

Harvesting Golden Black Civilisations: Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Imperial Ruses

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Abstract

At the end of the American Revolutionary War, Britain helped to establish Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone like many other places in Africa was a ruse that helped to maintain British imperial control in Africa. In 1816 there was another civilisational experiment that precipitated from American involvement with African enslavement. The American Colonisation Society needed a place for freed African Americans and Liberia was the idyllic choice. Both localities can be construed as El Dorado endeavors that involved diasporic Africans. These two localities were conceived as ideal for reforming African labour in a way that involved continued exploitation and continued control of diasporic Africans. Like the French West African developments so too did these two localities implicate British and ultimately American yields on humans as El Dorado units. The ideal imperialist endeavour would have been to have resources and transpose “factories” of humans than transport Africans. The Sierra Leone and Liberia civilisational experiments were El Dorados that resulted in disaster. Both countries suffered from imperial and faulty governance, and became symptomatic of imperialist schemes that were intent on reaping from golden human laborers. This paper involves the intersection of the civilisationist endeavour and imperialist control structures intent on perpetuating capital gain. It primarily unveils African nation-building ruses that were prompted by an El Dorado ideal of African peoples and resources.

locus denovo et proprietas Britannia
(A Renewed Position and British Ownership)

Since so many American patriot leaders resisted employing African-American troops before July 1775, the British took advantage of their dire situation and initiated the recruitment of

African-Americans. This prompted American patriots to believe that British agents promised to reward any African-Americans who murdered their masters. Ultimately, there was not one insurrectional event committed by the enslaved during the American Revolutionary War. In June 1775 the royal Virginian

governor, John Murray, Earl of Dunmore, was driven out of Old Dominion. On 7 November 1775 he issued a proclamation offering to liberate enslaved African-Americans who joined the British in the fight. This was a distressed measure because by the middle of 1775 red coats did not have enough soldiers and needed more fighters. The rumor was that John Murray's African-American troops wore sashes that bore the motto 'Liberty to Slaves' and they were considered the 'Ethiopian Regiment' (Nash, 2006:28-29; Nash, 2005:162-163). Like Rhode Island in early 1777, it inevitably became pragmatic to have a black regiment at hand. Many enslaved African-Americans escaped and sought refuge in both the Loyalist and Patriot sides for the cause of their own freedom.

The British employed escaped slaves as laborers and foragers in 1781 and some of the British fighters even used the bodies of African-American labourers who died of smallpox as biological warfare. Black loyalists were numerous in the low country region of South Carolina and Georgia. Many from South Carolina at the end of the war (about 20,000), which made up about 30 percent of the state's African-American population, left with the British (Hine, Hine, and Harrold, 2011: 98-99).

At the end of the American Revolutionary War, Britain began settlements in Sierra Leone that included recently freed enslaved African-Americans who, as dutiful Loyalists, fought more for their maintained notion of freedom than for any impressed British ideals about their devotion to the crown. The brave soldiers fought for their own freedom, in keeping with the *zeitgeist* of the revolutionary times. They were ultimately rewarded with land that supposedly encapsulated to them some sort of

sovereignty. In England proper, festering African vagrants roamed the streets of London due to not being accepted and were finally shipped to Sierra Leone (Briadwood, 1994: 22-27). Troubling maroons in Jamaica were also brought to Sierra Leone along with any and all African captives found on slavers attempting to travel out of West Africa from either the Bights of Benin or Biafra, i.e. modern Nigerian area or further south from the Congo. Nineteenth century Sierra Leone was symptomatic of the imperial activity of the times with its fill of human deposits stemming from various localities. It was a viable space as any located on the edge of a potentially maintainable continent that was useful for the grand imperial endeavour (Thomas, 1997: 497).¹

From the start, the African space could be construed as persisting through time, at the outskirts of the heart of an imperially perceived 'dark' continent with useful resources including labouring humans. The Portuguese first used the name Sierra Leone. Its descriptive nomenclature derives from the visual hills that surround modern-day Freetown. Literally, the name for the land meant 'wild mountain', i.e. land untamable like a lion (Kup, 1961: 8 and 21). Its double *entendre* can be construed as primitive lands with inherently untamable people. To the Portuguese these were feral places inhabited with prehumans, i.e. *tertium quid* ("third entity").

