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EDUCATION IN SIERRA LEONE**

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AMERICAN MISSION SCHOOLS AND THE ALBERT ACADEMY SCHOOL

FOR BOYS: ROOTS AND LEGACY OF COLONIAL EDUCATION IN
SIERRA LEONE

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New York

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ABSTRACT

AMERICAN MISSION SCHOOLS AND THE ALBERT ACADEMY SCHOOL FOR BOYS: ROOTS AND LEGACY OF COLONIAL EDUCATION IN SIERRA LEONE

Theodore K. Andrews

This work is an examination of the role and impact of American mission schools on the culture of the peoples of Sierra Leone. Colonial capitalism – that is, colonialism with a capitalist component – was accompanied with western values and Christianity. The incorporation of Sierra Leoneans into colonial society was facilitated through education. Education served the purpose of socialization, in order that the institutions and system introduced into West Africa would be maintained. This research explores how the British colony sustained its control through education, although it eventually was weakened by the success of the missionary schools. This research provides a historical, intellectual, and political analysis of the establishment and impact of American mission schools. These schools were essential in bringing about the social change in the young colony. Education serves the purpose of the architects of that education; therefore, it is rational that pre-colonial education attended to the interests of indigenous Africans. Colonial education, although it may have some benefits to the colonized, ultimately serves the interests of the colonizers. Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* offers a lens to view this uneven relationship. Rodney explains the way colonial schooling was education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion, and the development of underdevelopment. This study offers insight into the rise of the

Sierra Leonean ruling class and a permanent underclass that continues to present a problem for advancement in the country.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents, Theodore Andrews Sr. and Valerie Andrews, for all their support. My Grandparents, Eleanor and Richard Andrews, and Janet Dixon. To Lakisha Garth, who I love dearly, for never giving up on me. It was her strength that helped me carry on and finish this dissertation. To Malcolm X, whose teaching help me become Ikemba Ojore Balanta. Finally, to my sons Allan, Zion and Zaire Garth-Andrews and my daughter Queen Garth. Let this be an example that you can accomplish anything if you put your mind to it. Never give up on your dreams.

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In 2014, in one of my doctoral courses, I submitted a paper on the history and impact of the Albert Academy School for Boys. This paper is the culmination of years of research, but also the support and love of so many people. I want to first thank Konrad Tuchscherer because without his support this process would have been a lot more difficult. His wisdom and dedication to help me see this through, gave me all the confidence needed to complete this project. I want to thank Frances Balla, you have been the biggest help since day one. Thank you Delridge Hunter for making graduate school seem possible, and Maria DeLongoria for picking up the torch and making sure that I finished. Thank you to the entire Andrews family, there are too many to name, but special thanks to Malik and Kim Armstead, Samir Armstead, Andre Andrews, Antoine Andrews, Rasheeda Andrews, Maurice Andrews, Keosha Andrews, Karen Dixon, Nicola McIntyre (may you rest well), Tone the organizer, the Chairman Omali Yeshitela and entire Uhuru Movement, We Charge Colonialism, the Abundance in Ujamaa Movement, Linda Davis and family and everyone who helped me along my journey.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The work before you is an examination of the role and impact of American mission schools in Sierra Leone, and how the Sierra Leoneans were educated to sustain colonial conditions. The British were able to maintain influence by keeping Sierra Leone tied to the British economy. Through western education and training, the local inhabitants became the administrators of the colony, and the defenders of the status quo after independence. This research is a study of the process that went into creating a country that ranks among the poorest in the world, despite having a close relationship with one of the world's wealthiest nations.

Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another.¹ After the British relinquished their rule over Sierra Leone, the system and institutions remained intact, as well as the relationship between the two countries; one in which benefitted the British at the expense of Africans. Colonialism had forced the Sierra Leoneans into the western political economy. Social mobility was in direct correlation with the level of formal education. Colonization forced Africans to adjust to economic changes. For instance, government taxes caused Africans to produce for the western markets. Sierra Leone would go from a subsistence economy to one geared to production for the export market.² Formal schooling proved instrumental in assimilating Africans into the global economy.

¹ "Colonialism," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, last modified Aug 29, 2017, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/colonialism/>.

² Michael Crowder, *West Africa Under Colonial Rule* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 12.

The goal of this study is to gain a better understanding of the relation between colonial education and poverty-stricken nations. Education serves the purpose of socialization, in order that institutions and systems of survival and dependence are maintained. Society is held together by its institutions, and when these institutions are dismantled, transformations in society take place. In the words of Walter Rodney, “education is crucial in any type of society for the preservation of the lives of its members and the maintenance of the social structure. Under certain circumstances, education also promotes social change.”³ Sierra Leone’s transformation, however, has often not produced produce positive outcomes for the masses.

Before the arrival of British and American missionaries, Sierra Leoneans had a system of education that served their interests, but the introduction of colonial schools put the interests of the colonizers first. The architects of the educational system designed curriculums for the assimilation of Africans into the dominant society. Rodney explains, “colonial schooling was education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion, and the development of underdevelopment.”⁴ Clearly, Rodney saw colonial education serving the interests of colonizers. His use of the phrase “development of underdevelopment” appears to be a contradiction in terms. Rodney’s point here was that there was development occurring among both the exploited and the exploiter, but the exploiter’s growth was at a disproportionate rate. In examining underdevelopment, it is best understood in comparison to other levels of development, and it expresses

³ Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington D.C.: Howard University Press, 1982), 238-239.

⁴ Rodney, *How Europe*, 241.

exploitation, namely, the exploitation of one country by another.⁵ American mission schools were indispensable to the underdevelopment of Sierra Leone during the colonial period.

Within the historiography of Sierra Leone, historians such as Howard Mueller, Doyle Sumner and Ebunolorun Sawyerr have examined the development of mission stations and education in the colonial and post-colonial periods in the nation. These historians and others narrowed their focus on the location of schools along with the external and internal struggles of building viable schools to educate the children of Sierra Leone. Less attention was given to how mission schools served colonialism, or the cultural impact that such schools had on Africans. These various works offer some insight into the history of Sierra Leone and give much needed context to this research and will be referenced throughout this study. D.L. Sumner's *Education in Sierra Leone*, published in 1963, is a detailed and comprehensive history of education in Sierra Leone, from 1787 to 1950, that connects the early successes of education in Sierra Leone with the development of the Colony and of Freetown by freed and returned slaves. This overview of education in Sierra Leone has aided me in gaining a better understanding of the history of education during colonization. In 1969, E.S. Sawyerr published *The Development of Education in Sierra Leone Relation to Western Contact*, a study of educational development in Sierra Leone, beginning with an examination of educational practice in the country before the arrival of Europeans. Sawyerr details the problems with the British and American mission schools, such as language barriers, class distinctions and culture conflicts. Sawyerr argues that although problematic from its beginning, the

⁵ Rodney, *How Europe*, 13-14.

Western type of education was needed to help people become more efficient producers and prepare them to meet the challenges of independence.

Previous studies of colonial education in Sierra Leone have been an examination of the dichotomy between the British and American systems of education and theoretical debates on their effectiveness in westernizing Africans. Little attention has been given to how African culture was being challenged and supplanted by an education with the intention of transforming students into ideal colonial subjects. Many of these colonial subjects went on to become the administrators of the independent nation. The study of the development of mission schools feigns the appearance of objective institutions with no social and cultural consequences. It becomes a measurement of the success of westernizing or evangelizing Africans. This research examines the impact of colonialism in the American missions, the supplanting of an American model of education in Sierra Leone, and the cultural effect it had on Africans in the region.

This research will go beyond merely detailing the challenges, successes, and failures of colonial education, by exploring the supplanting of an American system of education among African Americans of the southern United States into the British colony of Sierra Leone. This industrial model of education had the objective of training a new laboring class for the industrializing western economies. This research is not meant to be a critique of the missionary's intentions in order to demonize them. My goal is to examine the consequences of colonial education, leading to the advent of a new kind of colonialism in the twentieth century: a colonialism in which the African ruling class of Sierra Leone became key in the continued exploitation of the nation. American mission

schools played a key role in educating indigenous Sierra Leoneans, who were less exposed to western influence in the British colony of Freetown.

Due to its dominating influence on changes that took place in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this research on education is positioned within framework of colonialism. By looking through the lens of colonialism, a better understanding of the motivations, intentions, and objectives of missionaries can be grasped. Colonialism explains the paternalistic relationship that developed between the missionaries and the Africans of Sierra Leone. It was this paternalism that infantilized the Africans and forced them to adopt a foreign culture out of necessity. Colonialism brought a political and economic infrastructure that transformed the former political economy. A new form of education was needed in order to assimilate into the new society. Looking at this transformation through the lens of colonialism gives a more accurate depiction of what was happening in the British colony.

The works of Frantz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Albert Memmi, Aime Cesaire, W.E.B. Du Bois, Kwame Nkrumah and others were consulted due to their extensive work on the subject of colonialism and its impact on the colonized. Colonialism is examined and used throughout this research as a lens to analyze evangelism and paternalism. What is revealed is a clearer understanding the history of education in Sierra Leone in colonial and post-colonial periods. The research study ultimately shows that the lasting impact of colonial education would be its continued impact in the rise of neocolonialism after Sierra Leone gained its independence. The authors noted above, who informed my research, have made seminal contributions to the discourse on colonialism.

American mission schools were central in the growth and development of the Sierra Leone protectorate and colony, as well as having been fundamental in fostering a sense of national consciousness that galvanized a movement for independence. There had been several factors which contributed to Sierra Leone's liberation, such as a bolstering economy and a growing middle class. This study will underscore the development of a collective identity facilitated by American mission schools that was critical to eroding and ending colonialism in Sierra Leone in 1961. Howard Mueller, author of *The Formation of a Mission Church in an Africa Culture*, identified the central role of mission schools in African decolonization. He asserted that educating Africans and breaking down "ethnicism" were catalysts for fostering nationalist fervor and the subsequent movement for independence.⁶ Although Mueller made this claim, the documentary evidence he relied on to make the claim was scanty, perhaps because his focus was the development of the mission church in Africa and not on schools. This study will further explore the connection between American mission schools and the breakdown in ethnicism as well as how it influenced the movement for independence.

The affect that the American missionary schools had on the nationalist movement is not the primary focus of this research. The end of colonial rule did not end Sierra Leone's dependency on its former colonizer. This dependency is what gave rise to neocolonialism. "Neocolonialism" is the false appearance of independence and sovereignty. The former colony's dependence on the former colonizer is indicative of neocolonialism. As Nkrumah stated:

⁶ Howard Ernest Mueller, "Formation of a Mission Church in an African Culture: The United Brethren in Sierra Leone" (Ph.D. Diss. Northwestern University, 1973), 205.

The essence of neo-colonialism is that the State, which is subject to it, is in theory independent and has all the outward trappings of international sovereignty. In reality its economic system and thus its political policy is directed from outside.⁷

The economy is the foundation of all societies and when control over the economy is lost, a group or country's sovereignty consequently is forfeited. In the colonial setting, there were different methods used to control a former colony, but the most common was control through economic or monetary means.⁸ During the period of colonialism, Sierra Leone, and other colonized people, were incorporated into a global economic system. Education was a means of assimilating the colonized into the western world. The struggle for independence consequently became a struggle to administer the colonial institutions within their borders. Sierra Leone gained its independence in 1961, but remained under the influence of Great Britain due to its lack of control over the country's economy.

Colonial schools were largely responsible for the rise of neocolonialism because the education was a means of westernizing Africans. The colonizers saw no value in African society and culture. This ethnocentrism contributed to paternalism and a distorted view of African culture among American missionaries. Michael Crowder, in his book *West Africa Under Colonial Rule*, dedicated only three pages to paternalism under

⁷ Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (New York: International Publishers, 1966), ix.

⁸ Nkrumah, *Neocolonialism*, ix.

colonial rule. Crowder described the conundrum that the colonizers faced in planning the method of colonial rule. Crowder explained:

The best solution to this problem would of course have been direct administration, but this was impossible, for to employ sufficient Frenchmen to institute such a system of administration would have been prohibitively expensive, and therefore African society would have to be radically reorganized to meet the exploitative requirements of the colonial authorities, and for want of Frenchmen or educated Africans, traditional chiefs would be used in a new role, as agents of the administration, substitutes for the above. This was the system of administration that has been called Association, but which is here described as Paternalism.⁹

According to Crowder, the British adopted a policy of paternalism very similar to that of the French. He explained, “at no stage in this period did Britain pursue a policy of assimilation though her rule had strong assimilationist features in the form of missionary education and the legal systems of the colonies as distinct from the protectorates.¹⁰ Crowder corroborates the argument made in this research on the link between colonial education and neocolonialism. The colonialist benefitted from the colony, whether the colony was ruled directly or indirectly. It was a matter of controlling the wealth of a

⁹ Michael Crowder, *West Africa Under Colonial Rule* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1968), 171.

¹⁰ Crowder, *West Africa*, 171.

nation. Indirect rule can be facilitated by an educated elite within the exploited country.

In reference to France and Britain, Crowder went on to state:

The virtues of different native policies, however, continued to be the subject of debate and study until the Second World War, when both countries had to change their pre-occupation with the problems of “Native Administration,” which essentially those of local government, to the demands of African nationalists for participation in the running of the central administration of their colony-countries.¹¹

Colonial education was a means to foster a new identity, one which served the interests of the colonizing country. American missionaries went to Africa on a civilizing mission. The aim was saving Africans from themselves. American mission schools struggled against “ethnicism” or consciousness along ethnic lines (for example, Mende, Temne, Limba, Creole/Krio), during Sierra Leone’s colonial period. This struggle had the objective of creating a “new African.” Africans were viewed in a homogenous way, so education tended to be universal. Ethnic identity, culture, and traditions were taken into consideration, but meant little to the ultimate aim of mission schools. The objective was to create uniformity through education. The establishment of mission schools, such as the Albert Academy School for Boys, were deliberately established in part to combat African culture and ethnicism.

¹¹ Crowder, *West Africa*, 172.

The Albert Academy School for Boys functioned as a central school for American missionary endeavors, and many of those educated in the American missions went on to challenge the British colony and the Creole elite. Leaders of the Sierra Leone independence movement were products of Albert Academy and other American mission schools. Colonial education was never meant to make slaves out of the Africans. Paternalism was the impetus behind the programs and policies toward the Sierra Leoneans. Organizations, such as the American Missionary Association (AMA) and United Brethren in Christ (UBC), and the ideas of American leaders such as Booker T. Washington and Samuel Armstrong spread American beliefs for educating Sierra Leoneans. The Albert Academy served as the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education for American missions in the colony.

As previously mentioned, colonial education ironically became the catalyst for the development of a national consciousness, and the undoing of colonial rule. Evidence points to American mission education serving as a critical component of the nationalist movement during the twentieth century, as an increasing number of Sierra Leoneans moved past ethnic conflicts and worked towards assimilation into colonial society. Independence became the priority for the newly educated class of indigenous Africans and Creoles alike.¹² “Detribalization” – the act of causing Africans to abandon their customs and adopt urban and more western-oriented ways of living – facilitated the creation of a Sierra Leonean national identity; the Sierra Leonean identity is in fact a

¹² Iyunolu Osagie, "Historical Memory and a New National Consciousness: The Amistad Revolt Revisited in Sierra Leone," *The Massachusetts Review* 38, no. 1 (1997): 63-83.

colonial identity. This process, initially facilitated by the American mission schools in the British protectorate, witnessed its greatest success in Freetown at the Albert Academy.

Often overlooked in scholarly research on the subject of nationalist movements is the role of education and the so-called process of “detrribalization.” Education provided the undergirding to the process of breaking down barriers along ethnic lines, yet the role of education has often been undervalued in narratives of African nationalism, which tend to focus more on political ideas and movements, as well as the stories of oppression and exploitation behind them. As mentioned, the research here explores education as a contributing factor in breaking down ethnicism in Sierra Leone, with special attention given to the American mission schools, particularly the Albert Academy School for Boys. Part of the reason for establishing the Albert Academy in Freetown was to overcome obstacles of ethnic differences.¹³ Training at the Albert Academy School for Boys was significant in the detrribalization process that contributed to developing the collective identity that was necessary for nationalism. This research essay will, therefore, explore the connections between American mission schools and the process of detrribalization, as well as the link, if any, with the later nationalist movement in the twentieth century.

Due to the training and demographics of the Albert Academy, Sierra Leoneans who attended this school and hailed originally from outside the formal colony and its center at the capital in Freetown, were less amenable to the colonial government than the Creoles, who resided there. Creoles and the British colonizers appeared to be less concerned with ending colonization, hence, the British mission schools encompassed a

¹³ Glen Taylor Rosselot, “The Origin, Growth and Development of the United Brethren in Christ Mission Schools in Sierra Leone, West Africa” (MA diss., University of Chicago, 1936), 78.

different character than the schools under the American mission. This had its root in the founding of the country and establishment of the earliest schools. Sawyerr explained, "The C.M.S. did not encourage industrial education. A source of antipathy could be traced to incidents connected with the founding of the country. Literate Africans were given more lucrative jobs and literacy was a condition for church membership."¹⁴ Although the British experimented with industrial schooling, it began to wane as the country became more prosperous but had reemerged at the turn of the twentieth century. American missions tended to focus more on normative and industrial education.

An aspect of this study will delineate the development of education in Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century and its impact in preparing students to become administrators of the colonial system. Walter Rodney's examination of colonialism and education in his work *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* sheds light on the purpose of colonial education. According to Rodney:

The main purpose of the colonial school system was to train Africans to help man the local administration at the lowest ranks and to staff the private capitalist firms owned by Europeans. In effect, that meant selecting a few Africans to participate in the domination and exploitation of the continent as a whole.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ebunolorun Sawyerr, "The Development of Education in Sierra Leone in Relation to Western Contact," (Canada: M.A. Diss., McGill University, 1969), 49.

¹⁵ Rodney, *How Europe*, 240.

This argument is made in this research; i.e., Africans were never meant to develop a system controlled by them for their own benefit, and that the system was designed to serve the interests of the colonizer. In other words, American mission schools were not meant to disrupt British authority, they were there to support colonialism. This is evident in the continuing underdevelopment of African economies. Rodney explains:

It was not an educational system that grew out of the African environment or one that was designed to promote the most rational use of material and social resources. It was not an educational system designed to give young people confidence and pride as members of African societies, but one which sought to instill a sense of deference towards all that was European and capitalist.¹⁶

The “miseducation” of Sierra Leoneans will be further analyzed in the conclusion of the research essay.

