought with the progovernment forces. Seeking out more profitable alternatives, Samuel began to run Nigerian cocaine from Monrovia through Abidjan and Man, where he purchased looted vehicles and goods from frontline commanders and sold them in Monrovia or other towns in Liberia.

Samuel's story was common enough in any war zone, where fighting does not so much put an end to business as provide a cover for those willing and creative enough to exploit quasi-legitimate opportunities (Keen 2000; Nordstrom 2004). What was intriguing about Samuel's account was the flexibility of his movements and the overlap of the logic of violence and commerce. Samuel was returning to Côte d'Ivoire because the long-delayed disarmament was rumored to be starting shortly, with its promised cash payout of $900 per combatant. Samuel was only one of many youth, some of whom had never fought in Côte d'Ivoire before, planning

to race across the border in time to enroll for disarmament.[21] As on his previous visits, Samuel planned to carry cocaine across the border; after disarmament he intended to take a looted vehicle waiting for him in Abidjan across Ghana and into Togo for sale in Lomè. On an earlier visit, the commander with whom he organized his vehicle sales had suggested that Samuel, who was born in Sierra Leone, apply as an Ivorian for noncombatant refugee status with the United Nations. He was among a group of "refugees" who made it as far as the last step in the registration process in Accra, Ghana before someone recognized him as a former combatant and he was shipped back to Abidjan.

Speaking with Samuel in the darkness at Johnson Yard, it was impossible not to map the route he followed as one of networked barracks spaces, nodal points for the assembly and subsequent deployment of bodies for all manner of labor. Battlefields, disarmament centers, refugee camps, diamond mines, timber camps, and the city itself each manifest the logic of assemblage and containment, deterritorialization, and reterritorialization.

The disarmament in Côte d'Ivoire did not take place, and at the time of this writing the country is in the midst of yet another series of lightning attacks on international peacekeepers. There remain rumors of training camps in the north of the Ivorian countryside where young men are preparing for a future war in Guinea or an assault on Liberia and eventually Sierra Leone. It is too early to tell whether the inauguration of a new president in Liberia will put an end to the illegal mining of diamonds or the timber harvest, or whether the departure of the UN peacekeeping troops from Sierra Leone will mean a military takeover in that country. What does seem to be clear is that the barracks logic of Monrovia and Freetown is becoming generalized throughout the region. The nomos of West Africa's postmodernity appears to be one governed by the efficient assembly and deployment of workers in a violent economy.

ABSTRACT

Responding to characterizations of the postcolonial African city as a negative space, theorists of African urban processes have begun to focus on the city's unique modes of production. But what does this emphasis on productive capacity mean if "the city" is not Johannesburg or Nairobi but the West African urban warscape of Freetown or Monrovia? I explore that question by examining how the labor of male urban youth is organized according to the logic of the barracks. I suggest that these West African capitals make labor simultaneously available for use on regional battlefields or mines, logging camps, or rubber plantations. Focusing on the Brookfields Hotel in central Freetown and Monrovia's Duala neighborhood underscores how urban spaces are increasingly configured by the

structure and function of the barracks: as spaces for the organization and deployment of violent labor.

Keywords: capitalism, labor, masculinity, violence, Africa

NOTES

1. The names of some locations and individuals have been changed in this piece to protect the anonymity of sources. The phrase "the laboratory of the future" is inspired by the subtitle of *Juárez,* Charles Bowden's (1998) ethnographic portrait of the everyday violence of that city.

2. The spatialization and organization at work here is a gendered one. Although I do not deal with it in this article, one facet of the processes I describe is the way in which women's labor is increasingly organized into a "service" economy. In the barracks, "female" is defined by the performance of duties that sustain the barracks itself. Although employing different terminology, Chris Coulter 2005; Doug Henry 2000, 2005; Mary Moran 1998; Susan Shepler 2002; and Mats Utas 2005 have each done work on some of the important gender and sexuality questions posed by the Mano River War.

3. I use the term *Mano River War* to refer to the collection of war zones that have, since 1989, emerged in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Côte d'Ivoire. The Mano River runs between Sierra Leone and Liberia. At the time of this writing, there is fighting in Côte d'Ivoire and concerns over the stability of Guinea and the possible mobilization of rebel forces for attacks in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

4. Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ceasefire Monitoring Group.

5. Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy.

6. Revolutionary United Front.

7. Abdullah defines the *pote* as "a joint, a rendezvous, where young unemployed youth, mostly male, congregate to talk, do drugs, and just hang out" (2002:208). On the implications of characterizing irregular combatants as a lumpenproletariat, see Hoffman 2006.