In the 1460s, when the Portuguese searched for golden material wealth there were various people like the Susu who also moved into Sierra Leone from the North at around 1400 CE (Kup 11). In the early 1400s, the Portuguese dealt with local people such as the Shebro-Bullom, Temne, Limba, Loko, Gola and the Krim (Kup

12-13). The Mani, Shebro, Temne clashed with the Susu near the River Scarries and the Mende historically appears in the seventeenth century (Kup 13). The lands at the outskirts of the continent were interminably transitory spaces. Cataclysms occur among various groups. The French were once slaughtered by the Portuguese, while the Dutch and the French attacked English settlements (Kup 23).

Early on Sierra Leone saw its share of slaughter where one people took over another's space in an endless struggle for golden entities. An imperial process was at work and the local peoples were inconsequential as this space's teleology was dependent on yields and the great marketable continuance. Multiple peoples vied to create utilitarian hierarchies as constitutive of domains. And yet, inevitably recurrent hybridity accrues in African spaces and imperial endeavours continue to transplant a sustainable *res publica*, i.e. "republic" (Ehret, 2013: 322).

Sierra Leone was always considered as a sieve that would alleviate imperial anomalies like the problem of the large number of unemployable Africans who had settled in England, especially in London, in the aftermath of the American War of Independence. The British shipped many African loyalists initially to Nova Scotia (Arcadia to liberated African-Americans), with promises of land and freedom. Arcadia meant more than a mythological and unspoiled wilderness for a deserving people, but they were extracted once again. The promise was not kept and many went to England to ameliorate the biopolitics. While in Europe they inevitably joined the unemployed and impoverished. Olaudah Equiano insists that it was better to be an African than a Londoner or an American, but

he noted the mismanagement of the project as a whole.² On 9 April 1787, the *Nautilus* set sail, reaching Sierra Leone in May 1787 and it was conceived as a sovereign and independent venture where a little over 400 men, women, and children which also included whites and 50 lascars (i.e. Indians) (Carretta, 2005: 232). Ultimately, by December 1789 conflict with locals left them almost all dead (Carretta, 2005: 232).

By 1792, twelve hundred free loyalists from Nova Scotia were ultimately sent and in 1795 five hundred more were removed from their Arcadia. Again, the sieve was turned on to rinse and continue with the imperial pressures. Afterward Jamaican Maroons, who were in Nova Scotia after a 1775 rebellion in Jamaica, were similarly brought to Sierra Leone. Under the corporate guidance the Sierra Leone Company recreated Sierra Leone and appointed governors (Schama, 2006: 262). The African Arcadians displaced to Sierra Leone and formerly Nova Scotians did not find representative government as pledged once. They rebelled in 1800 against British governors with their dictator-like policies. Conflict with the Temne people turned to warfare in 1801 and in 1807. The Temne were to learn the implications of living in the midst of a construction site of a republic of property. They were soon forced to sign over their space to the Sierra Leone Company (Schama, 2006: 262; Braidwood, 1994: 208-209).

So Sierra Leone, during early colonisation, became populated with Africans from the diaspora. After 1807, immigrants to Sierra Leone primarily include loyalists of African descent. Tragically, like so many more times to come, in African diasporan history, the Port Royale experiment in 1787 being another example, the genius of African repatriation

brought several advantages. The British effort to further populate Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century was a benevolent and imperial ideal not only as venue for helping to resist against the abominable enslavement process but also it precipitated the use of African space to yield many resources from an orchestrated African civilisation (Schama: 261-262; Thomas, 1997: 567 and 576; Tomkins, 2007: 142).³

Inevitably, in 1808 Sierra Leone was decreed a Crown colony and anti-slavery patrollers were dispatched to protect West Africa. All the ships found with enslaved peoples were sent to Sierra Leone. The nineteenth century re-captives, i.e. Yoruba and Igbo peoples, were found on slavers and relocated not to Yoruba or Igboland but to the land of the 'wild mountains'. The original settlers were known as 'Creoles' who were ardent Christians and strongly Anglicised in character. Christian missions from Britain helped to spread Christianity and created European style education for new arrivals. Sierra Leone found original settlements of farmers but Creoles turned to trade to make a living instead of doing agricultural work, which would have meant a symbolic return to enslavement. They traded timber, groundnuts, and palm oil, while some became craftsmen, bureaucratic clerks, teachers, and even missionaries. The Creole and Yoruba scholar Samuel Ajayi Crowther a founding student of Sierra Leone's Fourah Bay College led a Christian mission to the Niger (Page, 1889: 35).⁴