Great Britain had little concern for the education of Sierra Leoneans due to the cost of taking on that endeavor, preferring to support the outsourcing of educational instruction to the church. Motivated by religious zeal, during most of the nineteenth century, education was almost exclusively a missionary affair with minimal government contribution, which was widely viewed as a costly venture by the British government. Despite not wanting to take on the financial burden of educating Sierra Leoneans, colonial administrators understood the benefit of having indigenous Africans working on

¹⁶ Rodney, *How Europe*, 240.

behalf of the colonial government. The British believed that the primary objectives of mission schools should be to westernize Africans, propagate Christianity, prepare potential workers for the civil service and colonial economy, and accomplish what slavery failed to do; i.e., civilize the “savages.” This became the cornerstone of colonial education in the nineteenth century.

Definition of Terms

“Detribalization”: the act of causing Africans to abandon their customs and adopt urban and westernized ways of living.

“Hinterland”: the territory directly outside the British Colony of Freetown.

“Protectorate”: a territory not formally annexed but in which, by treaty, grant or other lawful (from the colonizer’s perspective) means, the British Crown had ultimate power and jurisdiction; the Hinterland became a British Protectorate after the Hut Tax Rebellion of 1898.

“Paternalism”: the policy or practice on the part of people in positions of authority of restricting the freedom and responsibilities of those subordinate to them in the subordinates’ supposed best interest.

“Ethnicism”: Consciousness of or emphasis on ethnic identity and culture; ethnic self-determination; ethnic separation.

“Creole”: descendants of various African American, Caribbean, and African ex-slaves and freemen who the British resettled in Sierra Leone.¹⁷

“Neocolonialism”: The use of economic, political, cultural, or other pressures to control or influence other countries, especially former dependencies.

Background

European settlements in Sierra Leone began in the mid-fifteenth century by Portuguese seamen under the auspice of their king, Don Henry. Sierra Leone, “Mountain of Lions,” derived its name from these seamen who thought the mountainous peninsula had a leonine resemblance. Not long after settling, the Portuguese were driven out of Sierra Leone by the Dutch. Due to its location, situated in West Africa between Guinea and Liberia, and the growth and expansion of the slave trade, Sierra Leone would later serve as a slave port for the French. In 1562, Sierra Leone became of interest to the

¹⁷ The identity of the Creole/Krio was described by one scholar as follows: “Creole in Sierra Leone took on a wider, cultural definition as well. Besides those individuals who were biologically descendant from liberated Africans or the earlier settler groups, the Creole community always included, and still includes, persons of black-African stock, usually from one of the neighboring ethnic groups of from the Sierra Leone hinterland, who emulated the “Creole way of life” by adopting the habits, standards of behavior, and outlooks with which Creoles identified.” See Leo Spitzer, *The Creoles of Sierra Leone: Responses to Colonialism, 1870-1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1974), 13.

British when John Hawkins forced some of the inhabitants into the business of exporting enslaved Africans.¹⁸

In 1786, Great Britain was presented with the opportunity to expand its economy into West Africa, and to rid London streets of its indigent Black residents.¹⁹ This was three years after the British were defeated in the American war for independence. During this same period, the abolitionists were exerting themselves into the political arena. In 1789, William Wilberforce addressed parliament to argue for the abolition of the slave-trade, detailing the effect on Africa, and the horrors of the trade itself.²⁰

In 1791, when the Sierra Leone Company, a corporate body involved in the founding of the colony, sent out the Rev. M. Horne, a Wesleyan minister, and in 1792, Mr. Field, a school master to accompany him, a school was established with only four children in a temporary church that grew to three hundred the following year. Sierra Leonean culture and tradition were being challenged by the European settlers, and this challenge was becoming more of a threat by 1804 when the most prominent mission in Sierra Leone during the early nineteenth century, the Church Missionary Society (CMS), established itself. Founded in England in 1799 by a group of activist evangelical Christians, including Henry Thorton and William Wilberforce, the CMS set out to contribute to the abolishment of slavery, bring about social reform at home, and

¹⁸ A.B.C. Sibthorpe, *The History of Sierra Leone*, 4th ed. (London: Frank Cass, 1970), 7. The first edition of Sibthorpe's book appeared in 1868, was enlarged in 1881, and finally a third edition appeared in 1906. This third edition was reprinted in 1970, which is the volume I have relied on here. Sibthorpe, who was Sierra Leone, was one of the first known historians of the nation.

¹⁹ Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (London: Oxford University Press, 1962), 15.

²⁰ William Wilberforce, *The Enormity of The Slave-Trade and The Duty of Seeking The Moral and Spiritual Elevation of The Colored Race: Speeches of Wilberforce and Other Documents and Records* (New York: The American Tract Society, 1899), 5-7.

evangelize the world. Representatives of the CMS settled in Sierra Leone and began setting up schools in 1804 with the purpose of “civilizing” the Africans. During the early part of the nineteenth century the CMS operated with minimal government interference, but government involvement began to intensify later in the century.

In 1808, Sierra Leone became a British colony, ending the sixteen-year control by the Sierra Leone Company. From the time of its founding, missionaries played a significant role in the colony. Mission schools were central in Sierra Leone’s growth and development, creating an educated class to take on the administration of the colony. Around 1815, the CMS was primarily responsible for education in Sierra Leone (which at the time, referred to Freetown and immediately surrounding areas), and it remained this way until around 1827. It was at this time that education in the colony began to diffuse and diversify, with missions of other denominations contributing to the schooling of Sierra Leoneans. Beginning around 1840 and through to 1868, due to denominational jealousy the educational program began to intensify creating the basis for extraterritorial expansion in education.²¹ It was during this period that American missionaries began to establish mission stations throughout the hinterland.

Increased government involvement did not stop the educational work of the missions, but by the turn of the century their work was immensely supplanted by the government. According to Sawyerr, the control of educational institutions was exercised by missions and local governments without any formal agreement on how this relationship would function.²² By 1879, the government began to play a more active role

²¹ Sawyerr, “The Development of Education,” 37.

²² Sawyerr, “The Development of Education,” 55.

in Sierra Leone education policy, which benefitted schools that were strapped for resources. In 1882, an ordinance was passed establishing a Board of Education composed of the governor and four members appointed by him, giving government the power to make rules and regulations, to establish schools maintained by public funds, to give aid from public funds to private schools, and to provide for the training of teachers in the most economical way.²³ In Taylor's study of the United Brethren in Christ (UBC), he asserted that the government directly operated only a small number of schools in comparison to those controlled by the various missions – primarily American and British – yet, many of the mission schools were under the supervision of the government that rewarded schools that were performing up to the government's standard.²⁴ One can surmise the amount of influence the government had on the performance of mission schools during the twentieth century. The improvement in the performance of mission schools in the twentieth century was perhaps the consequence of government incentives for resources.

The work of the British in Sierra Leone opened the door for American missionaries to establish stations in the country. American Missionaries were operating in Sierra Leone since at least 1821, through the work of Daniel Coker and Lott Cary. In 1841, the Mendi Mission would be the first permanent American settlement what is today Sierra Leone. It would not be until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, however, due to the work of the UBC, that American missionaries had a significant influence in educating Sierra Leoneans.

²³ Sawyerr, "The Development of Education," 56.

²⁴ Rosselot, "The Origin, Growth," 2.

The Mendi Mission was a result of a series of events dating back to 1839, beginning with the illegal capture of fifty-three Sierra Leoneans from slave-traders. The Mende, a Sierra Leonean ethnic group, reflected the majority of the captives aboard the slave vessel. On July 2, 1839, while being transported aboard the slaver *La Amistad*, the Africans mutinied against their captors. The rebellion led to the eventual seizure of the *Amistad* by the Africans. The release of the Sierra Leoneans culminated in the creation of the Amistad Committee, to aid them in their trip back to Africa, which eventuated in the Mendi Mission. I will return to the history of the *Amistad* captives, their return to Sierra Leone, and its impacts later in the research essay.

American mission education became an arduous task during the nineteenth century due to indigenous resistance culminating in a major setback at the end of the nineteenth century. After the British imposed a new tax in the Protectorate, a rebellion ensued in the hinterland culminating in the violent Hut Tax War of 1898. Suppression of the Hut Tax Rebellion gave rise to another viable option for Africans to attain political and economic power: the notion of assimilating into colonial society. British mission schools, established in the early part of the nineteenth century, had done this for Creoles settled in Freetown.²⁵

Up until 1900, education in Sierra Leone was primarily modelled after a traditional British educational policy with the American schools presenting a divergent model.²⁶ American mission schools were predominantly located in the hinterlands, known as the Protectorate. At the turn of the century, American mission schools began to

²⁵ Mueller, "Formation of a Mission," 64-65.

²⁶ Sawyerr, "The Development of Education," 58.

play a larger role in the education of Sierra Leone. There was, importantly, the Harford School for Girls, founded in 1900 by the United Brethren in Christ.²⁷ The purpose of the school, based in Moyamba in the Protectorate, was to train girls to become good teachers and housewives. It developed into a secondary boarding school for girls serving the whole country, rather than only the Western area.²⁸

Research Method

The research reflects extensive probing into a range of topics and concepts; e.g. the history of Sierra Leone, colonialism, paternalism, evangelism, missionaries, education, etc. While there has not previously been research conducted exclusively on the Albert Academy, there do exist works that examine education in Sierra Leone during the colonial period. The archives of Drew University, Schomburg Center for Research and Black Culture, as well as various digital archival repositories were utilized for this study. Through an examination of primary and secondary sources – including books, articles, journals, newspapers, microfilm, online sources, and archival materials – a narrative on the history and ramifications of American mission education in Sierra Leone has been constructed.

This research contributes to the field of history by detailing a transnational relationship between Americans and Africans that eventuated in Sierra Leone independence. Although this was perhaps an unintended consequence on behalf of the UBC, its contribution need not be omitted due to its lack of deliberate intention or

²⁷ Sawyerr, “The Development of Education,” 58.

²⁸ Sawyerr, “The Development of Education,” 59.

foresight. The relentless efforts of the UBC to westernize Africans was critical in the history of Sierra Leone and left its mark not only during decolonization and the immediate post-colonial period, but through to today.

The research essay is divided into six chapters, including the introduction and conclusion. In the present chapter – the Introduction – I have introduced the research problem along with some perspectives on how the research essay contributes to scholarship on the history of education in Sierra Leone during the colonial period. I have attempted to provide the historical context for education in the colonial period, introduced important scholarship in the historiography and methodology, and finally a chapter overview of the research essay. My goal in the Introduction has been to introduce the theoretical framework employed as well as the historical discourse on the subject, along with the important topics to be explored in the research essay.

Chapter Breakdown

Chapter Two explores the historical context for the establishment of the colony of Sierra Leone. Centuries of European contact with Africans in the region resulted in Sierra Leone becoming an ideal location for colonization efforts. The chapter examines the Age of Enlightenment and the abolitionist movement on the founding of the colony of Freetown. Challenges to the ethics and morality of slavery and the slave trade resulted in the resettlement of formerly enslaved Africans in the new world to Sierra Leone. The

settlement opened the door for missionary work from nations on both sides of the Atlantic.

Chapter Three transitions to the commencement of American missions in Sierra Leone. The story of *La Amistad* is essential to the presence of American missions in Sierra Leone, so the history of the important uprising and its consequences will be explored. The story of the self-emancipated *Amistad* captives ultimately leads to the establishment of the Mendi Mission in Sierra Leone. The initial role that the American Missionary Association (AMA) had in building the mission, and its subsequent take over by the United Brethren in Christ (UBC), will also be examined.

Chapter Four will explore the development of industrial and normative schools in the United States, and its connection to the development of American mission schools in Sierra Leone. The chapter examines these changes through the lens of paternalism. Paternalism, no matter what seemingly benign or benevolent intentions on the part of the outsiders, is inherently racist and ethnocentric: in sum, what was good for the oppressed Africans (the child) must be determined by the predominantly white males (the father). The AMA were very active in the education of African Americans in the southern United States. The AMA and the UBC subsequently introduced their blueprints for education in Africa. In the US, this model had its greatest expression in the universities of Hampton and Tuskegee, which will also be explored. The growth and the development of American mission schools from the UBC's first school, and its early challenges, to the establishment of the Albert Academy School for Boys, will be explored. The chapter explores the early beginnings of industrial training and the role of key American

missionaries in the development of the American model of education in the protectorate and colony, and the later, timely reconstruction of the mission that saved it from total collapse.

The primary focus of this research concerns one school in particular, the Albert Academy School for Boys, founded in 1904. The Albert Academy would play a crucial role in challenging tribal discord in the hinterland. Chapter Five of this research essay will focus on the establishment and education of Albert Academy and its impact on Sierra Leoneans and their cultural transformation. The comparative similarities of the Albert Academy and the Tuskegee Institute will also be explored. Its emphasis on industrial and normative training set it apart from the British schools. Many of those who graduated from the Albert Academy went on to hold administrative jobs in government, and would later be key to the end of British rule.

The final chapter – the Conclusion – will provide an analysis of colonialism in Africa and the overall impact that colonial institutions, such as schools, had on indigenous culture in Sierra Leone and how examining colonial education in Sierra Leone through an Africa-centered perspective has the potential to shed new light on the long-term effects that mission schools had on their colonial subjects for which reverberations remain today.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The establishment of an independent settlement for formerly enslaved Africans was inextricably linked to colonial expansion, abolitionism, and evangelism. This chapter examines the historical events that paved the way for the founding of the colony of Sierra Leone and the coming of American missionaries. As numerous historians have previously examined this history, the goal here is not to provide a comprehensive account of that history, but rather to probe the forces that drove the establishment of a colony of formerly enslaved Africans that later connects to educational initiatives.

During a period of scientific enlightenment and religious revival, those who did not agree with the inhumane treatment of Africans presented new challenges for the status quo. The establishment of Granville Town and later Freetown were the result of actions by various key figures on economic as well as moral grounds. Irrespective of outside motivations, the initiatives and individuals involved were paternalistic by nature. Paternalism was a product of slavery and colonialism. The idea of paternalism is connected to ways in which colonialism, abolitionism, and the church were not only establishing spaces for “freedom” for formerly enslaved Africans, but were also creating and reshaping “people” in the process. These people included Jamaican Maroons, Black Loyalists, Mende, and Temne, among other indigenous Africans, who were being transformed into Creoles and Sierra Leoneans.

The lives and identities of Africans in Sierra Leone were shaped through the institutions of slavery and colonialism, and later reshaped again through movements to abolish these systems. The justification of these institutions was usually paternalistic in

nature. For example, the planters' "values" were romanticized in the hierarchical, agrarian society in which slaveholding "gentlemen" assumed personal responsibility for the physical and moral well-being of their dependents – women, children, and slaves. This paternalistic outlook had been a feature of American slavery going back to the eighteenth century.²⁹ Abolitionism and evangelism did not mark a shift from the paternalism of slavery and colonialism, they at times complimented one another and influenced government policies toward Africans.

When examining the movement to settle diasporic Africans in Sierra Leone, it would be easy to conclude that white men were making decisions on their behalf. The interaction between European and African nations developed into a colonial relationship. This paternalistic relationship became the undoing of what set out to be an independent African space. Through colonization, the British controlled the lives of the settlers, while at the same time providing Africans a means to live "free" on a land, and with a government, of their own. Despite this arrangement, the settlers were never granted full independence or autonomy. The Sierra Leone colony remained tied to the government of Great Britain and the settlers as subjects of the Crown.³⁰

The history of Sierra Leone's contact with Europe can be traced back to the power struggles on the Iberian Peninsula. Centuries of conflict existed between the Spanish, Portuguese, and Moors. The Moors represented Muslim occupants of North Africa, the

²⁹ Eric Foner, *Give Me Liberty: An American History*, brief 6th ed. (New York: W.W. Norton Company, 2020), 314.

³⁰ Joseph Irwin, "Committee for the Relief of Poor Blacks and their Emigration to Sierra Leone", Copy agreement between Mr. Joseph Irwin and the Black Poor. Contains a list of 675 persons who signed it. *The National Archives* (October 6, 1786).

western Sahara, and the Iberian Peninsula during the Middle Ages. They entered the Iberian Peninsula in 711 and expanded their control in that region over the next seven centuries. During the fourteenth century, Portuguese Christians devoted themselves to fighting the Moors and by the fifteenth century, European presence in Africa began with Portugal's attack and capture of the Moorish stronghold of Ceuta in North Africa in 1415. Prince Dom Henrique, or Don Henry of Portugal, gained his notoriety from the assault and capture of the city Ceuta. Subsequently, in 1435, they reached Senegal, in 1443 Cape Bojador, and in 1446 Sierra Leone.³¹ At this point, Portuguese ships could sail between the Mediterranean and the Atlantic without Muslim interference. It would not be until 1492 that the reign of the Moors over the peninsula ended and they were pushed out of Europe.³²

This shift in power would set in motion a series of events that would bring about the birth of the modern world, the salient event being Columbus' voyage to the Americas. At this time, Sierra Leone would become an important point of contact in the new global trade system that developed during the fifteenth century. With Moorish presence eliminated on the Iberian Peninsula, the balance of power shifted in favor of Spain and Portugal. Just over four decades earlier, an important event occurred further east, with the fall of Constantinople in 1453. The result of the fall of Constantinople would be the loss of European control and access to eastern caravan routes which would have negative consequences on western Europe's ability to engage in trade. Despite the resurgence of

³¹ Eric Williams, *From Columbus to Castro: The History of the Caribbean* (New York: Vintage Books, 1984), 13.

³² Raymond Beazley, "Prince Henry of Portugal and the African Crusade of the Fifteenth Century," *The American Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (Oct. 1910): 14-16.

Spain and Portugal on the Iberian Peninsula, Muslim and Italian rivals prevented the Iberian states from participating in the spice trade and gold trade in the eastern Mediterranean and western Africa respectively. This brought rising prices in Europe which caused Portugal and Spain to search for new sea routes to the east.³³ The forging of a new global order happened in the context of these fifteenth-century power struggles on the continents of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Maritime expansion in Europe started with the Portuguese and Spain, and was motivated by numerous conditions and factors, such as the zeal for discovery of territory, trading partners, and trade routes. Sierra Leone would become a trading post in the ushering in of this new global order.