8. Zack-Williams illustrates this beautifully when he writes that "in an ironic way Foday Sankoh's infantile revolution aided the flight of skilled personnel out of the country by finishing the job [of demolishing Freetown] begun a decade earlier by World Bank and IMF structural adjustment programs" (2002:310).

9. Where in an earlier moment in the development of capital (that of the "formal subsumption of labor") there existed spaces of nonwork, we enter the state of labor formally subsumed when "the product ceases to be the product of isolated direct labor, and the combination of social activity appears, rather, as the producer" (Marx 1973:709; cf. Hardt 1995:38). The subsumption of labor is real when all relations, "social subjectivities, sociality, and society itself" (Hardt and Negri 1994:7; cf. Hardt and Negri 2000, esp. pt. 1), seem extensions of the logic of capital. As Michael Hardt (1995) argues, the transition from the formal to the real subsumption of labor also corresponds to what Deleuze (1995) describes as the transition from Foucault's disciplinary society to the society of control: the point at which distinct disciplinary institutions are no longer necessary for the construction of proper subjects.

10. There is a parallel here to what Jean Comaroff and John Comaroff (1999) call the "occult economy" and the violences it is generating in the new South Africa.

11. The use of *419-ing* as a verb is now widespread among Krio speakers in Sierra Leone, especially among youth. It refers to any scam, particularly those involving elaborate or particularly bold boasts. I am grateful to the anonymous *CA* reviewer who pointed out the more general circulation of the term.

12. The fundamental role that movement plays in West African urban landscapes is brilliantly manifest in photo essays by Senegalese photographer Boubacar Touré Mandémory (see, e.g., 2000).

13. This is a configuration described in particularly graphic detail by Lorna Rhodes (2004) in her work on maximum security prisons in the United States.

14. For more on the disarmament proceedings at Bo, see Hoffman (2003).

15. I have dealt more extensively with the Brookfields Hotel in Hoffman (2005b).

16. The regular provisioning of the CDF from funds allocated by the legislature also forged an important link between the capital and the militia.

17. Despite their progovernment stance, many CDF combatants at Brookfields had at one time served in the rebel RUF and, as Abdullah and Muana (1998) argue, were drawn from the same demographic as RUF fighters and the breakaway soldiers behind the 1997 coup d'etat. The extent to which the CDF was simply a faction not substantively different from the RUF and AFRC despite its progovernment stance and its "secret society" mystique has been the subject of intense debate in both the literature and postconflict policy on the war. Although I would maintain that there was a significant, qualitative difference between the CDF and its wartime opponents, Abdullah and Muana's point is well taken. Certainly by the late stages of the war and the early postwar period, many CDF members belonged to the same lumpen class of youth existing at the margins of the economy and the law in Sierra Leone.

18. Although as Rosalind Shaw points out, there were a number of other reasons why Sierra Leoneans were hesitant to engage the TRC, including a reluctance to "reproduce the war by discussing it publicly" (Shaw 2007:68).

19. In the end, the mining operation never materialized. Mohammed's contact substituted his own laborers on the taxis arranged by European backers, effectively cutting Mohammed, Ray, and Ibrahim from the enterprise. As it happened, rumors of the profitability of the Greenville deposit were wildly exaggerated, and a cholera outbreak killed a number of diggers who were squatting in the forest.

20. UN Mission in Liberia.

21. This observation comes from my own interviews in Monrovia and Ganta. Human Rights Watch made similar observations in their 2005 report.

Editor's Note: *Cultural Anthropology* has published a range of articles engaged with work of Giorgio Agamben. See, for example, the August 2005 issue of *Cultural Anthropology,* which includes Peter Redfield's "Doctors, Borders, and Life in Crisis"; Judith Farquhar and Qicheng Zhang's "Biopolitical Beijing: Pleasure, Sovereignty, and Self-Cultivation in China's Capital"; and Didier Fassin's "Compassion and Repression: The Moral Economy of Immigration Policies in France."

Cultural Anthropology has also published several articles on militarization, the military, and resistance. See, for example Linda Green's "Fear as a Way of Life" (1994); Lesley Gill's "Creating Citizens, Making Men: The Military and Masculinity in Bolivia" (1997); and Donald S. Moore's "Subaltern Struggles and the Politics of Place: Remapping Resistance in Zimbabwe's Eastern Highlands" (1998).

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