The British dominated products kept on going in or out. Nevertheless, the Creoles took up the ways of American social élite as they helped to create a class based system. Instead of yielding to unity with local indigenous

peoples to resist European control and thus gravitate and strengthen a pan-African ideal with an end to identity groupings of Igbo, Yoruba, Creoles, Jamaicans, Londoners, Loyalists, Temne, Mende, etc. Sierra Leone could be construed as the pan-African panacea or at least an attempt to unite Africa under one entity as the prophetic Edward Blyden had once insisted (Shillington, 2005: 259; Blyden, 1856). Thus, the West African El Dorado with its capitalistic epitome came in multiple perspectives that involved the newly arrived as they envisioned their singularity and maintained a notion about autochthonous stagnancy. The Creoles initiated novel guises of westernising the locality and only ultimately degenerated the vicinities of peoples. The imperialist propensity appropriated and devised notions of property as they forged ahead to conceive *res publica* ("republic") set on *aurea* ("gold") increases (Voegelin, Sandoz, Weiss and Petropulos, 1989: 467; Benson and Heltzel, 2008: 15).⁵

Sierra Leone was equipped with a Legislative Council, British arbiter and repatriates from London, Nova Scotia, Jamaica, and Nigerian and Congo slave ships (i.e. Creoles). All were part of a utilitarian activity that extracted ivory, gold and the labor of people. The vague boundaries and territorial legality are hard-pressed. Commonalities of humanity, ivory and gold inherently were part of the monumental imperial increase. The unfolding of multiple localities served the interminable *res publica* task well. The manufacture of *proprietas* ("property") made use of deposited and redeposited peoples in spaces that were never too interior but yet near the Bights of Biafra and Benin with their own useful portals to send resources.⁶

On 9 April 1787, over 300 black men and women and about seventy white women, that included sixty prostitutes, were deported from London under the aegis of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor, an organisation set up by the British abolitionist and dedicated Christian Granville Sharp (Hochschild 148-149).⁷ They established what was proclaimed the 'province of Freedom' or otherwise ultimately known as Granville Town which was land purchased from a local Koya Temne subordinate Chief named Tom (Thomas 498).⁸ The supposed freedom colony began from 1792 and through to 1800 but throughout the years there were challenges and some went to work in the slave trading business. Thomas Peters, an African- American loyalist, helped to lead the settlement. Nevertheless, the business of slave trading and the involvement of some of the settlers in the slave business caused problems for the 'province of Freedom'. A new Granville Town was established by members of the Clapham Sect who were British abolitionist and also directors of the Sierra Leone Company. There was no real free town or space and what soon pragmatically evolved was a colony that controlled with an appointed governorship. This was a British informal imperial space, moving more and more towards formal imperialism. Indeed it was under the British crown in 1808 that capitalist endeavours drew out peoples in preparation for proxy control (Thomas 498). Dating back to 1787 and the repatriated endeavour, i.e. the African diasporans, came to their eternal return. Their 'homeland' conception was partly their own and partly those benevolent yet contradictory abolitionists who enforced a notion. For the repatriated their *ῥιόδιᾶ*, i.e. 'homecoming', even if it meant to

barren places different from their origination meant something better than where they once were in Nova Scotia, London, and Jamaica. And yet their envisioned abode was ultimately turned into a novel production of nineteenth century imperial existentialism.

ordinatio
(Governance)

Sierra Leone came under European control in the seventeenth century. On 27 September 1672, the Royal African Company was chartered and became involved with enslavement in the Sierra Leone region, so slavery relied on monarchy, i.e. the Royal house of Stuart. By 1688, locals were enticed with free cash gifts accrued between the peoples of the West African region and the Royal African Company (Davies, 1999: 187).⁹ The utilitarian governance of the region was precipitated by the Royal African Company which ultimately was replaced by the imaginary benevolence of the Sierra Leone Company which all required a controlled African space. Governance, i.e. *ordinatio*, was given the semblance of social order but imperial civilisation helped to manage and manoeuvre production (Blyden, 2000: 27). An African foundation was relegated by business and religious missions that saw divinity in *proprietas*. Liberia devised its governance with the American Colonization Society, formerly known as The Society for the Colonization of Free People of Color of America. Sierra Leone and Liberia had institutional apparatuses and disseminated their respective imperial ventures. Governance works straightforwardly and purposefully, creating laws that conceive how people existed in space and land. The natural

thing was to conform to the construction. Both Sierra Leone and Liberia were similar to the miniaturised sugar-plantation models of Madeira in the western coast of Europe and Sao Tome (outside the western shore of Africa) (Curtin, 1998: 143).¹⁰ The objective was to export materials and maintain control like the earlier Venetian proxy controlled sugar plantations in Cyprus.¹¹