Prince Henry of Portugal led the charge in naval expeditions for the discovery of unknown lands, which culminated in the enslavement of Africans. This resulted in the annexation of parts of Africa and neighboring islands, such as Sao Tome, the Canaries, and Cape Verde. It was the early declaration that the Christian nations of Spain and Portugal had the right to lay claim to non-Christian territories and enslave its inhabitants that set a precedent that effected non-Christian nations for the next five hundred years. Portuguese explorations along the western coast of Africa in the 1420s ushered in the European-African trade in Black slaves. Prince Henry even gave to his father, John I of Portugal, and his successors, all the lands he would stake claim to.³⁴

Prince Henry directed his African expeditions as an extension of the Roman Catholic church, via the authority of its pontiff. In 1430, Pope Martin V, in his bull of

³³ Palmira Brummett, Robert R. Edgar, et al, *Civilization Past & Present* 11, v 1 (New York: Pearson Longman, 2007), 464.

³⁴ Robin D.G. Kelley and Earl Lewis, eds., *To Make Our World Anew: A History of African Americans to 1880*, vol. 1 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 9.

ratification, declared that “whatever might be discovered from the laid cape to the utmost India, should pertain to the Portuguese dominion.”³⁵ Throughout the fifteenth century, Martin V’s successors picked up where he left off at issuing papal bulls that codified colonization and slavery. On January 5, 1443, Pope Eugene IV published *Rex Regum*, which stated the position of the Church in regards to rights to lands claimed in Africa. On June 18, 1452, Pope Nicholas V issued *Dum Diversas*, also referred to as the *Doctrine of Discovery*, giving Alfonso V, King of Portugal, the authority to reduce any Muslims, pagans, and any other unbelievers to perpetual slavery. In addition, this edict gave them the power to claim “unoccupied land” and establish dominion over such territory. In effect, *Dum Diversas* aided Portugal in its quest to spread Christianity, as well as secure political and economic power.³⁶ Another papal bull was issued in 1454 extending Portuguese dominion over all the seas from Africa to India. On January 8, 1455, Pope Nicholas V issued another papal bull, *Romanus Pontifex*, to King Alfonso V, as a follow up to *Dum Diversas*. It confirmed to the Crown of Portugal dominion over all lands south of Cape Bojador in Africa, as well as encouraged the seizure of lands of Saracen Turks and non-Christians, and repeated the earlier bull’s permission for the enslavement of such peoples.³⁷ On May 4, 1493, the new Pope, Alexander VI, issued papal bull, *Inter Caetera*, that divided the Eastern and Western territories of Non-Europeans between the

³⁵ James Dana, “The African Slave Trade: A Discourse Delivered in the City of New Haven, September 9, 1790 Before the Connecticut’ Society for the Promotion of Freedom”, *Antislavery Pamphlet Collection (RB 003) Special Collections and University Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst Libraries* (New Haven, CT: Thomas and Samuel Green), 12-13.

³⁶ “Dum Diversas” (English Translation), *Unam Sanctam Catholican*.

³⁷ “Romanus Pontifex, (Granting the Portuguese A Perpetual Monopoly in Trade with Africa) January 8, 1455,” *Papal Encyclicals Online*.

Spanish and Portuguese.³⁸ The Pope of the Catholic Church through the issuing of these papal bulls set the precedent for European relations with Africans and their descendants. These decrees would set a legal claim to the lands of non-Christian nations. The non-Christian status of Africans and Native Americans were also used as grounds for their perpetual enslavement. As noted earlier, the chain of events began with Prince Henry the Navigator, whose historical shadow looms large in setting the stage for European domination over the African continent.

The changes that occurred on the Iberian Peninsula led to European exploration down the western African coast, ultimately leading years later to the first European settlements in Sierra Leone. In 1446, Portuguese seamen were the first to make inroads into Sierra Leone, naming it “Serra Lyoa” or “Mountain of Lions” because they thought the mountainous peninsula, when entering what is today the Freetown Harbor, resembled lions. The Sierra Leone peninsula, a small mountainous lump forming the south shore of a wide estuary, protrudes abruptly from the West African coast. Corrupted through the centuries into many variants – as Serra Lyonne, Sierra Leona, Serr-Lions, Sierraleon, Serillioon – to form Sierra Leone, which is the current name of the nation.³⁹ From this point the Portuguese began to set up direct relations with the people of Sierra Leone and western Africa, setting up trading posts along the West African coastline.

Not long after settling, the Portuguese were driven out of Sierra Leone by the Dutch. Due to its location, in West Africa between Guinea and Liberia, and the growth

³⁸ “Inter Caetera, (Division of the Undiscovered World Between Spain and Portugal),” *Papal Encyclicals Online*.

³⁹ Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, 1.

and expansion of the slave trade, Sierra Leone would later serve a slave port for the French. In 1562, Sierra Leone became of interest to the British when John Hawkins forced some of the inhabitants into the business of exporting enslaved Africans.⁴⁰ Sierra Leone became more of a vested interest during the latter part of the eighteenth century when British philanthropists and abolitionists worked together to help expatriate free Africans in the diaspora back to Africa. Sierra Leone became a British colony in the early nineteenth century. After three centuries of being a trading post for a variety of European nations, the British gained legal claim to the territory in 1807, and the colony (later expanded to include the hinterland) remained in its possession until Sierra Leone's independence in 1961.

There exists a clear connection between abolition of the slave trade and colonial expansion that led to the establishment and growth of the colony of Sierra Leone. The Sierra Leone colony was the culmination of resistance to a centuries' old system of trade in Africans. Columbus' 1492 voyage and contact with the Americas subsequently led to the trans-Atlantic slave trade, lasting for centuries, linking and expanding over four continents. The ethics and morality of this trade, although challenged from its inception, was ineffective until the late eighteenth century. Initially calling for the introduction of African slaves in order to end the atrocities against the indigenous Americans, de las Casas later advocated for the abolishment of all slavery. During the eighteenth century, a movement gained traction to end the trans-Atlantic slave trade, culminating in the institutionalizing of the abolitionist movement. Political struggles over the morality and

⁴⁰ Sibthorpe, *The History of Sierra Leone*, 7.

the viability of the Atlantic slave trade and slavery were driven by enlightenment and religious ideas.

The founding of Sierra Leone owes a great deal to the abolitionist movement. The rise of abolitionists such as Thomas Clarkson, John Clarkson, William Wilberforce, Alexander Falconbridge, Granville Sharp, and others, was significant to the founding of Freetown, as well as the abolishment of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Sharp was vocal about the defense of escaped slaves. He remarked:

So that it must be of indispensable obligation as long as the hateful oppressions of slave-holders afford us any occasions of exercising this duty to God of protecting the slaves that escape from their masters; and, consequently, I asserted, that any colonial law, which opposes this ordinance of God, by ordering the arresting, and delivering up runaway slaves; or which, in any way, tends to deprive them of due legal protection, is, of course, to be deemed “a corruption, null and void in itself,” as being contrary to the second foundation of English law.⁴¹

This statement was aligned with the Somerset Case in London. During the eighteenth century, Great Britain held several colonies in the Americas in which slavery legally

⁴¹ Granville Sharp and Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and the Relief of Free Negroes, and Others, Unlawfully Held in Bondage, *Letter from Granville Sharp, Esq., of London, to the Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and the Relief of Free Negroes and Others, Unlawfully Held in Bondage* (Baltimore: D. Graham, L. Yundt and W. Patton, 1793), 3.

existed. Britain itself did not practice slavery within its borders, but slave owners could travel with their slaves freely within the country. Africans living in England were mostly imported for domestic service from Africa or the transatlantic colonies. In 1772, Sharp took on a case believed to be the catalyst for the abolition of the slave trade. James Somerset, a runaway slave, used London's legal system to win his freedom. Lord Mansfield, Chief Justice of the King's Bench, declared in the Somerset Case that a master could not reclaim a former slave in England and that all were free.⁴² Additionally, Wilberforce was very vocal against slavery, and became one of the leading voices against the slave trade. He declared, "I firmly believe, that could many of our opponents see with their own eyes but a slight sample of the miseries the Slave Trade occasions, they would themselves be eager for its termination."⁴³ The voices and actions of Sharp, Wilberforce, and other abolitionists transformed the social relations between Europeans and Africans. The slave trade, however, would be supplanted by colonial aspirations. Irrespective of how the outcome is judged, it was these "rationale dissenters" who were instrumental in the fight against slavery and the founding of the first British settlements in Sierra Leone.

By the late eighteenth century, moral disapproval of slavery was widespread and antislavery reformers won many victories that brought about systemic changes. Despite these changes taking place, the West was not ready to relinquish power over the enslaved and colonized. Struggles over the slave trade would take place in Parliament. Wilberforce pleaded to Parliament in 1789 to end the slave trade due to the wretchedness of its

⁴² Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, 13.

⁴³ William Wilberforce, *Mr. Wilberforce on The Abolition of the Slave Trade. A Letter on the Abolition of the Slave Trade; Addressed to the Freeholders and other Inhabitants of Yorkshire* (London: Luke Hansard & Sons, 1807).

character and the causes of conflict between African groups.⁴⁴ In the US similar discussions were taking place. In 1775, the first abolitionist society was formed, The Society for the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage (Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society); Benjamin Franklin served as its first president. Several other anti-slavery societies would form during the eighteenth century. In 1792, The Providence Society and several others petition the legislature for the abolishment of slavery. The petition stated:

Although it has been the policy of the American Union to suffer the powers of authorizing domestic slavery, and of importing slaves into the United States, for a limited time; ye, under our present excellent Constitution, Congress have authority to refrain the citizens of the United States from carrying on the African trade for the purpose of supplying foreigners with slaves, and to prohibit foreigners from sitting out vessels in any port of the United States, for transporting persons from Africa to any foreign port.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ William Wilberforce, *The Speech of William Wilberforce, Esq. Representative for the County of York on Wednesday the 13th of May, 1789, on the Question of the Abolition of the Slave Trade: To Which are Added, The Resolutions Then Moved, and a Short Sketch of the Speeches of the Other Members.* (London: Logographic Press, 1789), 7.

⁴⁵ Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, Providence Society for Abolishing the Slave-Trade, Connecticut Society for the Promotion of Freedom, and the Relief of Persons Unlawfully Holden in Bondage, New York Society for Promoting the Manumission of Slave3s, and Protecting Such of Them as Have Been, or May Be Liberated, and Maryland Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, *Memorials Presented to the Congress of the United States of America by the Different Societies instituted for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, &c &c* (Philadelphia: Francis Bailey, 1792), 1-2. Slavery and Anti-Slavery: A Transnational Archive

The petitioners raised the hypocrisy of propagating ideas of freedom while holding hundreds of thousands of people in bondage. The petition further stated:

that, from a sober conviction of the unrighteousness of slavery, your petitioners have long beheld, with grief, a considerable number of our fellow-men doomed to perpetual bondage, in a country which boasts of her freedom. That, though all men are of the same species, and by nature have an equal claim to all the enjoyments of life, it has been the unhappy policy of this country, to impose slavery and want on those who are brought from Africa; while we hold forth the prospects of liberty and plenty to emigrants from all other countries.⁴⁶

Another abolitionist group that garnered attention was the Providence African Society. At the same time that there was a rise of anti-slavery societies in America, formerly enslaved Africans were building a colony in Sierra Leone. This gained the attention of both African Americans and white Americans.

In the new British colony in Sierra Leone, paternalism undermined the Creoles' vision of freedom. Granville Sharp had been clear in his writing about the position of the settlement in relation to the British government. In 1786, he detailed the regulations of the new settlement in which he expressed a lack of faith in the settlers to govern themselves. Sharp justified this by stating his intentions were to "promote the happiness

⁴⁶ Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, *Memorials Presented*, 7-8.

of the new settlement.”⁴⁷ His belief that he, and the British government, knew what was best for the settlers, created an environment primed for British rule. For example, Sharp stated:

They must be careful not to adopt any regulations that are at all inconsistent with the fundamental principles of the Common Law of England; because the majority of the settlers have been sent out at the expense of the British Government, which is restrained by the fundamental and unalterable principles of the British state, from establishing or promoting any form of government, even in the most distant part of the world, that is at all inconsistent with its own excellent constitution either in church or state.⁴⁸

Religious freedom was also limited in Sharp’s proposal. The Africans that came to Sierra Leone in the 1780s and 1790s entered a world in which they were meant to be the builders, but not one in which they would be the architects.

In 1787, Henry Smeathman, an English naturalist, proposed Sierra Leone as a settlement for the poor Blacks in London. He was familiar with the region as a result of an expedition he had made in 1771. By 1786, London became home to some former slaves who had left Republican or loyalist masters in response to proclamations offering

⁴⁷ Granville Sharp, *A Short Sketch of Temporary Regulations (Until Better Shall be Proposed) for the Intended Settlement on the Grain Coast of Africa, Near Sierra Leona* (London: H. Baldwin, 1786), iii.

⁴⁸ Sharp, *Short Sketch*, iv.

them freedom if they served against the rebels. The British government, businessmen, and evangelists began to turn to Africa as a place of opportunity. Missionaries saw an opportunity to spread the gospel of Christ and evangelize the “heathens.” The British government and entrepreneurs concerned themselves with the economic benefits of colonization. Smeathman presented opportunities in Sierra Leone that were palatable to all three.

In January 1786 a committee, comprised chiefly of businessmen, published an appeal in the newspapers for contributions to relieve the Black poor. Henry Smeathman wrote to the committee for the Black poor in February 1786, offering to take their charges for 4 sterling a head, to found a settlement near the Sierra Leone River. Smeathman offered incentives to those who were interested in settlement promising allowance of provisions per week: “5 pounds of Bread, 1 ditto beef, 3 ditto pork, $\frac{3}{4}$ ditto molasses, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto flour, $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto pot barley, $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto suet, $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto raisins, 1 point of oatmeal, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ditto of peas, 2 dittos of rum for grog; with proper quantity of spices, as pimento, ginger, etc.” Settlers were offered this allowance for three months after their arrival.⁴⁹ Africans who believed there were no benefits to staying in the Americas, looked at expatriation to Africa as a fresh start. Smeathman died in July 1786 and Granville Sharp succeeded him in founding the settlement in Sierra Leone.

⁴⁹ Henry Smeathman, *Plan of a Settlement to be Made Near Sierra Leone, on the Grain Coast of Africa: Intended more particularly for the Service and Happy Establishment of Blacks and People of Colour, to be Shipped as Freeman Under the Direction of the Committee for Relieving the Black Poor, and Under the Protection of the British Government* (London: T. Stockdale in Piccadilly, G. Kearsley, 1786), 4.

The founding of the settlement at Sierra Leone would not have been possible without the support of government and private industry resources. On April 8, 1787, an early wave of settlers disembarked for Sierra Leone, of whom 84 died during the passage.⁵⁰ More passengers were subsequently sent to the settlement, making the total 411 who sailed.⁵¹ A treaty was made on June 11, 1787, along with land purchased for a settlement, with King Tom and his sub-chiefs Pa Bongee and Queen Yamcouba. The agreement would give the Crown of England perpetual control of the land, becoming not only an English settlement, but an English territory. Once diasporic Africans became settled in what became known as the Province of Freedom, their freedom in their own country was tempered by the fact that they remained subjects of Great Britain. A close examination of the early British settlements in Sierra Leone show that the government of Britain maintained control of territory prior to formalizing it as a colony in 1808.⁵²

In 1789, a dispute had broken out between the people indigenous to the land and the crew of a British vessel at the settlement at Province of Freedom. Pa Komba, a Temne chief, had given three days notice to the settlers before burning it to the ground. In 1790, Province of Freedom was abandoned. That same year, an act of Parliament had passed incorporating the Sierra Leone Company. The Directors of the company would use this opportunity to bring in more Black colonists. The dispersed settlers were united again, in 1791, through the interference of the Sierra Leone Company. The new settlement of Granville Town would be established after Alexander Falconbridge arrived and collected

⁵⁰*An Account of the Colony of Sierra Leone, From its First Establishment in 1793. Being the Substance of a Report Delivered to the Proprietors. Published By Order of the Directors* (London: James Phillips, 1795), 2.

⁵¹ Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone*, 19.

⁵² *Free English Territory in Africa. At Sierra Leona – Called Province of Freedom* (1790), 9.

64 survivors and settled them around Fourah Bay. Granville Town was located just outside of Freetown, the Sierra Leone Company's colony.⁵³

In the year 1791, free Blacks in Nova Scotia who had served in the American Revolution, sent a delegate to the Directors of the Sierra Leone Company. They complained about broken promises of land after fighting in the American war, and complained about Nova Scotia's cold climate. They were targeted by Thomas Clarkson to be colonists of the settlement to be made at Sierra Leone.⁵⁴ Clarkson's brother, John Clarkson, set sail August 17, 1791 with 1,196 settlers-to-be, landing on March 16, 1792. Having received a suitable spot from the local chiefs, the directors named the place Freetown. This will mark the inception of the building of the colony of Freetown which will become the future capital of the country we know now as Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leonean resistance to assimilation was frequently countervailed through the use of force by the British government. The uprising in 1800 represents an example of African attempts to sever ties with the Sierra Leone Company and the British government. James Sidbury has written about the African settlers' dissatisfaction with their arrangement as follows:

a significant portion of the settlers came to believe that as
 "Africans" who were living "in their own country," they
 were free of any obligation to "obey the King and laws of
 England," so they sought to achieve a formal and

⁵³ James Phillips, Substance of the Report of the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company to the General Court, held at London on Wednesday the 19th of October 1791, (London), 2-3

⁵⁴ *An Account of the Colony of Sierra Leone*, 3.

permanent separation from the Company. But the strategies they used and the society that sought to build, as “Africans,” were deeply rooted in their Anglo-American experience.⁵⁵

These developments in Sierra Leone in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries opened the door for American missionaries. The motivation for American missionaries in Sierra Leone were very similar to those of the British. There were distinguishable differences in their methods of schooling and their relationship with the British government, which will be discussed in later chapters. The establishment of American missions in Sierra Leone did not occur in a vacuum, they were part of a longer and deeper history of European and African conflict and trade relations, as well as the notion that Africans had inherent rights to life and liberty as did all human beings. Yet, the specific context of nineteenth-century America is significant to the history of American missions in Sierra Leone. Slavery was becoming more and more problematic in the face of American industrialization. Northern industrialists and white laborers viewed the expansion of slavery as a threat. With the growth of the free African population in the diaspora, the question of what to do with the free Black population continued to be a part of the American discourse. For whites and some abolitionists, in a society with men who did not view or treat Africans as equal, expatriation became the solution. Thomas Jefferson and George Washington both voiced opposition to slavery, despite holding hundreds of Africans in bondage. Jefferson was more vocal about emancipation and what

⁵⁵ James Sidbury, “African” Settlers in the Founding of Freetown,” *Slavery, Abolition and the Transition to Colonialism in Sierra Leone*, ed. Paul E. Lovejoy and Suzanne Schwarz (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2015), 138.

to do with the free Black population. His stance on emancipation included contingencies such as compensation for the slaveholders and finding a new home outside US borders for the formerly enslaved. American interest in Sierra Leone as a home for emancipated slaves and free people of African ancestry will be explored more fully in the next chapter.

In conclusion, when American missionaries ventured to Sierra Leone in the nineteenth century, they entered a world that went through several transformations since the first British and African settlers arrived in 1787. It is in this world that American missionaries would create an educational system that mirrored the industrial schools of the southern United States for Black Americans. American missionaries who came to Sierra Leone were motivated by religious fervor to civilize the Africans. A primary means of evangelizing and westernizing Africans was through a system of education that resembled schools in America designed for free Black Americans. These mission schools were products of the colonial world, in which Africans were forced to adopt a foreign culture in order to survive under a colonial system. American missionaries may not have come to Africa with negative intentions, but ideas of western civilization and African backwardness created a paternalistic view and relationship with African people. These missionaries may have come with good intentions, but they were affected by ideas of white and western superiority. Europe had forged a world where they ruled the political, economic, and social spheres.

European exploration and colonization of the Americas opened the “New World” for immigration and enslaved African labor for over four centuries. Once the inhumane treatment of African people began to be challenged, Christian missionaries offered a

solution to the problems that were besetting Africans. Africa's problems could be solved through evangelism and colonialism. Ideas of white superiority were influential in the belief that it was the charge of the west to civilize people deemed inferior. The idea of white superiority and Black inferiority would influence the European and American presence in Sierra Leone.

This chapter has attempted to explore some of the actions taken by European powers that shaped the relationship between Europeans and Africans, ultimately leading to the founding of the colony of Sierra Leone. Creoles and Sierra Leoneans had to adapt to a political and economic system created in the colonial framework. As Rodney explained:

Europe assumed the power to make decisions within the international trading system. An excellent illustration of that is the fact that the so-called international law which governed the conduct of nations on the high seas was nothing else but European law.”⁵⁶

Sierra Leone gained its identity under these conditions. It is a creation of the European nations' power to define other people and lands.

America, like Great Britain, was motivated to establish settlements in Sierra Leone for various reasons. Economic motivations were less significant for the American settlers, than the business elites and government of Great Britain, but both nations sought

⁵⁶ Rodney, *How Europe*, 77.

to end the slave trade and to evangelize Africans. The abolitionists were motivated by ending the immoral practice of slavery and finding a home for free Africans in the Diaspora. Lastly, the Church was motivated by a duty to civilize and evangelize those who they deemed “heathens.” After the Revolutionary War, leaders of the new republic were pondering over what to do about the free Black population in America. Discussions of expatriating enslaved Africans in the United States were taking place as early as 1784.⁵⁷ American missionaries began to establish permanent settlements in Sierra Leone during the 1840s, beginning with the Mendi Mission. The coalescence of abolitionist and evangelist represent the driving force behind the colonization of Sierra Leone, and the coming of American missionaries.

British evangelicals were instrumental in the education and colonization process, during the nineteenth century. American missionaries would follow British missionaries and establish a presence in Africa for many of the same reasons. For the western powers, Africa became the new frontier during a period marked by Western European and United States imperialism and colonialism. The boundaries of “civilized” nations had already been set around those populations under the domain of Western European nations (Great Britain, France, etc.) and the United States. Regions outside their borders were viewed as backwards, wild, and ripe for annexation and colonization. The European presence in Africa, during the fifteenth century began a process of invasion and domination by way of the slave trade. European colonialism developed a benign face through missionary work and schools, which subsequently opened the door for American missionaries to

⁵⁷ George Brooks, "The Providence African Society's Sierra Leone Emigration Scheme, 1794-1795: Prologue to the African Colonization Movement." *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 7, no. 2 (1974): 186.

have a presence in Africa. Slavery and its antithesis, freedom, were able to be reconciled through the establishment of settlements in Sierra Leone, beginning with the Province of Freedom. The nineteenth century was a period of western expansion and the subjugation of nonwhite people. Religious revival and the enlightenment ideas were instrumental in the fight to end slavery, but it did little to quell colonialism.

The next chapter will explore the establishment of American mission stations and schools in Sierra Leone. In examining the development and effect of American mission schools, it is important to contextualize motivations and impacts in terms of colonialism. Under colonialism, some Africans looked at education as a means to lift themselves out of a life of subsistence. Mission schools created conditions more conducive to colonial rule. Through the education system the British turned Africans in Sierra Leone into agents of colonialism. Colonial education would be the means by which soft colonialism or neocolonialism could emerge after independence. Through close examination, this research delineates how the presence of American mission schools in Sierra Leone facilitated the socialization of Africans under colonialism.⁵⁸

⁵⁸ Rodney, *How Europe*, 240-241.

CHAPTER 3: ESTABLISHING AN AMERICAN MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

The nineteenth century witnessed the rise of American missionary activity overseas, which culminated in an American presence in Sierra Leone. Colonization in Sierra Leone opened the door for British missionaries, which then created a favorable environment for American missionaries during this period. This was a time of evangelistic and paternalistic fervor, and Africa became the ideal location for doing “God’s work”. This work came with a price for Sierra Leoneans, which was often the supplanting of western culture and the transformation of African society. This chapter examines the events that resulted in the settlement of American missionaries in Sierra Leone.

Between 1795-1835, America experienced its Second Great Awakening, and active Christianization of the world became a focus for nineteenth-century evangelists. This Christian revival was accompanied by the abolition of the slave trade and the incorporation of Sierra Leone into the British empire. The abolition of the slave trade has been largely credited to the work of the abolitionists, Christians and rational dissenters alike. The abolitionist movement gained traction during the eighteenth century, when rationalist thinkers of the Enlightenment began to criticize slavery for its violation of the rights of man. Enlightenment thinkers suggested that all men held certain rights, among such rights being liberty, which enslavement of a human being clearly violated. Quaker and other evangelical religious groups condemned the slave trade it for its un-Christian qualities. A similar movement was developing in the United States around the same period. American abolitionists looked at expatriation as an option for free Africans and a way to bring Christianity to the continent.

There were various factors that inspired American Christians to travel to Africa to bring Christianity to the continent. British colonization of Africa gave way to British missionaries which opened the door for the Americans. Expatriation of the United States' free African American population became an avenue to send missionaries. The news of Britain's missionary success in other parts of the world, such as India, may have also supported American missionary zeal.⁵⁹ Historians have extensively examined the presence of American missionaries in Africa. Edward E. Andrews in *Christian Missions and Colonial Empires Reconsidered* reexamines the historiography of Christian missions and colonial empires. Andrews examines the relationship between religion and empire in the early modern Atlantic world.⁶⁰ In his article "The Black Atlantic Missionary Movement and Africa, 1780s-1920s", David Killingray examines African American missionary activity in Africa.⁶¹ Toyin Falola and Raphael Njoku's book, *United States & Africa Relations, 1400s to the Presents*, adds to this discourse by examining 150 years of African American missionary activity in the Black Atlantic.⁶² In Emily Conroy-Krutz's *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic*, the author discusses motivations behind evangelism.⁶³ Most historians who have written on this topic have focused on *what* was happening rather than *why* it was happening. This

⁵⁹ Emily Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism: Converting the World in the Early American Republic* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2015), 20.

⁶⁰ Edward E. Andrews, "Christian Missions and Colonial Empires Reconsidered: A Black Evangelist in West Africa, 1766-1816," *Journal of Church and State* 51, no. 4 (2009), 667.

⁶¹ David Killingray, "The Black Atlantic Missionary Movement and Africa, 1780s-1920s." *Journal of Religion in Africa* 33, no. 1 (2003): 3-4.

⁶² Toyin Falola and Raphael Chijioko Njoku, *United States and Africa Relations, 1400s to the Present* (London: Yale University Press, 2020), 107.

⁶³ Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism*, 21-22.

chapter reexamines this history by looking at these events through the lens of colonialism with paternalistic implications.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade presented an ethical and moral conundrum, and the abolitionist movement would affect America just as much as it did Great Britain. America's first attempt to abolish the slave trade was made on the eve of the American Revolution. In 1774, the First Continental Congress created the Continental Association, a system for implementing a trade boycott with Great Britain. These sanctions included the termination of the slave trade on December 1st of that year, stating, "we will neither import nor purchase, any slave imported after the first day of December next, after which time, we will wholly discontinue the slave trade, and will neither be concerned in it ourselves."⁶⁴ The motivation behind the abolition of the slave trade was clearly a political maneuver and response to Great Britain's continuing taxation policies on the colony, but it ignited a conversation about slavery that would take place during and after the American war. At the conclusion of the American Revolution, both the United States and Great Britain were mulling over the idea of ending the Atlantic slave trade and slavery.

The work to abolish the slave trade bore fruit in 1807 and 1808, as Britain and the United States respectively ended the trade, but slavery would be supplanted with colonial capitalism. Opponents to slavery were growing in Europe and the United States. The questioning of the morality of slavery did not change the racist views of African inferiority, held among many white people. Benjamin Rush, for example, a founding

⁶⁴ "Journals of the Continental Congress – The Articles of Association; October 20, 1774," *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy* (Yale Law School: Lillian Goldman Law Library).

father of the US, proposed that Africans derived their skin color from a modification brought about through leprosy. According to Rush to, this leprosy was brought about by Africa's climate and the savage manners of the indigenous Africans.⁶⁵ As racist ideas about Africans were taking shape, the position of Europeans and Africans in the new world order were being solidified. Racism shaped the perceptions whites held of Africans and this had material consequences. Africans were placed at the very bottom of the global social ladder. Racism justified the social hierarchy and the institutions of slavery and colonialism. The Diasporic Africans settled in Sierra Leone were victims of circumstance. The world that the colonialist made was one where Africans were forced to accept life under the ground rules created by the colonialist.

The settlements in Sierra Leone had an effect on the slave trade, and vice versa, that proved to be significant. In 1808, a year after Sierra Leone became a British colony, the West Africa Squadron was established by Great Britain. This navy was tasked with suppressing the slave trade. Africans rescued from slave ships were frequently taken to Freetown and became a part of the Creole community. The region of Sierra Leone became an ideal location for free Africans in the diaspora.

European and American missionaries entered Sierra Leone with distorted ideas of African culture and civilization. Enlightenment thinkers such as David Hume and Thomas Jefferson had a tremendous influence on how Africans were viewed. Since the inception of the slave trade, most slaveholders found legitimacy for slavery from

⁶⁵ Benjamin Rush, "Observations Intended to Favour a Supposition That the Black Color (As It Is Called) of the Negroes Is Derived from the Leprosy," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 4 (1799): 289.

churches and Biblical passages, such as the injunction that servants should obey their masters. This indoctrination was not lost on the enslaved. In a petition to abolish slavery in Massachusetts, the African American petitioners made clear their duty to their masters.

“But since the wise and righteous governor of the universe has permitted our fellow men to make us slaves, we bow in submission to him, and determine to behave in such a manner, as that we may have reason to expect the divine approbation of, and assistance in, our peaceable and lawful attempts to gain our freedom.”⁶⁶

Slaveholders in America argued that slavery was essential to human progress, contending that slavery guaranteed equality for whites by preventing the growth of a class doomed to a life of unskilled labor. Slavery for Blacks, they declared, was the surest guarantee of “perfect equality” among whites, liberating them from the “low menial” jobs such as factory labor and domestic service performed by wage laborers in the North. Africans were reduced to property, so there was no protection from the law, in fact, laws were instituted to protect the institution of slavery. Enlightenment philosopher, John Locke, in his *Second Treatise on Civil Government in 1690*, espoused ideas of natural and property rights, but twenty-seven years earlier (1663) he was hired to write the founding legal document for the colony of Carolina, *Fundamental Constitutions*, decreeing that Christian conversion would not affect slave status and that every freeman of Carolina

⁶⁶ William Cooper Nell, “Petitions of African Americans to Massachusetts General Court to Abolish Slavery, 1773, 1777, *The Colored Patriots of the American Revolution* (Boston 1855), 40-41.

should have absolute power and authority over his Negro slaves.⁶⁷ Locke, like many slaveholders and theorists, were able to come to terms with the contradictory ideas of freedom and slavery by taking away the humanity or physical and mental capacity of African people.

Not all who advocated for the abolition of slavery believed in the equality of races. Notions of African biological and intellectual inferiority were also espoused in abolitionist circles. The belief in African inferiority would be used to justify a program for expatriation. One prominent American who considered the abolition of the slave trade was Thomas Jefferson. Locke's ideas of freedom and natural rights were echoed in Thomas Jefferson's penning of the *Declaration of Independence*. Thomas Jefferson, in spite of his declaration that "all men were created equal," had to struggle with his own contradictions."⁶⁸ Despite advocating ideas of natural rights and freedom, Jefferson spent the latter part of his life attempting to reconcile these ideas with the institution of slavery. Jefferson, an owner of slaves, thought that slavery should be abolished and advocated the abrogation of the slave trade.

Jefferson, like Abraham Lincoln much later, would later state that he thought Africans were inferior to the white race. Jefferson stated, "I advanced it, therefore, as a suspicion only, that the Blacks, whether originally a distinct race, or made distinct by time or circumstances, are inferior to the whites in the endowments of both body and

⁶⁷ John Locke, "The Fundamental Constitution of Carolina," *The Avalon Project: Documents in Law, History and Diplomacy* (Yale Law School, March 1, 1969).

⁶⁸ Thomas Jefferson, *The Declaration of Independence*, National Archives.

mind.”⁶⁹ Jefferson did not believe that freed Negroes should stay in the United States and suggested Africa or lands outside the union as the future home for emancipated slaves. The idea of white superiority and Black inferiority rationalized a paternalistic outlook. Slaveholders took personal responsibility for the physical and moral well-being of the enslaved. These ideas will later affect the relationship between the British, Americans, and Africans of Sierra Leone.

The objective of American missionaries in Sierra Leone was to rescue the Africans from their “heathenism” through education. The relegation of the African to a heathen was necessary to rationalize their paternalist ethos. This disposition led Northern missionaries into the US South after the Civil War. These missionaries entered the South and supplanted an education they believed was more fit for African Americans. Prior to the intervention of missionaries, African Americans educated themselves, valuing self-help and self-determination.⁷⁰ Missionaries entered the South with other intentions in mind. According to Anderson, most Northern missionaries in the South had the preconceived idea that the slave regimes brutal and dehumanizing behavior toward Blacks made uncivilized victims out of the Blacks, and that as a result they needed to be taught the values and rules of civil society. Freedmen were treated as objects.⁷¹

The paternalism that was prevalent among slave owners in the South was imbued in the program of the missionaries headed to Africa. Emily Conroy-Krutz examines

⁶⁹ Thomas Jefferson, “Notes on the State of Virginia,” *Thomas Jefferson Encyclopedia*, last modified February 22, 2018, <http://www.monticello.org/site/research-and-collections/notes-state-virginia>

⁷⁰ James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 5.

⁷¹ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 6.

American international evangelism in her book *Hierarchies of Heathenism*. According to Krutz, early American missionary interests overseas came from the success stories of the British in India.⁷² Founded in 1810, The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM) was among the first American Christian missionary organizations. The ABCFM was inspired by the Second Great Awakening, a Protestant religious revival in the United States from about 1795 to 1835. During this period, many churches made proselytizing the primary function of ministry. This movement is what created a climate of missionary activity which led to American missionaries venturing to Sierra Leone.

The history of missionary work in Africa coincides with the history colonialism. Toyin Falola is one of several authors who details this history. Falola explains that the bond between African and America is attested by the presence of American missions to Africa, similarly to the concept of pan-Negro consciousness, the American Colonization Society, and the Back-to-Africa movement.⁷³ Missionaries occupied a pivotal role in the westernization of Africans in Sierra Leone. During the colonial period American missionary work in Sierra Leone had been a civilizing endeavor, and schools were established to facilitate this process.

The objectives of abolitionists and missionaries were explicitly stated in their writings. Abolitionists believed Africans needed saving from their barbaric or heathen ways. Abolitionists, such as Birney, claimed “that we shall in sending them to Liberia by their instrumentality in civilizing and Christianizing Africa, pay in some measure the debt

⁷² Conroy-Krutz, *Christian Imperialism*, 19.

⁷³ Falola and Njoku, *United States and Africa*, 107.

we owe to that continent for the might trespass we have committed upon her.”⁷⁴ Liberia was a colony founded in 1822 when the American Colonization Society (ACS) began sending free people of color to Liberia. This was two years after the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which preserved a balance of power in Congress between slave and free states. The expansion of slavery in this way did not give African Americans any hope that America would ever see Africans as equals, so colonization became appealing to many African Americans. In a report by the ACS, the organization stated the benefits of colonization by claiming:

The laws of civilized countries will avail something, but tenfold greater will be the influence of a well ordered colony residing in the midst of the people teaching them the arts of life, showing them the value of mental and moral improvement, and convincing them by example, that civilization in all its branches is the spring and the safeguard of human happiness...As a first step, the slave trade must cease, the work of humanity will then be commenced...These two objects, the suppression of the slave trade, and the practical civilization of Africa, may be pursued together.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ James G. Birney, *Letter on Colonization, addressed to the Rev. Thorton J. Mills, Corresponding Secretary of the Kentucky Colonization Society* (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1838), 10.

⁷⁵ American Colonization Society, *American Colonization Society: Extracts from the North American Review, the Reports of the Society, the African Repository, &c* (Maysville, KY: Printed at the Office of “The Maysville Eagle,” 1826), 20.

The paternalistic ideas and motivations for colonization were rooted in the abolitionist movement. It found its manifestation in the ACS, and later offered a blueprint for American missionaries elsewhere in Africa, including Sierra Leone.