The locals are remotely measured with the use of middlemen (e.g. Americo-Liberians) who were plentiful and maintained social hierarchies. This inconsequential possession of land and people remained situated on the edge and as peripheral protectorate it yielded anything that it could. The propensity to establish a sense of nation-state with European-American similitude was useful. Attempted governance was the second stage in maintaining a productive system as representative sovereignty. First came devising land property or notions of frontiers and then came the identity politics. Both aspects of property and identity were intertwined. Identity interchangeably became property. The evolution of Sierra Leone with its multitude of displaced peoples served to work on building a one-dimensional existentialism (i.e. identity with property both maneuvered in unison). Sierra Leonian governmental development increased as land and people acquirement increased and transformed spaces into sovereign entities. On 22 August 1788, a grant of land was given to Captain John Taylor of the ship *Miro* along the Freetown Peninsula by a Temne chief (Sierra Leone Protectorate Commissioner on the Insurrection in the Sierra Leone Protectorate. *Report by Her Majesty's Commissioner 1899: 8*). Unfortunately, the land due to unsustainability was subsequently abandoned from 1789 to 1791.

Ultimately, Freetown is renewed and rediscovered on 11 March 1792.

The Freetown peninsula itself was ruled by Temne and eventually it was reclaimed by more immigrating people on 5 July, 1799 and it was as though it discovered its historic identity and ultimately renamed Sierra Leone. It was as though it rose up to civilisational significance and by 1 January 1808 it was deemed officially a crown colony, i.e. an imperial possession. There were always expansions into Africa throughout the nineteenth century. By August 1895, the hinterland region was incorporated into the British realm. Along the way, other African territories were added and throughout the last part of the nineteenth century more African immigrant settlements occurred (Cartwright, 1978: 51).¹² And so, 153 years later on 27 April, 1961 Sierra Leone finally achieves its invented independence from the United Kingdom (Cartwright 36).¹³

Beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century until the middle of the twentieth century, palm oil had become West Africa's major overseas export (Lynn, 1997: 4). Industrial Europe needed to manufacture soap and machinery lubricant before the development of petroleum oil took hold in the 1950s. In the Niger Delta, the clearing of space was helped by useful networks of the Ijo with their war canoes and their Igbo captives to sell down from the up-river regions to the coast (Niane and Ki-Zerbo, 1997: 345; Chinenye Eluwa, 1988: 66).¹⁴

The twentieth century civil wars as internalised scrambles began from illusions of independence once long awaited upon British dispossession occurred. Imperial cybernetics was funnelled with district councils and a

protectorate assembly. Ethnic group authorities were included but they were not elected and were really assigned and guided by a paramount chief. The Sierra Leone government like others attempting to maintain imperial control was devised as a Legislative Council which was comprised of eleven British officials which included four nominated from the business sector and religious missions. There were three appointed paramount chiefs and three colony representatives. The colony representatives were land owners in keeping with a useful property identity and they required an educational background to substantiate full human and not subhuman intellect. Since 1943 there were always two unofficial members who were considered the Executive Council and the Governorship was purposefully endowed with operative departments. After 1947, the majority of people in the Legislative Council became African, but there was still a protectorate assembly which was really a body held by the dictates of chiefs and their vested interests in gaining something to maintain themselves as leaders of their respective peoples (Cartwright 240-242). The universalising imperial ontology would not have it any other way. The Creoles were an intermediary group who increased their political capital. The 1951 constitutional changes furthered illusions of African empowerment and kept a propensity toward British modeling, i.e. the ameliorative *res publica* perpetuated the imperial process and gave constituency and legal claim and obligation to reformulated people. The West African El Dorado was construed as a campaign to be less guilt-ridden and more humane about acquiring the labour of people in a different manner, i.e. in a façade of benevolence.

Spatium Americanum ad homines aureos
(American Space for Golden Humans)

The American Colonization Society could be considered one of the most significant antislavery organisations of the 1810s and 1820s. Its official name was 'The Society for the Colonization of Free People of Color of America'. One very important contentious issue encountered early on by the organisation involved defining its historic purpose, i.e., whether its goal was abolition or African-American expulsion. Famous slaveholders like Bushrod Washington (nephew of George Washington) and Henry Clay gravitated to being members (Hine, Hine, and Harrold 201). On paper, it considered two prominent propositions:

- (1) abolishment of slavery gradually in the United States with compensation for slaveholders' economic loss, and
- (2) expel all emancipated enslaved Africans and also send any and all free peoples of African descent back to Africa.