The United States relations with Africa were forged through the Atlantic slave trade, and the longing of Africans in America to return home. Since its founding, Sierra Leone had become a place of refuge for Africans rescued from the slave trade, and those free Africans in the Americas. During the eighteenth century, free and enslaved Blacks petitioned to go back to Africa. Christianized Africans in the Americas were preferred by the founders of Freetown, as the prevailing thought was that these Africans would be able to help spread Christianity throughout Africa. As noted above, there had been discussions in America about what to do with the free Black population prior to settlements commencing in Sierra Leone. Some enslaved Africans determined that they would like to return to their homeland. In 1773, enslaved Africans in Massachusetts pleaded to the court to abolish slavery and send them back to the land from which they came. These Africans introduced a petition to the Massachusetts General Court and legislature to abolish slavery. In the petition, they requested that the free Black population, once enough resources were procured, should be allowed to transport themselves back to Africa.⁷⁶ Knowledge of a settlement for free Blacks spread to the Americas and opened the door for an opportunity for formerly enslaved Africans to return to their homeland and escape the injustices of America. Reverend Hopkins was one of the first abolitionists

⁷⁶ Ed. John H. Bracey, Jr. and Manisha Sinha, "Petitions of African Americans to Massachusetts General Court to Abolish Slavery and to the Massachusetts Legislature, *African American Mosaic: A Documentary History from the Slave Trade to the Twenty-First Century*, vol 1 (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004), 55.

on either side of the Atlantic to propose the resettlement of Black freedmen in Africa, advocating emigration both for their own advantage and for the contributions they could make as agents for the evangelization of the African continent. Samuel Hopkins called for the emigration of free Africans in 1777 and worked with the Providence African Society to send free Blacks in Rhode Island to Sierra Leone in 1794. In November 1794 the African Society of Providence dispatched one of its officers, James Mackenzie, to negotiate arrangements for the settlement of American freedmen. The colony's governor and council accorded Mackenzie a sympathetic hearing, and promised farm land and town lots to accommodate twelve families. That no members of the African Society subsequently emigrated to Sierra Leone was principally, if not entirely, due to the refusal of Reverend Samuel Hopkins, a prominent member of the Congregationalist clergy, to furnish the prospective colonists with the character references required by the governor of Sierra Leone.⁷⁷

American missionaries were motivated by the notion of duty to the uncivilized Africans, to bring Christianity to the "heathen," but they also served as instruments to reinforce colonialism and paternalism. The motivation of American missionaries to establish missions in Sierra Leone is significant in attempting to gain an understanding of their impacts on the sociocultural environment. American missionaries were products of their time, in which European and United States imperialism were expanding throughout Africa, the Americas, and around the globe. The Atlantic slave trade, along with the institution of slavery, was under attack and slowly crumbling. By 1808, Britain and the United States banned the Atlantic slave trade, and the nineteenth century witnessed the

⁷⁷ Brooks, "The Providence African," 183.

abolishment of slavery in the British colonies and the United States in 1833 and 1865 respectively. This same period also witnessed the rise of scientific racism, which grew from racist religious and philosophical ideas of African inferiority. Scientific racism sought to explain the advancement of Europeans and the lack of development on the part of Africans. It was a means to justify the superior political and economic position of Europeans relative to Africans. The Church believed that Africans could be redeemed through Christianity, so there were American Church leaders who began to develop missionary programs geared toward Africa.

The abolition of the Atlantic slave trade opened the door to the illegal trade of Africans, which led to the establishment of the first American permanent mission in Sierra Leone. A series of significant events led to this permanent mission being established, and these events concerned the illegal capture and sale of fifty-three Africans and their subsequent release and voyage back to Africa, leading to the establishment of the Mendi Mission. American missionary presence in Sierra Leone started to make permanent inroads with the Mendi Mission in 1841. Thus, the Mendi Mission was a consequence of the events surrounding the Amistad mutiny of 1839. This case is significant to the development of American missions in the region because it opened the door for the presence of the American Missionary Association (AMA) and later the United Brethren in Christ (UBC). Their contribution to the development of mission schools is the central focus of this study. The establishment of the Mendi Mission in 1841, opened the doors for the presence of the American Missionary Association (AMA) and the United Brethren in Christ (UBC).

In 1839, the capture of fifty-three Africans, hailing primarily from Mendeland in modern-day Sierra Leone, is indicative of the struggle to end the capture and sale of African captives even after the official abolishment of the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Before Europeans set sail west and encountered the peoples indigenous to the Americas, European ships were sailing up and down the coast of west Africa. A dependency on the trade of Africans was developed among some of the indigenous Africans. The founding of the colony of Sierra Leone and the fight against the slave trade set the stage for the coming of American missionaries. Trade and settlements were established between Europeans and Africans that set the tone for trade for four hundred years. These Africans are noteworthy for their mutiny on *La Amistad*, their capture and arrest on United States soil, and their subsequent victory in the America court system. After suffering enslavement in Sierra Leone, their sale in Cuba, the *Amistad* captives rose up and self-emancipated themselves. On March 9, 1841 the Supreme Court decided in their favor. They were subsequently released to be returned back to their homeland. The release of the Mendi resulted in the creation of the Amistad Committee, to aid them in their trip back to Africa, which gave birth to the Mendi Mission. The following is an examination of this history.

At a slave auction, Jose Ruiz, a Spanish plantation owner, bought Sengbe and forty-eight others for \$450 each to work on his sugar plantation at Puerto Principe. Pedro Montez, another Spaniard bound for the same port, bought four children, three girls and a boy. On June 26, 1839, the fifty-three Africans were herded on board an American-built schooner, originally called *Friendship*, but changed to the Spanish *La Amistad* when the vessel changed ownership and registration to a Spanish subject. Although Spain had

prohibited the importation of new slaves into her territories since 1820, the two Spanish planters were able to obtain official permits to transport their slaves. *La Amistad* would have had to avoid the British and American Navies, as the West Africa and Africa squadrons, respectively, operated the seas to enforce the abolition of the Atlantic slave trade. They chartered *La Amistad* from Ramon Ferrer, who was both owner and captain. Apart from the fifty-three Africans and their Spanish owners, the schooner carried a crew comprising the master, Ferrer, along with two Black slaves, Antonio (the cabin boy) and Celestino (the cook), as well as two white seamen.⁷⁸ The trip to Puerto Principe usually took three days, but the winds were adverse. Three days out at sea, on June 30, Sengbe used a loose spike he had removed from the deck to unshackle himself and his fellow captives. They had been whipped and maltreated and, at one point, made to believe that they would be killed for supper on arrival. Sengbe armed himself and the others with cane knives found in the cargo hold. He then led them on deck, where they killed Captain Ferrer, and the cook Celestino, and wounded the Spaniard Montez. But Sengbe spared Montez' life together with those of Ruiz and Antonio, the cabin boy. The two white seamen managed to escape from the *Amistad* in a small boat.

Now in command of *La Amistad*, Sengbe ordered the Spaniards to sail in the direction of the rising sun, or eastward towards Africa. At night, however, Montez, who had some experience as a sailor, navigated by the stars and sailed westward, hoping to remain in Cuban waters. But a gale drove the ship northeast along the United States coastline. The schooner followed a zigzag course for two months, during which eight

⁷⁸ Arthur Abraham, *The Amistad Revolt: An Historical Legacy of Sierra Leone and the United States* (Freetown, Sierra Leone: United States Information Service, 1987), 4.

more slaves died of thirst and exposure. Sengbe held command the whole time, forcing the others to conserve food and water, and allotting a full ration only to the four children, He took the smallest portion for himself.⁷⁹

The *Amistad* drifted off Long Island, New York, in late August 1839. Sengbe and others went ashore to trade for food and supplies and to negotiate with local seamen to take them back to Africa. News soon got around about a mysterious ship in the neighborhood with her sails nearly all blown to pieces. It was the long, low, black schooner, the story of which had been appearing in newspapers in previous weeks as the ship cruised northeast along the U.S. coastline. Reports said that Cuban slaves had revolted and killed the crew of a Spanish ship and were roaming the Atlantic as buccaneers. On August 26, the United States survey brig *Washington*, under command of Lt. Commander Thomas R. Gedney, sighted the battered schooner near Culloden Point on the eastern tip of Long Island. The United States Navy and Customs Service had previously issued orders for the capture of the ship; and Commander Gedney seized the *Amistad* and took her in tow to New London, Connecticut, arriving there the following day. Gedney sent a message at once to the United States Marshall at New Haven who, in turn, notified United States District Judge Andrew Judson. The latter was certainly no friend of the Black man, for in 1833 he had prosecuted a Miss Prudence Crandall for admitting Negroes into her school in Canterbury, Connecticut.⁸⁰

Judge Judson held court on board the *Washington* on August 29, in New London harbor, examining the ship's documents and hearing the testimony of Ruiz and Montez,

⁷⁹ Abraham, *The Amistad*, 5.

⁸⁰ Abraham, *The Amistad*, 5.

as well as their urgent request that the ship and all its cargo, including the Africans, be surrendered to the Spanish Consul in Boston. Judson immediately released Ruiz and Montez and ordered that Sengbe and the others be tried for murder and piracy at the next session of the Circuit Court, due to open on September 17 at Hartford, Connecticut. The Africans were consigned to the county jail in New Haven.⁸¹ The abolitionists had to get the Africans' version of events to obtain counsel to prove their innocence before the Circuit Court.

The abolitionists, still fighting to end domestic slavery, held no illusions about the difficulties they were up against. The day following Judge Judson's orders, the abolitionists of New Haven met and wrote to fellow abolitionists in New York to check on the validity of the ship's documents, find an African who could speak the language of the captives and record their own version, and, finally, obtain qualified counsel. At this time, the American anti-slavery movement was in disarray, with divergent views on several issues – political actions, women's rights, American churches and slavery, and the basic nature of American government. The Amistad Case provided a focal point for rallying the disparate ranks of the abolitionists, as they all came out in defense of the captives, fully convinced of their innocence.⁸² Despite the early obstacles the Mendi prisoners faced, the Amistad case concluded with the release of the Mendi prisoners from the Connecticut prison, and an effort was then made to send them back to their home in Africa. They were released from custody and taken to Farmington, an early abolitionist

⁸¹ Abraham, *The Amistad*, 5-6.

⁸² Abraham, *The Amistad*, 7.

town in Connecticut, where they received more formal education for the rest of 1841. The Mendi went through a process of westernization while in the United States.

President Van Buren refused to provide a ship to repatriate the Mendi, prolonging their stay in America. The Amistad Committee assumed complete responsibility for the Africans and began to raise funds to charter a ship back to Sierra Leone. To raise funds, the abolitionists organized a speaking tour in the Northern states, and the Mendi went from town to town, appearing before sympathetic audiences, telling the story of their ordeal, and displaying their knowledge of written and spoken English. By this time, Sengbe had become a public figure in the US, and many were anxious to see the man whom Northern newspapers compared to the heroes of ancient Greece and Rome. Toward the end of the year enough funds had been raised, and the barque *Gentleman* was chartered for \$1,840. The thirty-five surviving Africans would travel to the Colony of Sierra Leone, accompanied by five American missionaries. Among the five were two Black Americans, Mr. and Mrs. Henry Wilson, who had taught at Farmington, and three whites, Rev. and Mrs. William Raymond and Rev. James Steele.⁸³ The Amistad Committee instructed the Americans to start a “Mendi Mission” in Sierra Leone. Before the ship left, Lewis Tappan addressed the passengers, and Sengbe replied on behalf of his fellow Africans. According to the newspapers, many of those present openly wept.⁸⁴ As the *Gentleman* left, the plan of the passengers was for all to keep together and somewhere in the vicinity of Cinque’s town to settle down and commence a new town and then persuade their friends to come and join them, and then to adopt the American dress and

⁸³ Rediker, *The Amistad Rebellion*, 215.

⁸⁴ Abraham, *The Amistad*, 14.

manners. The ship arrived in Freetown in mid-January 1842 amid great excitement. Many of the new arrivals were able to find friends and, in some cases, family members. Sengbe soon learned from recaptured Mende that his own home had been ravaged by war and most of his family wiped out. Thus, the hope to locate the Mendi Mission near Sengbe's town never materialized.

The Mendi Mission, founded in 1841 when the Amistad Africans were restored to Africa, was the major concern of the American Missionary Association, absorbing most of its contributions and effort until the Civil War opened the way for work among the freedmen.⁸⁵ In 1842, American missionaries established an American controlled missionary station in the area. An Amistad Committee was formed to administer and operate what was described as the Mendi Mission. The circumstances surrounding the mission represent a sort of microcosm of the history between whites and Africans during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries in Sierra Leone. In short, Africans were in a position in which their way of life was being altered by foreigners. The Amistads had arrived in Freetown in mid-January 1842, and by 1844 Rev. Raymond had secured a place for a mission station at Komende in the Sherbro region. In 1846, the Amistad Committee evolved into the American Missionary Association (AMA), and in that year the Association took over full financial responsibility for the Mendi Mission.⁸⁶ Due to the work of the Mendi Mission, American missionaries were operating in Sierra Leone since 1841, but it was not until the late nineteenth century and the establishment of the United

⁸⁵ Clara Merritt De Boer, *The Role of Afro-Americans in the Origin and Work of the American Missionary Association: 1839-1877* (Rutgers University The State University of New Jersey, 1973), 94.

⁸⁶ Albert Academy, *History and Background of Albert Academy*, <http://www.albertacademy.org/index.php>.

Brethren in Christ (UBC) that American missions would have a significant impact on the people and education in the region.

The UBC, a US-based evangelical Christian denomination, was familiar with the Mendi Mission, and decided to send their own missionaries to join the crusade to evangelize Africans. On June 1, 1854, in Westerville, Ohio, the deliberation over Africa as a field for mission work commenced.⁸⁷ The leadership expressed its views at a meeting, the minutes from which reveal the racist ideas that shaped the work of the UBC. Africa was perceived to be a place of great suffering and backwardness, and in dire need of the Christian church to redeem it. In their reports from the early meeting, the UBC displayed ignorance and aversion for African culture. The salvation that Africans would have is their renunciation of their former way of life and the acceptance of Christ. The UBC engaged in most of its work in the US before 1855, when the first UBC missionaries set sail for Africa, and Sierra Leone was the first foreign country in which the United Brethren established mission work.⁸⁸ The UBC's primary goal for going to Africa was to evangelize the Africans, and westernization was concomitant with the process of evangelization.⁸⁹

The UBC concluded its meeting with a vote in favor of sending one or more missionaries to Africa, with instructions to find a suitable station for the mission, a place with a high concentration of Africans who spoke the same language.⁹⁰ The UBC

⁸⁷ Rosselot, "The Origin, Growth," 4.

⁸⁸ Mueller, "The Formation of a Mission," 44.

⁸⁹ Rosselot, "The Origin, Growth," 5.

⁹⁰ *Annual Report of the General Secretary of the Foreign Missionary Society of the United Brethren in Christ for the Year Ending March 31, 1915* (Dayton: Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House), 10.

Executive committee appointed William J. Shuey, Daniel K. Flickinger, and Daniel C. Kumler as its first missionaries to Africa. They were given the directive to give the “gospel of Christ” to any people they may come in contact, specifically to Africans who they perceived as heathens. They were convinced that Africans were depraved and that it was their moral duty to bring them the word of Christ:

Resolved, that we are more than ever convinced of the obligations resting upon us as ministers of Him who said, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature,” and also as members of the Christian church, in general, to give the gospel, the whole gospel, to the heathen abroad as well as to our fellow countrymen at home.⁹¹

According to the UBC Board of Missions, it had several objectives for establishing a mission in Sierra Leone, including spreading the gospel of Christ and erecting schools for educating the “heathen”. The UBC expressed its disapproval with indigenous way of life and secret societies.⁹² The concept of Africans as barbarous was not a new phenomenon, in fact, it was the norm among white missionaries, and their primary motivation for being in Africa. Christian missionaries tended to see anyone who was not Christian as “uncivilized.”⁹³

The three appointed missionaries sailed from New York in January, 1855, and after a voyage of thirty-four days, landed in Freetown, on February 26. From there they

⁹¹ Rosselot, “The Origin, Growth,” 5.

⁹² Mueller, “The Formation of a Mission,” 45.

⁹³ Crooks, *A History of the Colony*, 63.

proceeded southward to Bonthe where, while they looked for a suitable place for a mission, were offered quarters by the missionaries of the Mendi Mission, which had been started fourteen years earlier.⁹⁴ With the arrival of UBC missionaries in Freetown, it essentially launched the Frontier and Foreign Missionary Society by the UBC for carrying out mission work for the church.⁹⁵

In March of 1855, the UBC missionaries arrived at the Good Hope mission of the Mendi Mission. Kummler documents their first experience in establishing a mission station in correspondence with the Executive Committee. In this correspondence, the perception that the UBC had of African people can be inferred. The obstacles to evangelization were explicated by Shuey:

Then you have the force of habit and the deeply rooted depravity of the human heart which is inherently opposed to submission to God to contend with at every step in addition to this. Is the work of saving souls in civilized countries a perpetual struggle with the powers of darkness taxing the energies and skill of the minister of Christ? Then it is infinitely more so in heathen lands. Are the obstacles to be overcome in evangelizing America great, and the wickedness of the people fearful? Then are they above

⁹⁴ Rosselot, "The Origin, Growth," 6.

⁹⁵ Mueller, "The Formation of a Mission," 15.

measure greater in heathen Africa and the wickedness of
the land shocking to the pious soul?⁹⁶

Shuey's view of Africa's depraved souls and the most corrupted of humanity helped to justify acts of paternalism. The UBC missionaries' perception of Africans were also tainted by the mythical "curse of Ham" story that was used by Jewish and Christian denominations to rationalize the suffering and backwardness of African people. Kummler asserted,

If such were once the prospects of England that her people
were considered "unfit for slaves" and they have risen to be
the most enlightened and powerful nation on the face of the
globe what may not the Christian missionary hope for the
sons of Ham?⁹⁷

The "curse of Ham" purports that because of Ham's transgressions against Noah, God cursed him and his descendants. Religion, science, and philosophy were used during this period to rationalize white domination of Africans.

African culture was under constant threat and attack by missionaries. Despite not having a grasp of the local languages and customs, the UBC missionaries erroneously perceived the Africans as devil worshippers. Kummler writes:

⁹⁶ W.J. Shuey, D.K. Flickinger and Daniel C. Kummler, "Report of D.C. Kummler, D.K. Flickinger and W.J. Shuey to The Board of Missions The United Brethren in Christ, May 17, 1855." 2.

⁹⁷ Shuey, "Report of D.C. Kummler", 2.

On the east bank of the river near the falls is the “Purrow” or “Devil Bush”, a kind of heathen secret society and in which sacrifices are made to the Devil, he being the god of the country and is feared by all the inhabitants as their enemy or friend as he is pleased or displeased by them. The African is most emphatically a Devil worshipper.⁹⁸

Based on the reports of unsuitable conditions in Liberia, the UBC missionaries deemed it most feasible to set up a station in Sierra Leone under the auspices of the American Missionary Association, since they were already established, and that it would be less of a strain on the Mission financially.⁹⁹ There was another observation by the UBC missionaries that at the time would also shape the focus of the UBC in Sierra Leone.

Shuey stated:

the only permanent hope of Africa seems to lay in the education and conversion of the children. The preaching of the gospel without this will certainly fail from the simple fact that it cannot be got properly before the people without the aid of the written word. It should be our aim as soon as practicable to gather a suitable number of the most promising children, intellectually and morally, into a mission family and school to be under the exclusive raising

⁹⁸ Shuey, “Report of D.C. Kummler”, 6.

⁹⁹ Shuey, “Report of D.C. Kummler”, 11.

and support of the Church so as to keep them from coming in contact with heathen practices and influences.¹⁰⁰

In these early UBC reports, there is evidence of that the racist attitude prevalent in America affected the approach to developing schools in Africa:

Resolved, that we place but little confidence in the building up of missionary schools for the purpose of teaching the heathen a foreign language and a foreign literature; yet we advise our missionaries as soon as practicable to erect schools for the purpose of teaching the heathen a more perfect knowledge of their own language, and the ordinary science pertaining to civilized life. And also by the aid of their schools let the scriptures be given to the heathen in the language wherein they were born, as soon as possible.¹⁰¹

Shuey advocated physical, mental, and moral training in order to save the children from “heathenism.” This was the impetus behind the growth of missionary schools in Sierra Leone.¹⁰² Sierra Leone was under the authority of the British, and there is no evidence that the United States had any intention of colonization. The UBC’s intentions were to Christianize and develop Africans, but their perception of the capabilities of Africans was still affected by racist ideology. For example, the missionaries wrote:

¹⁰⁰ Shuey, “Report of D.C. Kummler”, 17.

¹⁰¹ Rosselot, “The Origin, Growth,” 5.

¹⁰² Shuey, “Report of D.C. Kummler”, 17.

Resolved, that while we believe it will be many years before our missionaries in the heathen countries become self-supporting, yet we will labor to produce this result as soon as possible.

American missionaries were faced with several obstacles that almost destroyed the mission, e.g., economics, rebellion, and disease, but they were able to preserve and gain permanency in Sierra Leone. Through their perseverance, American missionaries established schools that were to play a role in the education of many of the leaders in the movement for independence. Sierra Leone may have been a colony of Great Britain, but missionaries from America would play a major role in the colony's development. Yet, in another way, these missions became training facilities for colonial administrators, eventually giving way to neocolonial rulers.

CHAPTER 4: PATERNALISM AND AMERICAN MISSIONARIES

We have two schools here, regular preaching, prayer temperance and singing meetings weekly all of which are interesting...At Boom Falls, the first and great object is, to give the gospel to the people. In the schools this is the first lesson.¹⁰³

Daniel Flickinger Wilberforce was born on Sherbro Island on February 24, 1857. Mckee wrote, “his parents had been converted to Christianity before he was born, so that he is not, and never has been anything approximating a heathen.”¹⁰⁴ Wilberforce was named after Rev. Daniel Flickinger while working as a missionary in Africa. Wilberforce’s story is representative of the effect of missionary work in Sierra Leone. Wilberforce was sent to America where he was educated, later returning as a missionary to the place of his birth. An examination of Wilberforce’s writings provides insights into the impact that his life experiences had on his African consciousness. Wilberforce, for example, viewed the presence of whites in Africa as positive for the continent. Wilberforce asserted, “a wonderful change has taken place; the sons of those who robbed and despoiled Africa, and entailed untold miseries upon her, are now presenting to her the true panacea for these woes – the Gospel.”¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ “Mendi Mission,” *The American Missionary Association Magazine* 1, no. 1 (January 1857), 2.

¹⁰⁴ Daniel F. Wilberforce, *A Native African’s Account of His Country and People* (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1886), 3.

¹⁰⁵ Wilberforce, *A Native African’s*, 7.

This chapter examines early American missionary activity and the development of American mission schools. Until about 1855, schools in Sierra Leone were in Freetown and the surrounding villages of Gloucester, Charlotte, York and Kent, and the Western area in general. It was the American missions that began the expansion of education into the hinterlands. The UBC was the central focus of American missionary development in the region, because of its successes and prevalence in Sierra Leone. The UBC became the dominant American mission station in Sierra Leone in the latter part of the nineteenth century. The educational developments in the hinterlands were almost exclusively UBC achievements, as the UBC became the dominant agent of education and evangelization in that area from its first arrival in 1855.¹⁰⁶ The opportunity was a given for the UBC, with Freetown and the surrounding areas being dominated by the CMS, to begin working with a population that was neglected for decades.

Initially, the UBC placed little effort in the building of mission schools, but soon realized the importance of setting up schools to acculturate African children. They recognized that education and evangelization were linked, and placing Sierra Leonean children in school environment was conducive to their Christianization.¹⁰⁷ As a result, missionaries began to emphasize education and with financial support from the government and the American Mission Association, the UBC was able to set up mission schools throughout the colony and protectorate.

For the UBC, finding a suitable location proved arduous early on, but ultimately the site of Shenge was finally secured as the starting point for the mission. In the

¹⁰⁶ Sawyerr, "The Development of Education," 38.

¹⁰⁷ Mueller, "Formation of a Mission," 64-65.

meantime, the three missionaries initially sent out had all returned home, with only one of them, Rev. Flickinger, returning to the field again. He was accompanied on his return in 1857 by W.B. Will and J.K. Billheimer. They were able to come to terms with the Sherbro chief, and in March 1857, Shenge became the first mission station of the United Brethren in Sierra Leone.¹⁰⁸ Shortly thereafter, Rev. Billheimer was the only one of his company left. The others had been compelled to return to America on account of their health. Rev. Billheimer, having been alone for some time, felt the need of a helper. He succeeded in securing the services of J.A. Williams, an African, who had received his training in a mission school in Freetown, and who was destined to become a very valuable helper and worker for the mission. The beginnings of the school must have been very difficult, for the records available do not give any definite number of attendants for many years after the work began. One reason given was the health of missionaries and the heavy amount of work. Another reason given for early difficulties was that the Africans probably did not understand what was being done for them.¹⁰⁹

American missionary work was a multicultural endeavor that included Whites, African Americans, and indigenous Africans. All three groups contributed significantly to the building of mission stations and schools in Sierra Leone. Only a few months after Mr. Williams became assistant in the work at Shenge, Rev. Billheimer was compelled to return to America for a few months to recuperate, and Mr. Williams was left in charge. Rev. Billheimer returned to Africa on February 19, 1860. He was joined on November 23 of the same year by Charles O. Wilson, who was taken seriously ill one month after his

¹⁰⁸ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 6.

¹⁰⁹ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 6-7.

arrival and, after a month of sickness, was compelled to return to America, where he continued to suffer from the results of the fever.¹¹⁰ Rev. Billheimer was able to remain for only a year and seven months and in September, 1861, returned to America again to regain his health. Mr. Williams was again left alone to teach the school and carry on the work of the mission.¹¹¹

Rev. Billheimer remained in America one year. During that time he was married, and in October, 1862, he and Mrs. Billheimer sailed for Africa, reaching Shenge the following month. They found much to do and many hindrances, the biggest among them being the unhealthy climate. Rev. Billheimer had scarcely gone to work before he was overcome by fever which incapacitated him. Mrs. Billheimer was also attacked with fever, and there were few days when they were both able to be up and at work. They strove hard to have regular prayers, morning and evening, at the mission, to teach a day school, a Sabbath school, and to have preaching services every Sabbath. Ultimately their strength failed them.¹¹²

Rev. O. Hadley and his wife were appointed to replace the Billheimers. The strain of the work was so heavy upon Rev. Hadley and the effects of the climate so baneful that his health broke, and he was compelled to return to America. For the fourth time, Rev. Williams was left alone to carry on the school and the general work of the mission. Mr.

¹¹⁰ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 7.

¹¹¹ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 7-8.

¹¹² W.J. Shuey, *History of the Sherbro Mission, West Africa* (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1874), 74-75.

and Mrs. Hadley arrived at their home in America on April 17, 1869, and eleven days later Mr. Hadley died.¹¹³

The Mission Board had been laboring for fifteen years to gain a foothold for work in Africa, and now the only tangible evidence of these years of effort was one station with a struggling little school and church left in the sole charge of an African who was poorly equipped in health to carry on the work. The Mission Board in its next meeting passed the following resolution: Resolved, that we will give our mission-property in Africa, with the missionary on the ground, Rev. J.A. Williams, into the care of the American Missionary Association until May, 1873; also, that we will give what is needed to support Mr. Williams for the period named.¹¹⁴

While negotiations with the American Missionary Association were being conducted, word was received by the General Secretary of the Mission Board that Rev. Williams had died on September 25, 1870. This left the United Brethren Mission Board with no representative in Africa. Unwilling that such should be the case, the Board appointed Rev. J. Gomer, an African American recommended by the General Secretary of the Board.¹¹⁵ The newly appointed missionaries, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Gomer, started their journey to Africa on November 8, 1870, and reached Shenge on February 13, 1871. Gomer opened a school in the chief's *barrie* (an open court space with a thatched roof) in the town, but later moved it to the mission. Thomas Caulker had been employed to teach

¹¹³ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 10.

¹¹⁴ D.K. Flickinger, *Our Missionary Work from 1853-1889* (Dayton, Ohio: United Brethren Publishing House, 1889), 88.

¹¹⁵ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 11.

for Mr. Gomer.¹¹⁶ J.A. Evans, an African American, and Mrs. Hadley were appointed and sent out in October 1871. Later, the Rev. D.K. Flickinger accompanied them to New York, and while there at a hotel he met a young African named Daniel Flickinger Wilberforce who was destined later to fill an important place in the work of the mission. He had been partly educated in the mission in Africa, where he had received his name, and had accompanied the sick missionaries to America as a servant and nurse. Rev. Flickinger took him to Dayton, Ohio, and put him in school, where he distinguished himself as a scholar and graduated from high school in 1878.¹¹⁷ The growing interest in education created an urgent need for the training of indigenous Africans to become teachers in the schools. The Mission Board at its annual meeting in May, 1884, took the following action:

Resolved, that when five thousand dollars have been contributed, the Executive Committee may commence the founding of a school at some eligible location on the West Coast of Africa, for the training of teachers and missionaries there.¹¹⁸

It is one of the great ironies of African American history that the ideological and programmatic challenge to the ex-slaves conception of universal schooling and social progress was conceived and nurtured by a Yankee, Samuel Chapman Armstrong, and a former slave, Booker T. Washington. The ex-slaves struggled to develop a social and

¹¹⁶ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 13.

¹¹⁷ Rosselot, "Origin, Growth," 15.

¹¹⁸ *Thirty-First Annual Report of the Foreign Mission Board of the United Brethren in Christ* (1884), 12.

educational ideology singularly appropriate to their defense of emancipation and one that challenged the social power of the planter regime. Armstrong developed a pedagogy and ideology designed to avoid such confrontations and to maintain within the South a social consensus that did not challenge traditional inequalities of wealth and power. Washington founded Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in 1881, and by the turn of the century, the “Hampton-Tuskegee Idea” represented the ideological antithesis of the educational and social movement begun by ex-slaves.¹¹⁹

The traditional emphasis on Hampton as a trade or technical school has obscured the fact that it was founded and maintained as a normal school and that its mission was the training of common schoolteachers for the South’s Black educational system. The Hampton-Tuskegee curriculum was not centered on trade or agricultural training; it was centered on the training of teachers. A condition for admission to Hampton was the “intention to remain through the whole course and become a teacher.”¹²⁰

Unlike Hampton’s concern with teacher training, the late nineteenth-century industrial education movement did not include the training of teachers but instead stressed three basic types of vocational training: applied science and technology, trade schools, and schools consisting of manual instruction. At Hampton, manual labor formed the core of the teacher training program and was included in every aspect of both curricular and extracurricular activities. Hampton’s manual labor routine was designed partly to teach students steady work habits, practical knowledge, and Christian morals.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 33.

¹²⁰ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 34.

¹²¹ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 35.

Most importantly, Armstrong viewed industrial education primarily as an ideological force that would provide instruction suitable for African Americans adjusting to subordinate social roles in the emergent New South.

Hampton's ideological and pedagogical framework was derived mainly from the racial, political, and economic views of Armstrong, who served as principal from 1868 until his death in 1893, and from Hollis Burke Frissell, the vice-principal and chaplain from 1880 to 1893, who succeeded Armstrong and served as principal until 1917.

Armstrong, with the help of the American Missionary Association, had founded Hampton Institute in April 1868.¹²²

It was considered to be an import part of mission work in Africa to teach people how to farm, how to build houses and live properly in them, how to raise, cook and eat food, how to make and wear their clothes, and how to take care of their bodies as well as their souls. Missionaries wanted to show Africans how to be honorable, make an honest living, how to care for themselves, and how to act toward each other and to the Lord. It was felt that to be civilized and Christianized, they must be helped out of the small, dirty, cheerless mud huts in which they lived. Clothes must be put upon their naked bodies. They must eat their food from tables instead of sitting on the ground and taking it with their hands out of the same vessel in which it was cooked. They must learn to sleep upon some kind of decent bed rather than upon mats on the ground. According to Rosselot,

¹²² Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 36.

“this statement of aim was an admirable one, but how successful the methods of attaining it were remains to be seen in the development of this history.¹²³

Mr. D.F. Wilberforce, to whom reference has already been made, and his wife arrived in Shenge in December, 1878, to assist Mr. Gomer. The report of the Board in 1879 states that Mr. Gomer was to superintend the general mission work and the industrial school, while Mr. Wilberforce was to have charge of the other schools.¹²⁴ The mission, accordingly, launched out to obtain new sites for permanent mission stations, and in 1881, during a visit of the General Secretary of the Board to the field, the following sites, each containing a hundred and sixty acres, were obtained: Rembee, Mambo, Mofuss, Tongkolah, and Kooloong. One of the objectives stated for obtaining this land was to teach the mission boys how to cultivate it properly, and to train them, as well as the girls, to habits of industry that they might become helpers in enlightening their own people.¹²⁵

No obligation of any kind was placed on the parents of the children for their schooling, except that those who could clothe their children would do so, and the others were taken in by the teachers or mission and clothed and fed. The practice was to allow the person or persons to name the child for whom support was given. Some of the names give were: Joseph Young, Annie C. Kreider, Jennie Rhodes, Priscilla Brandt, Jacob Markwood, Mary Sowers, George Keister, William J. Shuey, Preston Edwards, among many others. This explains how these African children received their American names.¹²⁶

¹²³ Rosselot, “Origin, Growth,” 19.

¹²⁴ Rosselot, “Origin, Growth,” 17.

¹²⁵ Rosselot, “Origin, Growth,” 19.

¹²⁶ Rosselot, “Origin, Growth,” 21.

Changing the names of Africans may seem innocuous, but of course it can have a devastating impact on identity and contributes to the destruction of indigenous culture.

In 1933, Carter G. Woodson's work, *The Mis-education of the Negro*, was published.

Woodson's first statement is telling: "The 'educated Negroes' have the attitude of contempt toward their own people because in their own as well as in their mixed schools, Negroes are taught to admire the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin and the Teuton, and to despise the African."¹²⁷ These are the words of someone who had received high academic honors from Harvard University. Western education was taught with the premise that European or White civilization represents the most advanced society that had every existed, and that Africans had not developed the kind of thinking and institutions that would put them above the category of barbarous. This standard of education has altered the worldview of African people to the point that their views – internalized inferiority – are indistinguishable from the very racists themselves. This is what Woodson was postulating in the first chapter of his book. Woodson goes on to say, "even schools for Negroes, then, are places where they must be convinced of their inferiority."¹²⁸

The education that Africans received under a system of White rule, clearly serves the purpose of White domination. In order to maintain their position of power, the historical narrative cannot challenge the assumption of white superiority. As Agyekum has argued:

¹²⁷ Carter G. Woodson, *The Mis-education of the Negro* (Chicago: The Associated Publishers, 1933), 1.

¹²⁸ Woodson, *The Mis-Education*, 2.

White supremacy, the global system designed to maintain the domination of one racial group, “whites”, over all people considered “non-white”, has obscured and distorted many historical facts and events. Through its humanities and sciences, religion and philosophy, Western academia has consigned the Africoid race to the cellar of humanity.¹²⁹

White power is facilitated by its control of language and labeling. As Wilson has also noted, “labeling and defining behavior is a part of a power-rationing process in which certain segments of a society are granted exclusive legitimacy and power to explain, diagnose and treat certain states of consciousness and forms of behavior not granted to others.”¹³⁰

In Sierra Leone, during the early twentieth century, the UBC founded the Albert Academy School for Boys to serve as the flagship for the various schools established in Sierra Leone throughout the latter part of the nineteenth century. Based out of the United States, the UBC believed that part of its mission was to evangelize African people, who were in their view the most downtrodden and uncivilized people in the world. If anyone needed to be saved, it was the people of Africa.

¹²⁹ S.K. Damani Agyekum, *Distorted Truths: The Bastardization of Afrikan Cosmology* (New York: Afrikan World InfoSystems, 2012), 25.

¹³⁰ Amos N. Wilson, *The Falsification of Afrikan Consciousness: Eurocentric History, Psychiatry and the Politics of White Supremacy* (New York: Afrikan World InfoSystems, 2002), 105.

The Albert Academy became a significant agent in the liberation movement in Sierra Leone, having educated several key actors in the ending of British colonial rule. Although there were several factors that led to independence, such as a bolstering economy and a growing middle class, the American missions were key in creating an atmosphere that led to the end of colonial rule in Sierra Leone. In *The Formation of a Mission Church in Africa Culture*, Howard Mueller came to this same conclusion, asserting that the UBC contributed to the destruction of colonialism in Sierra Leone. Mueller insists that by breaking down tribalism in educational settings may have been the impetus for the nationalist fervor that brought about the country's independence in 1961.¹³¹

My research has revealed that colonial education during the nineteenth century differed from the twentieth century as a result of increased government involvement in the latter part of the century. This is not to imply that governmental support of education was nonexistent during the nineteenth century, but that it did not play a major part in the development of education until perhaps 1879 which, according to Sawyerr, was an important turning point in Sierra Leone's educational policy.¹³² Loosening the grip of the missions over Sierra Leonean education perhaps provided the opportunity for Sierra Leoneans to determine their own destiny. The Albert Academy School for Boys benefited from these changes taking place, as many of their pupils played significant roles in the movement for independence.