The founders of ACS were adamant about sending free African-American peoples out of the United States as the proper solution to bettering the continuation of the United States. Some slaveholders could never envision increasing numbers of manumitted African-Americans in the United States. African-Americans were thought to be lacking in citizenry materiality. They were considered inferior and shiftless and like what occurred in London with liberated peoples the assumption was that rampant vagrancy would occur (Murrin, 2011: 407). The organisation was intent on not including ill equipped or tainted

people into the citizenry (Dain, 2002: 121; Smedley and Smedley, 2012: 222; Holt, 2010: 104).

ACS's strongest support came from the upper South. It even included Francis Scott Key who was inspired by seeing the flag standing after Ft McHenry was attacked during the War of 1812 to write 'The Star Spangled Banner', which became the American national anthem in 1931 (Hine, Hine and Harrold 202). Presidents James Monroe, Andrew Jackson, and John Tyler and also Congressman John Randolph of Roanoke, states' rights advocate, were prominent members. By the 1820s, there were branches in every northern state. Lewis Tappan, Gerrit Smith and William Lloyd Garrison all initially supported ACS due to its abolitionist tendency but its notions of Africa as the primary homeland for peoples of African descent eventually became troubling to others. Certain African-Americans believed in the abolitionist aspect of ACS, and a 'back to Africa' ideal did not seem antithetical to great African-American figures like Paul Cuffe of Massachusetts. Cuffe's father, Slocum Cuffe, was from West Africa. Cuffe had visited Sierra Leone in 1811 and in 1815 again ventured there, this time with 38 African-Americans from Boston. After his death, Daniel Coker from Baltimore, inspired by Paul Cuffe, led another contingent of 86 African-Americans to Sierra Leone in 1820. By 1838, 2,500 African-American colonists persisted in Liberia and they resided beside 28,000 indigenous Africans (Hine, Hine and Harrold 202).

African-American opposition to the 'back to Africa' model of the ACS increased. In the late 1820s, many African-Americans criticised the notion and it even caused divisions publicly. Samuel Cornish and John Brown Russwurm

from New York City began *Freedom Journal* in 1827; it was one of the first African-American newspapers, reflecting these sentiments. Cornish and Russwurm were conscientious advocates of the anti-slavery movement. The 'back to Africa' American *zeitgeist* unfortunately divided many African-Americans. In 1829, Cornish resigned from the paper that he helped start and *Freedom Journal* was suspended for a time. John Brown Russwurm was the first to get a college degree from Bowdoin College in Maine and he went as far as to move to Liberia and stand by his words. Stanley Cornish adamantly opposed moving to Liberia because people like him thought it was unhealthy and truly a strange place. People like Cornish believed the voluntary colonisation model advocated by the ACS was a contrivance by pro-slavery advocates resolved on transforming the United States into an African-American enslaved-only America (Hine, Hine and Harrold 203).

Liberia, founded in 1822, was conceived by ACS and it was intent on making use of freed African-Americans. Richard Allen's African Methodist Episcopalian Philadelphia Church denounced it as a scheme to get rid of peoples of African descent. The representatives of ACS were strategic and inevitably forced local African chiefs in Cape Mesurado to sell them land and the American representatives were not afraid of brandishing their rifles. The freed African-Americans settled in Cape Palmas near Shebro Island. The settlement was started by European-Americans and then educated African-Americans took over the administrative tasks of keeping the space (Jenkins, 1975: 63-64).

In the early 1800s, there was also an American push to create a particular kind of

United States. An elder Thomas Jefferson had stated that when it came to dealing with enslavement and the manumission of enslaved peoples in the Western hemisphere the United States really had 'a wolf by the ear' (Hine, Hine and Harrold 198; Painter, 2010: 111-113). Jefferson's allusion exemplified the direction American civilisation would enter with freed African-Americans. The ideal American civilisation would need to rid itself of non-enslaved peoples of African descent. All the slave insurrections involved free and literate African-Americans. ACS was based out of Washington DC and since 1816 it maintained the idea that it was always best to eliminate any African-American citizenry. The ACS perceived itself as mutually serving the interest of African and European Americans (Carey and Mercer, 1832: 27).

Liberia functioned then as an idyllic place that solved the problem of removing peoples of African descent from the United States. Very much like Sierra Leone, Liberia was a British and American El Dorado in that they both were devised as utilitarian civilisations and were integral to the imperial process. The two localities were brought about to reformulate African labor in a way that involved continued exploitation and control (of diasporan peoples). Like the French West African developments, so too did these two vicinities implicate British and ultimately American yields on humans and as an El Dorado component.

The imperial ruses of repatriation and independency were part of a process of siphoning resources with transposed 'factories' of humans visibly understood as civilisations. Africa's human resources or tradespeople with skills harvest and help transport domestic

products appropriated from African spaces. Sierra Leone and Liberia as civilisational and also Christian experiments are read as El Dorados that resulted in disaster for the immigrating and indigenous peoples involved. Both invented civilisations writhe from governance, i.e. *ordinatio* as artifice and both countries are symptomatic of a countless imperialist bag of tricks intent on reaping gold from metaphorical golden human labourers.

The interval of the civilisationist ruse continues with capital gain. African nation-state building is a means to obtain production yields that might be needed. Notions of inadequacy become paternal excuses and keep incessant control. African-American liberation required the allusion of self-determination and Liberia manifested the next *a priori* stage. Liberia was a trope for freedom but was never given a fair chance to grow because its hands were inextricably tied to America. Liberia was independent of itself and yet if nothing else it is tethered to the imperial process of becoming.

From the start, Liberia was a geographic constituency selected as human depository for existential remnants. The broken pieces of people from various places could not be placed back to where they once were. And so a utilitarian interconnectivity was keen and its imagination of repaired Africa and pieced back together only furthered hybridity in African spaces and recreated another opportunity in the nineteenth century to gain resources and continue with stages of the imperial process. On the surface, Britain may have been passionate about ending enslavement, Granville Sharp included, in the case of Sierra Leone, but stripping Africans of lands and returning them back to unknown spaces on the edge of a continent might not have been the best

American agent for ACS, later on helped to administer the colony and remained in Africa from 1847 to 1869 leaving and joining in at the midst of US reconstruction (Johnson 198). In preparation for emancipation that was to come, Lincoln asked Ben Butler (a Massachusetts politician) to prepare African-Americans for deportation (Johnson 200). A few years before the start of the American Civil War, Martin Delany and Robert Campbell explored the Niger region hoping to discover the right soil for building a self-sufficient civilisation (Brotz, 1992: 73).¹⁵ Then, the Civil War arrived, and Martin Delany was commissioned as a field officer. He was anointed by President Abraham Lincoln and was commissioned the rank of Major. Throughout the Civil War, ACS was on the decline and Reconstruction gave African-Americans hope for a better day within the United States with the socialism of a Freedmen's Bureau.

Yet before the American Civil War, there was hope for Liberia and that came with an aspiring John Brown Russwurm who for twelve years served as governor of the land that belonged to Maryland State Colonization Society. Before the American Civil War, many states established and appropriated their own piece of Liberian land in keeping with replicating their own great American *res publica*. Many states attempted to build their subset place in and around Liberia and there were several; Mississippi was one and so was Maryland (White, Bay and Martin 403).¹⁶ John Brown Russwurm led the Maryland state version but by 1848 he became ill and suffered health problems.

Spaces and places were traditionally taken away from the autochthonous people in

Liberia. In the East African region, Mauritius (Santa Apollonia) in 1507 was first discovered by the Portuguese and then the Dutch came to own it, then the French and finally the British by 1810. By 1968 it was inhabited by Africans, Indians French and Chinese people. In the West African region like the East African region, many fights ensued among Europeans and trading posts and settlements were lost and gained. When the British eventually took over Mauritius (Santa Apollonia), they had inherited what the Dutch had created, i.e. exporting ebony trees and establishing sugar-cane crops ("History of Mauritius" in *Ministry of Art and Culture*, <http://culture.gov.mu>). With Liberia, on 18 January 1849, John Brown Russwurm stated to James Holt: 'On Liberty! Thou art, indeed a by-word for oppression in the mouths of such hypocrites' (Johnson 190). The allurements of extracting products like gold was significant and not the people. The Dutch procured slaves for Brazil and obtained gold in several places. The Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch, at last British seized Elmina in Ghana and it remains a testament to a multiple undertaking.

Eventually in the midst of building a place called freedom, President Roberts of Monrovia annexed Maryland's side and no one received permission from the Kru people located there. John Brown Russwurm died and was buried in Cape Palmas, Liberia. Expansions were part of obtaining *res publica* and expansion included and provided 'free schools' (James and Russwurm, 2010: 62).¹⁷ Schools modeled after the New England African Free Schools system. Schooling in manufactured civilisations attended to reproducing future Christians and thus future James Fortens and Alexander Crummells of the world.¹⁸ Building civilisations required building citizens who could read,

understand and abide by printed laws.