¹³¹ Mueller, "Formation of a Mission," 205.

¹³² Sawyerr, "The Development of Education," 55.

Sierra Leoneans, educated through the British system, were not only turning away from traditional African culture, but they also expressed an antipathy to industrial education. The gentry and learned looked down on labor, and viewed it as uncultured and degrading. In *Education in Sierra Leone*, D.L. Sumner asserted that industrial education was detested because of the traditions that English missionaries brought with them in the early part of the nineteenth century. Under the direction of English missionaries, education in Sierra Leone became the social luxury of the elite.¹³³

The development of nationalist fervor in Sierra Leone has long been attributed to one school in particular: the Albert Academy School for Boys. The Albert Academy, a school founded by the United Brethren in Christ in 1904, and its development throughout the colonial period represented a change from nineteenth schools. The Albert Academy produced some of Sierra Leone's greatest intellectuals and political leaders that helped changed the course of history for Sierra Leone.

The UBC's effect on the education of Sierra Leoneans had been exemplified through mission education. Initially, UBC schools were set up to educate Sierra Leoneans in Christianity and prepare them for mission work. UBC schools differed from CMS and other British mission schools in their focus on industrial education. Industrial education was unpopular in the British mission schools as Sierra Leoneans preferred instruction that would prepare them for more elite and professional careers. Later their goals expanded, and included an education that reflected the changes that were taking place in society. This impact was felt through the country's leadership, as the first Prime

¹³³ Sumner, *Education in Sierra Leone*, 122.

Minister and President of independent Sierra Leone, were educated at the Albert Academy.

The school's challenge to traditional African culture had an effect on many of the schools pupils. Mueller argued, "almost all graduates of the Albert Academy, and many who only attended primary school, agreed that education was an influence in decreasing tribalism."¹³⁴ Many other men and women educated in UBC schools later held positions in civil service, ministry, education, and many other professional jobs. In the next chapter, this research essay will examine the development of the Albert Academy.

¹³⁴ Mueller, "Formation of a Mission Church in African Culture," 104.

CHAPTER 5: THE TUSKEGEE MODEL AND THE ALBERT ACADEMY SCHOOL FOR BOYS

In 1904, the UBC founded the Albert Academy School for Boys in Freetown, with the stated purpose of Christianizing the Africans, circumventing tribalism, and preparing Sierra Leoneans to be self governing. The Albert Academy was the result of a continuing struggle to westernize indigenous children in the Protectorate. The UBC believed that a central school in the colony was the most viable option for educating Africans without so-called “tribal interference”. The development of a central mission station in Freetown was crucial in bringing more indigenous Africans into mainstream society; i.e. colonial society. Additionally, it was essential in training the leadership for the independence movement in Sierra Leone.

This chapter is an examination of the influence and impact of the Albert Academy School for Boys and its connection, in its founding, to the earlier American-based Tuskegee model of education. The fact that colonial or missionary education was becoming imperative for social mobility, made westernization and evangelization inevitable. Albert Academy became the flag ship school for the UBC’s other schools. Albert Academy implemented a program similar to the Hampton-Tuskegee model of education used in the US South to educate emancipated African Americans. The school provided practical courses as well as the usual academic offering for graduates of the UBC elementary schools in the protectorate. The mission of the school was to educate

Sierra Leoneans and send them back to their communities to facilitate the assimilation of their countrymen in the same way the normative schools of America were training students to go back to their communities as teachers.

Booker T. Washington and Samuel Armstrong were instrumental in the spreading of a form of education they believed was practical for African Americans. In 1868, the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute was born. Its founder, Samuel Armstrong, introduced a pedagogy and social ideology of a different foundation and character.¹³⁵ An effort was made by those who felt they knew what was best for the formerly enslaved, irrespective of systems that were being created through their own agency. James Anderson, in his book *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, examines this transition from ex-slaves controlling their education to northern missionaries supplanting their education with industrial and normative schools.¹³⁶ Anderson explains:

The ex-slaves struggled to develop a social and educational ideology singularly appropriate to their defense of emancipation and one that challenged the social power of the planter regime. Armstrong developed a pedagogy and ideology designed to avoid such confrontations and to maintain within the South a social consensus that did not challenge traditional inequalities of wealth and power.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 33.

¹³⁶ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 33.

¹³⁷ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 33.

Anderson's research details how ex-slaves formed systems of education compatible with their resistance to racial and class subordination. This was undermined due to the paternalistic nature of slavery. Racially based ideas of African inferiority would impact the development of African Americans. Missionary societies such as the AMA helped set up schools in America, and were active in Sierra Leone. The AMA, was involved in the founding of the Hampton Institute, and was integral in taking the American model to Sierra Leone.¹³⁸

Booker T. Washington was not involved with the establishment and development of the Albert Academy, but it would be useful to look at the ideas of Booker T. Washington and his objectives for building the Tuskegee Institute. Washington believed that education should address the immediate needs of the community. The liberal education did not address the needs of impoverished African Americans. American missionary sentiment reflected this attitude. Washington argued that education in theoretical and practical agriculture should have been made a priority over studies in law, theology, Hebrew and Greek. He argued that African Americans were "educated in everything else except the very subject that they should know most about."¹³⁹

Before the arrival of the UBC, American missionaries struggled to maintain mission stations. The UBC experienced its struggles but were able to sustain missions throughout the hinterland, and it constructed its educational foundation in Sierra Leone

¹³⁸ Anderson, *The Education of Blacks*, 36.

¹³⁹ Booker T. Washington, *The Future of the American Negro* (Boston: Small, Maynard & Company, 1907), 49-50.

based on its earlier work in the US. UBC resolutions on mission work in Africa clearly demonstrate the education these American missionaries were aiming for:

Resolved, that we place but little confidence in the building up of missionary schools for the purpose of teaching the heathen a foreign language and a foreign literature; yet we advise our missionaries as soon as practicable to erect schools for the purpose of teaching the heathen a more perfect knowledge of their own language, and the ordinary science pertaining to civilized life. And also by the aid of their schools let the scriptures be given to the heathen in the language wherein they were born, as soon as possible.

Resolve, that while we believe it will be many years before our missionaries in the heathen countries become self-supporting, yet we will labor to produce this result as soon as possible.¹⁴⁰

This sheds some light into the purpose and objectives of the UBC in Africa. The American Missions, similar to the British, were to take on a sort of paternalistic role for those they deemed unfit to develop themselves. The resolution unequivocally points out that Africans were heathens and that they must assist Africans in becoming Christian and civilized people.

¹⁴⁰ Rosselot, "The Origin, Growth," 5-6.

As noted in an earlier chapter, in 1855 UBC missionaries arrived in Freetown, and this was also the point at which the Frontier and Foreign Missionary Society was formed for carrying out mission work for the church.¹⁴¹ From 1855 to 1870, the UBC struggled with proselytizing efforts. As Rosselot has asserted:

The Mission Board had been laboring for fifteen years to get a foothold for work in Africa, and now the only tangible evidence of these years of effort was one station with a struggling little school and church left in the sole charge of a native who was poorly equipped in health to carry on the work.¹⁴²

There were discussions amongst UBC Board members on whether they should turn over their work to the AMA or perhaps even walk away from the work. The UBC, however, continued to carry on with their work, despite after a fifteen-year effort the only accomplishments being the mission building and the few children who had gone to school sporadically.¹⁴³

Initially, the UBC placed little effort in the building of mission schools, but soon realized the importance of setting up schools to isolate the children from their families and so called “tribes”, which in this case were Temne, Limba, Kono, Kissi, Sherbro, and especially Mende. In time, these actions would to some extent diminish the cultural influence that ethnicity had on their students. An emphasis began to be placed on

¹⁴² Rosselot, “The Origin, Growth,” 10-11.

¹⁴³ Rosselot, “The Origin, Growth,” 11-12.

education once the missionaries recognized that subjecting African children to a school environment was conducive to their Christianization.¹⁴⁴ With financial support from the government and the AMA, the UBC began to set up mission schools throughout the colony and protectorate. An 1881 Board of Missions report shows that there was rapid growth of the schools. At this time, the UBC had four schools with 206 children enrolled, with an average attendance of 136.¹⁴⁵

Many Sierra Leoneans sought a Western education for financial reasons. According to Mueller, colonialism was a motivating force for acquiring a Western education, because of the desire to acquire positions in government, business, or the mission.¹⁴⁶ Education in Sierra Leone had been functioning since the early part of the eighteenth century, with a system modeled after the English educational policy.¹⁴⁷ During the latter part of the nineteenth century this model was rejected by some Sierra Leonean leaders because of its elitist characteristics. In 1845, Governor Ferguson had claimed that the aim of secondary schools were to be a means of evolving a bourgeois class.¹⁴⁸ The Sierra Leonean educated in the British schools tended to look down on the tribal way of life, turning their back on their traditions. This gave rise to a feeling of antipathy towards Western education.

At the turn of the twentieth century, the importance of industrial education had not gained any momentum. But the government was inclined to give funding to schools

¹⁴⁴ Mueller, "Formation of a Mission Church in Africa," 102

¹⁴⁵ *Twenty-Eight Annual Report of the Board of Missions of the United Brethren in Christ, 1881*, 31-32.

¹⁴⁶ Mueller, "Formation of a Mission Church in African Culture," 102.

¹⁴⁷ Sumner, *Education in Sierra Leone*, 136.

¹⁴⁸ Sumner, *Education in Sierra Leone*, 122.

that had a strong industrial character. The UBC were at an advantage because their missions had always had a strong industrial emphasis; in 1857, the UBC opened a warehouse in Shenge to secure Western products for the mission as well as the local community.¹⁴⁹ The UBC's preference for industrialization was reflected in the pedagogy of the mission schools.

The UBC was very active in the colony and hinterlands of Sierra Leone during the latter part of the nineteenth century, establishing schools in both places. Prior to the settlement of the UBC, Missions schools were primarily in the colony. Sumner states:

the first large-scale penetration of the hinterland of Sierra Leone by religious and educational influences was on the advent of the United Brethren in Christ Mission, now known as the Evangelical United Brethren Mission.”¹⁵⁰

During the 1880s, the UBC began to institute educational training that would embrace and foster industrial learning due to the belief that, as Mueller draws attention to, that a union between industry and education would destroy the laziness associated with African culture.¹⁵¹ The UBC mission schools had differed from the educational system that had developed in the Colony, where industrial training was quickly fading away and looked down upon.

Industrial education, under the UBC, entailed boarders in the boarding schools working four hours a day in the farm and gardens outside of school hours, and boarders

¹⁴⁹ Mueller, “Formation of a Mission Church in African Culture,” 49.

¹⁵⁰ Sumner, *Education in Sierra Leone*, 116.

¹⁵¹ Mueller, “Formation of a Mission Church in African Culture,” 50.

and day pupils doing manual training work during school hours.¹⁵² The UBC schools were private institutions that relied on the tuition, donations, and government funding. Through industrial training, the UBC attempted to make their schools self-sufficient. Farming became another way that the mission schools supported themselves. Mueller explains, “for practical and financial reasons, industrial training remained an integral part of the educational system, a feature which made the United Brethren unique among the missions in Sierra Leone.”¹⁵³

When the Albert Academy was founded in 1904, its purpose was to train young men for service of the ministry as well as in the schools of the mission. This was no different from earlier established mission schools, but the Albert Academy’s emphasis on craft work marked a divergence from the British Missionary schools.¹⁵⁴ Sawyerr explained that the Albert Academy was not just another secondary school based on the century-old tradition of education but one with a different emphasis. The aim was to give advanced training to those who were being prepared to teach, preach or engage in other mission work.¹⁵⁵

As mentioned earlier, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the colonial government had a very strong influence on educational policies. The Albert Academy was founded at the turn of the century, at the very time when these changes were taking place. Formally founded on October 4, 1904, through the joint effort of the

¹⁵² Sumner, *Education in Sierra Leone*, 116-117.

¹⁵³ Mueller, “Formation of a Mission Church in African Culture,” 51.

¹⁵⁴ Sawyerr, “Development of Education,” 359.

¹⁵⁵ Sawyerr, “Development of Education,” 61.

UBC's Foreign Mission Society and the Women's Mission Association, the Albert Academy started with a staff consisting of one principal, a teacher, and five students.

In 1905, Rev. J.R. King, Superintendent of the UBC Mission in West Africa, stressed the importance of education in an annual report. He asserted that education was a strong arm of missionary work, and any progress in the school meant greater success in all departments of the mission.¹⁵⁶ In the previous two years, Rev. King urged the Board of Missions to build another school in Sierra Leone. The Board of Missions responded to Rev. King's plea, and in 1903, the plans for establishing a training school were underway. The aim and purpose of the Board of Missions in establishing a school was to train young men for the Christian ministry and for teaching in the Mission schools, which were being established throughout the Protectorate. The Protectorate was proclaimed on August 31, 1896, and encompassed the hinterlands of Sierra Leone. In 1898, in what is known as the Hut Tax War, an insurrection occurred in the Protectorate, which led to the death of many missionaries and the destruction of a lot of property. This would later be used as a pretext to establish the new school in the Colony, where the safety of the missions was more ensured.

The Mission Council in Sierra Leone decided upon Freetown as a suitable location for the school, which was accepted by the Mission Board.¹⁵⁷ A temporary building was secured on East Street, and on October 4, 1904, the Albert Academy was established by the UBC, with an enrollment of five students. Raymond P. Dougherty was

¹⁵⁶ Sumner, *Education in Sierra Leone*, 136.

¹⁵⁷ Hartford Lillian Ressler, *History of the Woman's Association of the United Brethren of Christ 1910* (University of Michigan Library, 2007); 36.

name the Principal and Edwin M. Hursh served as Vice-Principal. On January 16, 1905, the school was publicly opened by Leslie Probyn, an administrator for the British Empire and Governor of Sierra Leone.¹⁵⁸ Probyn was not enthusiastic about opening up another school in Freetown. He believed that it was excessive, and hoped that the school would be transferred to the Protectorate.¹⁵⁹ During that time, there were many verbal attacks on the school, some which were published in the “Weekly News.” Rev. King felt a need to clarify the schools objective to those opposed to its existence. The “Weekly News” published Rev. King’s statement on January 28, 1905, proclaiming that Freetown was the ideal location for the school for four reasons: one, because of the uprising in which UBC lost much of their property, records, and accounts; two, transportation is easier since the railway now passes through the occupied territory; three, the establishment of Post Offices over the Protectorate has facilitated communication and made Freetown the best place from which to administer their work; four, the bringing together of the Sherbro, Mende, and Temne tribes in one school within the territory of one of these tribes is impractical, but it can possibly be achieved in Freetown. Rev. King believed that their students would receive more culture by their contact with life in Freetown.¹⁶⁰

The temporary building had served its purpose, but the call for a permanent and modern school building was put out. The call was answered by a Ralph Leininger of

¹⁵⁸ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus of Albert Academy, 1919-1920*, New Series vol. 5 & 6 (Freetown: Albert academy Press, 1919); 6, 2280-4-12:05, Church of United Brethren in Christ, Foreign Missionary Society, General Commission on Archives and History, Drew University.

¹⁵⁹ Richard E. Caulker, *Albert Academy: School for Boys 1904-1954* (Dayton, Ohio: Department of World Missions The Evangelical United Brethren Church); 10, 2287-3-8:12, The Evangelical United Brethren Church, Board of Missions, General Commission on Archives and History, Drew University.

¹⁶⁰ Caulker, *Albert Academy*, 7-8.

Brooklyn, NY, with a donation of \$8,000. Leininger requested that the new building be named in honor of his cousin Rev. Ira E. Albert, a United Brethren Missionary, who was drowned in the Bompeh River, Sierra Leone, on November 6, 1902. Contributions from the Woman's Missionary Association and the Board help secure enough funds to acquire the land and erect the new building. A suitable site was secured, consisting of five acres on Circular Road at a cost of \$2,000.¹⁶¹ On January 14, 1907, the corner stone was laid by G.B. Haddon-Smith, the acting Governor of Sierra Leone. On January 11, 1908, the new building was dedicated by Rev. W.R. Funk, graduating exercises were held, and the doors of the Academy were opened. On January 13, in front of a large crowd, Albert Academy's first five students graduated with their diplomas.¹⁶² The names of the students of the first graduation class were Jacob P. Allison, Samuel F. Deitrich, Samuel B. Sawyerr, Thomas B. Williams, Thomas W.D. Leigh.

The new building was an imposing cement block structure, one hundred feet long and forty feet wide. The larger portion of the building was for academic use, while one end contained the resident quarters. The main assembly room and the student's dining room were located on the first floor. The main room was furnished with forty-eight double desks. The second floor encompassed the office and library, four recitation rooms, the science room, and the resident matron's room. The library contained several reference books, biblical encyclopedias and commentaries, treatises of science and literature, and miscellaneous works. The dormitories had iron beds, tables, and more. There was a laboratory fitted with an apparatus equipped for elementary work in all the

¹⁶¹ Ressler, *History of the Woman's*, 36.

¹⁶² *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus of Albert Academy, 1919-1920*; 6.

sciences. Located throughout the third floor were dormitories for students and resident tutors. The basement included a manual training shop and two spacious rooms.¹⁶³

The industrial work in connection with the Self-Help program was carried on in the Manual Training Building. Industrial and Manual Training were – and have remained until today – a significant part of the pedagogy and training at the Albert Academy. The printing department had grown from a small hand press, the gift of a Mr. Messner of Akron, Ohio, in 1905, with the help of Rev. F.A. Risley. In 1910, Risley was appointed Director of Manual Training. Under his administration the work of the department increased greatly in volume and quality. The West Africa Conference magazine, *The Sierra Leone Outlook*, was founded and made its appearance monthly from the Albert Academy press. The addition of the shops were the result of the work of the self-help students under the direction of Mr. Risley.¹⁶⁴ The Self-Help program was designed to give students the opportunity to secure their education by doing manual labor to help meet the costs. This system made it possible for a young man to obtain a secondary education partly by his own efforts.¹⁶⁵ One example of self-help in action was the 1952 publication of *The Academician*, a magazine used as medium to express their experiences at Albert Academy. Through this program, the shops, wood-working and printing were all maintained by the school.