Ultimately, ACS ruined the voluntary ideal of repatriation especially that of Paul Cuffe's utopian endeavour that dated back to 1815. The ACS did not initially construct repatriation but it certainly provided the avenue of choice for African-Americans who strove to actualise on this notion of homeland. Africa as origination point was a concept that remained on the minds of African-Americans and manifested itself in nomenclature with 'Free African Society' of 1787, 'Sons of Africa' in 1798, and 'Free African Mutuality House' in 1805. Even as late as 1941 most repatriates were still sponsored by ACS (Johnson 204). A key obstacle of Liberia was the plight of caste maintained by elites who were not different from European colonists. The divisions between Americo-Liberians and peoples from the interior regions drove and sustained the reaching for the grand imperial system. From 1847 to 1908, for over 61 years Liberia paid their loans to European and American lenders and once colonisation went from visibility to invisibility, the poor who resided in the edge of West Africa were only made more miserable. Washington D.C. had long ruled Liberia and had a strong hand in helping to construct intentional civilisational similitude (Brotz 78).

Marcus Garvey, the only leader of African descent to lead the largest African diasporan social movement, had once propositioned to bring African diasporan people to West Africa. Approval was initially given but before the settlers were about to set foot on the soil the offer was rescinded (Garvey and Blaisdell, 2004).¹⁹ Harvey S. Firestone, the great American millionaire had offered to erect a deep-water harbor at Monrovia. Liberia was

given a lease for the use of the established space up to one million acres of land for 99 years at 6 percent interest (Johnson 141). Usage tax was also added to the American enterprise and yet Firestone exported rubber and paid no taxes (Johnson 141). Liberia would never really be land of the emancipated due to the interconnectivity and tentacles of the American imperial process of becoming the grander system.

imperium perpetuum
(*The Eternal Imperialism*)

In reviewing European and American enterprise to implant civilisational similitude on the edge of Africa, the post-Atlantic slave trade trajectory displays institutionalisation amenable to the imperial process of becoming. Once again humans were transported for the sake of building a novel venue filled with mine workers, governmental administrators, and chiefs. The re-plantation effort and its harvests produced with it a diminished epiphany of exploitation. The civilisational project required workers whether near or far from those who maintained control.

In Du Bois' *Soliloquy*, posthumously published, there is a chapter titled 'Western Europe' and in this chapter Du Bois reports on his revisit to Europe in 1958 after first visiting Europe in 1892. He states that he was intent on finding out if Europe had learned lessons from its past and unfortunately he soon became disappointed, when he saw that the British still were resolute about continuing their 'comforts and civilisation by using cheap labor and raw materials, seized without rightful compensation' (Du Bois, 1968: 15). At the time of his second visit it seemed to Du Bois that 'the British empire had built its prosperity on cheap

labor, which the colored peoples of the world were forced to do' (Du Bois 15). The El Dorado model in this instance, at the edge of African space, is the idea of obtaining interminably resources from portals at the periphery. The valued world is a world of endless gains and endless taking. In the context of Africa and the European and American relationship, this ideal made its way into the minds and hearts of a people who envisioned obtaining golden quantities in any form, literally and figuratively. Sierra Leone and Liberia precipitated from an abolition of slavery and slave trading and transitioned into functioning civilisations that produce African-laboured items.

Imperium perpetuum's ventricles forged Sierra Leone and Liberia's continuance into the process. They were inevitably deemed protectorates because, inconsequentially at first, and then consequentially later, they helped to extract units, whether as gold, ivory, rubber, palm oil and other commodities and all African laboured. Sierra Leone and Liberia's items were like grains of golden dust prepared for the taking. *Ordinatio apparatus* in both formed states that expended resources all of it tended to *res publica* as *proprietas*.

The British century, i.e., the nineteenth century, and the twentieth known as the American century helped both Sierra Leone and Liberia appear as civilisational units but they were devised as utilitarian for imperial continuance. The notion of transition from premodern to modernity and then on to postmodernity alludes to movement and advancement. From modern Europe to American postmodernity with its continual discovery of worlds, one would think American control repeats the processual practices of Europe. But this retrospection on

Sierra Leone and Liberia argues that premodernity like postmodernity and like postimperialism is illusionary. Imperial ruses of the processual becoming something grander involve *res* affairs that are meant to acquire and manipulate bodies that forever create expansive *proprietas*. Sierra Leone and Liberia prove the ability of imperial elasticity in boundaries and in rule. Thus, regimes allude to movement where control is not modestly visible and encom-passes an unobtainable totality.