The Manual Training Building was a structure of concrete and expanded metal seventy-four feet long by twenty-four feet wide. One part fifty feet by twenty-four feet, it

¹⁶³ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus of Albert Academy, 1919-1920*; 8.

¹⁶⁴ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus, 1904-1919*; 7.

¹⁶⁵ Caulker, *Albert Academy*, 8-9.

contained the wood-work shop and tool room and was fitted with modern work benches, lathe, band saw, circular saw, forge and other machinery and tools. The other part of the building was twenty-four feet square, and intended for an engine room but used as a print shop. The shop was well equipped with a large press.¹⁶⁶

In addition to the Albert Academy building, was the Barrie (this is a traditional structure found in rural towns and villages). A gift from Rev. and Mrs. E.M. Hursh, this building measured eighteen by thirty feet. It was intended for indoor games, study, band practice etc. At the time of the erection of the Barrie, it was used for extra space for the Manual Training department. The Academy was also provided with an enclosed swimming pool which afforded the students an opportunity for daily baths. The campus was also enclosed by a cement-block fence. On an elevated spot rises a picturesque tower containing the large bell of the school.¹⁶⁷

Principal Dougherty served the school until 1914 when he was forced to resign due to poor health. Unable to travel back to Africa to continue his post, the Executive Committee of the General Board elected vice Principal D. E. Weidler to fill the vacancy. Rev. Dougherty's time at Albert Academy had tremendous impact on its development. The continuing growth of the school in such a short time had exceeded the expectations of its founders, and this is partially due to Rev. Dougherty's contribution. In 1905, the Academy's enrollment was 46, 1906 it was 39, 1907 it was 138, and in 1908, the Academy witnessed its highest enrollment at 173. In the first fifteen years of its existence the Academy had grown from an initial enrollment of 5 to a total registration of

¹⁶⁶ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus, 1904-1919; 9.*

¹⁶⁷ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus, 1904-1919; 8-9.*

650. Of this number 35 had completed their course of studies and had been awarded a diploma from the institution.¹⁶⁸ One method used to raise public interest, was the holding of free public science lectures, by Principal Dougherty, periodically in the Wilberforce Memorial Hall. These were the first in the country, and they continued in the old building on East Street until January 11, 1908.

In 1959, a typical school day, from Monday through Friday, for an Albert Academy student would begin at 7:30 a.m. There would be a general assembly at 8:10 for morning devotions, conducted by the school's chaplain, and assisted by various members of the staff. The morning session ended at 12:15 p.m., and the afternoon session was held from 1:00 to 2:45 p.m.

Propagating Christianity remained a central focus in the Mission schools, and as late as 1954, an Itinerant's League organized in 1918 still functioned and sent volunteer students out on Sunday mornings to conduct religious services in the homes of the Mende, Temne, Sherbro, Kono, and Kissi peoples of Freetown. Despite of all this, the Academy's curriculum reflected a modern, secular education.¹⁶⁹ The schools course of study over a four year period included religious training, science, math, business, industrial work, Greek, Latin, English history, etc. These courses were designed to prepare students for the Cambridge Local Examination, the Fourah Bay College

¹⁶⁸ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus, 1904-1919*; 9.

¹⁶⁹ Richard E. Caulker, *Albert Academy: School for Boys 1904-1954* (Dayton, Ohio: Department of World Missions The Evangelical United Brethren Church); 10, 2287-3-8:12, The Evangelical United Brethren Church, Board of Missions, General Commission on Archives and History, Drew University.

Matriculation, the Higher Certificate Examination, and the various local public examinations.¹⁷⁰

Training at the Albert Academy accomplished far more than its founders could have foreseen, or what the UBC initially envisioned when they built the school. The educational system provided an increasing number of African pastors and teachers who developed into the type of leaders necessary for independent Sierra Leone, and more importantly, the Albert Academy helped break down ethnicity and created a sense of nationalism among Sierra Leoneans. The devolution of power to Sierra Leoneans over their education was a major factor in bringing about the changes in a colony, where education had been functioning for over a hundred years before the Albert Academy was established. The Academy had an open door policy for all ethnic groups, and for Sierra Leoneans in the Colony as well as the Protectorate. Many pupils from the Protectorate returned home after completing their studies. Perhaps motivated by a westernized education and ideas of autonomous Sierra Leone provided the leadership that the marginalized population needed. Ideally, Sierra Leone was never meant to be a permanent colony. The objective of the colonizing government and missions were to develop the so-called “uncivilized” Africans to the point where they would be able to self-govern. Much can be speculated about all the factors that contributed to the movement for independence. Nonetheless, the fact that significant leaders in the

¹⁷⁰ *Fifteenth Anniversary Souvenir Prospectus, 1904-1919*; 11.

movement were educated at Albert Academy attest to the impact of the UBC and its schools.

While the Albert Academy thrived, it is important to understand such “success” in facilitating the purpose of European colonization. As Carter Woodson’s 1933 publication *The Miseducation of the Negro*, pointed out, education under colonial conditions is designed to serve the colonizer. In the case of the Albert Academy, we see Sierra Leoneans adapting to colonization and adopting western culture. Such missionary schools were a place where Africans were indoctrinated into adopting western culture, and this process is referred to as the colonization of the mind. The colonial mind tends to shun the culture and traditions of its people because of the perceived primitiveness and backwardness that has been taught to them by the colonizer. The colonial mind begins to see the world through the lens of the colonizer. The missionary schools were no different from the government schools, the training that Africans received was intended to serve the purpose of the colony and make subjects out of the Africans.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In 2014 for an assignment, I traveled to New Jersey to consult the archives of Drew University for some primary sources on the Albert Academy School for Boys. The information I came across was interesting, but at the time I was not considering turning it into a larger project. A few years had passed, and I begin to learn more about the connection between African Americans and the people of Sierra Leone. The Gullah people of South Carolina are said to be descendants of the people of Sierra Leone. My family being from South Carolina, inspired greater interests in the history of Sierra Leone. Coincidentally after doing a genetic test with the company African Ancestry, I was able to trace my own roots to Sierra Leone and the Temne people. The 2014 assignment was appearing to be more of my calling than just a research paper.

This research was an investigation into the relationship between missionary schools and the rise of the new colonialist, or neocolonialist, with a focus on American missions. Education became a means to rise in colonial society. The idea was for Africans to govern themselves, but this had to be done through a westernized system. African way of life was made obsolete under colonial conditions. The attitude of the west toward Africa can be summed up in this way:

A congress on Africa! Why not? What land is more entitled to our best thought, or more deserving the most helpful service we can render? Where the country with a history of more romantic interest, or one whose peoples have had a

more varied experience or presented more serious problems
for the study of mankind?¹⁷¹

This was presented at a conference discussing the future of Africa. Men of scholarship, and imbued with the spirit of Christ, deeply interested in the evangelization of Africa, came together from various parts of the United States and other countries, and presented well prepared papers on the subjects which had been assigned them.¹⁷²

The Africans of Sierra Leone had their way of life altered through the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonialism. Western schools were integral in the transformation of indigenous culture and society. This research was an attempt to examine the impact of mission schools in order to develop a better understanding of the state of Sierra Leone today. Mission stations in Africa are part of a process that began with European and African trade of human bodies and colonization starting in the fifteenth century. The trans-Atlantic slave trade was dismantled by the abolitionist movement, but a new form of control was adopted.

Sierra Leone was supposed to be a colony of westernized Africans, established partially to facilitate the spread of western ideas and Christianity. Africa was known to the world as the “dark continent,” because of its so-called “backwardness”. To the evangelists, the people of Africa were not beyond saving. The colonists and evangelists entered Sierra Leone with the idea of rescuing the Africans from themselves. The African

¹⁷¹ Isaac W. Joyce, “Introduction,” *Africa and the American Negro: Addresses and Proceedings of the Congress on Africa: Held under the Auspices of the Stewart Missionary Foundation for Africa of Gammon Theological Seminary in Connection with the Cotton States and International Exposition December 13-15, 1895*, Ed. J.W.E. Bowen (Atlanta: Gammon Theological Seminary, 1896), 7.

¹⁷² Joyce, “Introduction,” 7.

Institution, an abolitionist and antislavery group, stated in their report that spreading Western civilization in Africa was an objective. In this document they stated the purpose of the Sierra Leone Company was to extend the blessings of freedom and civilization to Africa.¹⁷³ Colonization in the nineteenth century, which was carried over to the twentieth century, was reconciled through the belief that the colonizer was on a civilizing mission. Secular and religious challenges to authority and slavery did little to affect ideas of white superiority.

African consciousness and culture were under assault. It was not the kind of assault that needed weapons or a military. It was done through the negation of African history and culture. This was accomplished through western education. Booker T. Washington described the function of education in America asserting:

this Southern white man's idea of Negro education had been that it merely meant a parrot-like absorption of Anglo-Saxon civilization, with a special tendency to imitate the weaker elements of the white man's character.¹⁷⁴

Nkrumah goes even further:

In these schools, and in similar schools built throughout British colonies in Africa, curriculum, discipline and sports were as close imitations as possible of those operating in

¹⁷³ Joseph Marryat, "Thoughts on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, and Civilization of Africa: with remarks on the African Institution and an Examination of the Report of their Committee, etc.," *JSTOR Primary Sources* (1816), 4-5.

¹⁷⁴ Washington, *The Future*, 58.

English public schools. The object was to train up a western-oriented political elite committed to the attitudes and ideologies of capitalism and bourgeois society.¹⁷⁵

In colonial society the intelligentsia emerged to provide the link between the colonial power and the masses.¹⁷⁶ These people and others who were funneled through the colonial schools became detached from the African people. Their education alienates them from their own people. Woodson explained, “educated Negroes” have the attitude of contempt toward their own people because in their own as well as in their mixed schools Negroes are taught to admire the Hebrew, the Greek, the Latin and the Teuton and to despise the African.¹⁷⁷

When the Moors were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula in the fifteenth century, Europeans began to usher in a new international system of trade. This was the context in which the trans-Atlantic slave trade was born, accompanied with ideas of African barbarism and inferiority. The result of this international relationship between Europeans and the rest of the world was the linking together of four continents in which all its inhabitants’ lives were transformed. This relationship, over time, tended to be favorable for the European nations. Rodney described the development of Africa’s economy in terms of its relationship with western Europe. Europeans overwhelmingly benefitted from this relationship because of certain military and technological advancements. Rodney explained that when two societies come together, “the weaker of

¹⁷⁵ Nkrumah, *Class Struggle*, 36-37.

¹⁷⁶ Nkrumah, *Class Struggle*, 36.

¹⁷⁷ Woodson, *The Mis-Education of the Negro*, 1.

the two societies is bound to be adversely affected.”¹⁷⁸ The Reconquista, a series of battles by Christian states to expel the Moors, was the beginning of this adverse relationship.

Additionally, this research explored the historical development of American missionaries in Sierra Leone, and how expatriation and evangelism became the driving force for Americans, in the context of slavery and colonialism. This gives insight into the link between these institutions and American settlements in Africa. For instance, the abolitionists movement in America led to the founding of the American Colonization Society for Colonizing the Free People of Color in the United States in 1816. There is a history of viewing Africa as a place for freed slaves in America, and a place in need of the doctrine of Christ. In the nineteenth century, Africa as a place for expatriation and mission activity reached fruition and would eventually lead to a larger presence of Americans in Sierra Leone.

Colonization in Africa was perceived to be a benign enterprise for the colonial powers. Colonization was a means to bring civilization to the backward people of Africa. Paternalism, a system under which an authority undertakes to supply needs or regulate conduct of those under its control in matters affecting them as individuals as well as in their relations to authority and to each other, then becomes the product of colonialism

The role of religion in the eventual ban of the slave trade cannot be understated. Evangelical groups, such as the Quakers, saw abolitionism as an expression of “Christian Love” for their fellow man. The ideas of freedom that spread throughout the world had

¹⁷⁸ Rodney, *How Europe*, 11.

unforeseen consequences, as they would ultimately challenge the institution of slavery. The Abolitionist movement and the founding of the American Colonization Society in 1817, became pivotal in the fight to end slavery. The founding of American missions in Sierra Leone was an abolitionist endeavor, but it would develop into a system of education.

Before Europe invaded Africa, Africans were an autonomous people. They were dealing with their own internal issues, but they were hardly a backwards people. Africans have built civilizations that Europe at one point looked at in awe. The main point is that Africans were sovereign. Not a unified people; there was no universal way of thinking or viewing the world. The arrival of Europeans – invaders, enslavers, and colonialists – brought intense discrimination and racism, and exacerbated divisions. What resulted from European contact was, as Walter Rodney points out, “underdevelopment”. Underdevelopment is a product of exploitation and oppression. In recent times there has been a trend to shift the focus from the perpetrator of the African holocaust to the victims. Arguments regarding the complicity of Africans in the slave-trade are used to create confusion among African people around the world that we are to blame for our own historical suffering and the racism which still defines the world in the twentieth-century. But again, whatever one may think about African people and their societies, those peoples and societies were autonomous and had civilizations as advanced, or more advanced, than Europe.

The model of education used in the United States that was brought to Sierra Leone was intended to educate and prepare Sierra Leoneans for independence and self-government. The good intentions of the West did not translate into modernization and

economic advancement in the twenty-first century. It brought about underdevelopment. In the twenty-first century, Africa is still healing from colonial wounds, and the road to advancement has been, and will continue to be, an uphill climb. But the future remains bright. This research concludes with the words of E.L. Parks:

The industrial, intellectual, moral and spiritual progress of the colored people in America is a prophecy, both of what they will become and will do for the redemption of their fatherland, and also of what the native African is capable of becoming.”¹⁷⁹

¹⁷⁹ E.L. Parks, “The Stewart Missionary Foundation for Africa and the Purpose of the Congress,” in *African and the American Negro. Adresses and Proceedings of the Congress on Africa, held under the auspices of the Stewart Missionary Foundation for Africa of Gammon Theological Seminary, in connection with the Cotton States and International exposition, December 13-15*, ed. by J.W.E. Bowen (Atlanta: The Franklin Printing and Publishing Co., 1896), 10.

APPENDICES



Figure 1 Albert Academy Staff (1954)¹⁸⁰

¹⁸⁰ *Albert Academy, Sierra Leone Photographs*, Evangelical United Brethren in Church.



Figure 2 Rearview of Albert Academy (1954)¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ *Albert Academy, Sierra Leone Photographs*, Evangelical United Brethren Church, Board of Missions.



Figure 3 Self-Help Students¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ *Albert Academy, Sierra Leone Photographs*, Evangelical United Brethren Church, Board of Missions.

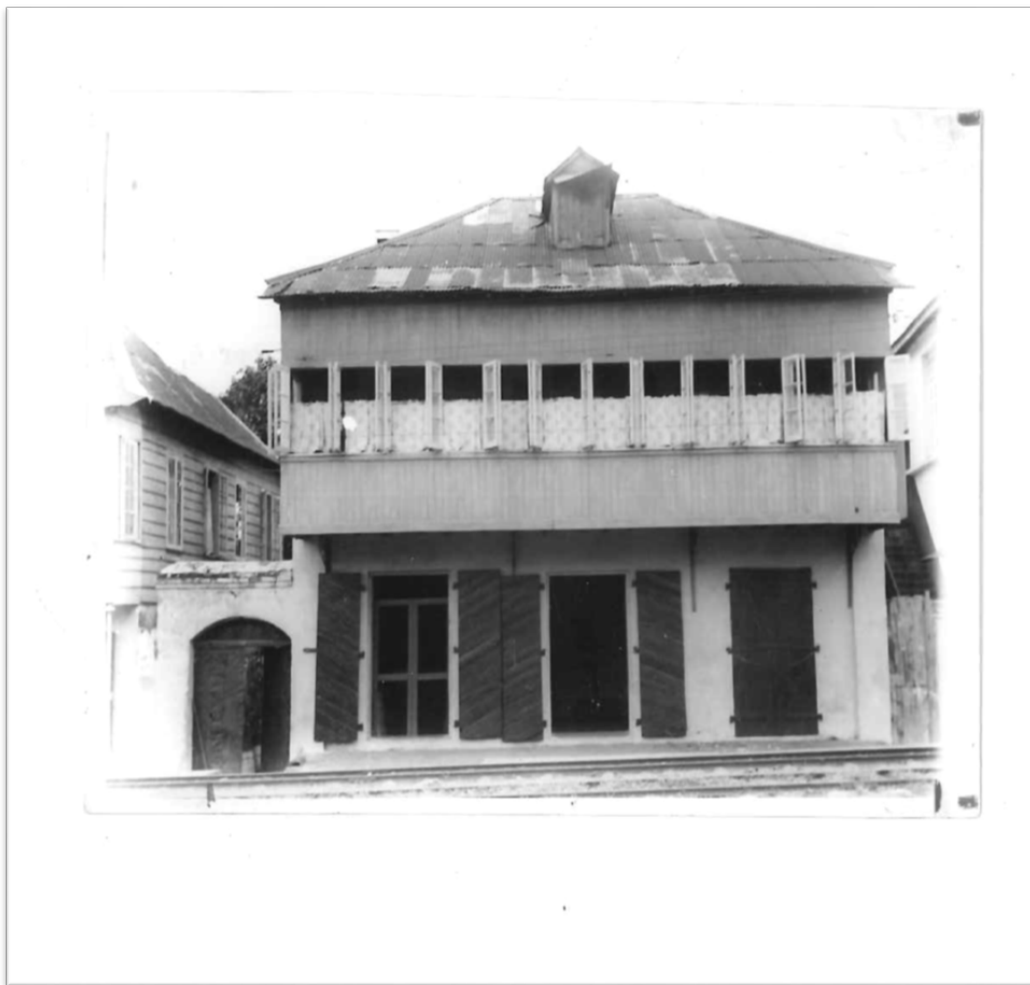


Figure 4 Albert Academy 10 East Street, Freetown (October 4, 1904)¹⁸³

¹⁸³ *Albert Academy Photographs, 1904-1937, 2280-4-2:29*, Church of the United Brethren in Christ, Foreign Missionary Society, General Commission on Archives and History, Drew University.



Figure 5 Albert Academy (2021)



Figure 6 Albert Academy (2021)

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