In the end, *imperium perpetuum* strives in the twilight of something more and the civilised entities then that became Sierra Leone and Liberia are suspended. And yet, they are fixated with suitable identity for the moment as they oblige to fit in and remain a prospect for harvesting golden units.

Endnotes

1. The Swedish botanist, Dr Henry Smeathman, spent three years surveying Sierra Leone and advised that it was ideal for a colony (Hochschild, A. 2005: 148-149). Hochschild notes that Smeathman proclaimed it such a fertile land 'that a man possessed of a change of clothing, an axe, a hoe, and a pocket knife, may soon place himself in an easy and comfortable situation' (148-9).
2. Carretta points out that some scholars referred to the whole resettlement project as 'an eighteenth-century version of ethnic cleansing motivated by racism and designed to rid London of unwanted blacks', yet others argue that the committee for the black poor and the British government were trying to help those who had risked their lives for Britain (2005: 232 and also Equiano and Carretta, 2003: 228-231).
3. Schama notes the intent of building a 'receiving and exporting station for goods from the whole West African coast' (261-262).

4. Crowther refers to the Niger as 'the highway into the heart of Africa' (41).
5. Hardt and Negri point out that 'the dialectic of Colonialism' emphasises the difference of Other/Self for civilisational purposes (127).
6. Although Granville Sharp, father of the entire Sierra Leone project, purchased land and did not initially anticipate re-enslavement, there was 'the use of the notion apprenticeship as re-enslavement' (Tomkins 142).
7. It was initially considered the ideal location both ecological and governable (Hochschild 151 and Thomas 497).
8. The land was purchased cheaply for £60 and Thomas points out that the Granville Sharp intended it to be a 'free settlement' and that meant 'free' like 'the ancient English fankpledge' which meant 'a system of law' where all members were held accountable for their actions and the actions of others.
9. For its debts see Zook (27).
10. For Cyprus see Curtin (144 and 148-9) and for the Atlantic Islands (i.e. Azore and Madeira) see as well Curtin (149).
11. Curtin showed that Venice and Genoa traded freely with Constantinople and hence the Mediterranean slave trade flourished (145).
12. Cartwright argues that the Creole community regarded itself as superior (39).
13. The colony as protectorate encompassed 16 different language groups.
14. Also, for twentieth century involvement (Apena, 1997).
15. Delany in *The Condition, Elevation, Emigration and Destiny of the Colored People of the United States* published in 1852, looked to Liberia as the guiding star, 'we desire the civilisation and enlightenment of Africa – the high and elevated position of Liberia among the nations of the earth may not be doubted . . .' (Brotz 73).
16. White, Bay and Martin point out that Kansas sought financial support from the federal government for the Colonization Council to send African-Americans to Liberia. Also, see John H. B. Latrobe, *Colonization and Abolition*, J. D. Toy, Baltimore, 1852 and John H. B. Latrobe, American Colonization Society, Miscellaneous

Pamphlet Collection (Library of Congress), and African-American Pamphlet Collection (Library of Congress), *African Colonization – Its Principles and Aims. An Address Delivered by John H. B. Latrobe, President of the American Colonization Society, at the Anniversary Meeting of the American Colonization Society Held in the Smithsonian Institute, Washington City, January 18, 1859*. J. D. Toy, Baltimore, 1859 show rationalisation for the movement. Also, Antuan Rivarius Bradford's (2010) dissertation from Morgan State University titled 'The Mississippi State Colonization Society and the Key Leaders in the Mississippi Colonization Scheme' (12) and (Burin, 2005: 220).

17. James notes that Russwurm wrote while in Liberia (in the *Liberian Herald* on 6 March 1830) that 'no government can long exist in a state of freedom' without education (63).
18. White, Bay and Martin, *Freedom on My Mind*, report that the New York African Free School was established long before and by 1835 it transformed into the New York City public school system (182).
19. See particularly Garvey's speech 'Africa for the Africans' (69-73), and reference 'building a racial empire of our own in our Motherland' (70). Garvey's presence in a devised and an incidental African civilization that was set up for dispersed Africans would have jeopardised 'effective' American control of African space and thwarted the intended *imperium perpetuum*.

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