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Making History in the Bedroom: Americo-Liberians and Indigenous Liberians Sexual Unions, 1880s- c. 1950s

William E. Allen*

“According to village tradition, Father Tolbert practiced polygamy. Even though he was born in America and was a Christian, he believed in living to the fullest that aspect of the African culture. Mother Tolbert was extremely jealous of his other wives” (First Lady Victoria Tolbert).¹

Sexual unions contradict the dominant historical narrative that is derived mainly from analysis of the political relationship between Liberia’s two major social groups. The conventional interpretation suggests the following. A perpetual struggle plagued the relationship between the black American settlers that founded Liberia and the majority indigenes that ultimately became part of the Liberian state. The conflict began when the black Americans, later known as Americo-Liberians, set foot ashore in 1822. It culminated in the 1980 coup d’état that ended more than a century of Americo-Liberian hegemony. An examination of new evidence provides some fresh perspectives. Sexual unions bridged the political divide, promoted the so-called “civilizing mission,” created social mobility, and upset one spouse, as well as others in a community.

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The notion of a "persistent conflict" between both groups originates in a historiography that relies almost solely on interpretation from political relationships.² In the early twentieth century, some historians began to question this traditional way of writing history. The most prominent critics were the French scholars that founded the journal *Annales* in the 1920s or so; the Journal later offered an alternative to the old historiography. By the 1970s the *Annales* method of historical research, dubbed the "new history," had gained significant following across academia. A major component of the new history was the concept of the totality of the human experience in historical interpretation. The call for "total history" has opened the door to research in every sphere of human activity, from politics, economics, and demography to gender issues, culinary history, and sexual unions, among others. Interpretations derived from each discipline, the "pieces of history," constitute the collective account of a society's past.³ This total experience, according to one new historian, "opens the possibility of a richer synthesis of historical understanding."⁴ Accordingly, this paper believes that a holistic interpretation of Liberian history can be discerned by peering under the "blanket."⁵

The Liberian nation was an offshoot of the transatlantic slave trade which began around 1525. Enslaved Africans were transported to the Americas, or New World, where they provided the labor for all economic and domestic activities, ranging from toiling on plantations to cooking and suckling white babies. When the transatlantic slave trade finally ended more than three centuries later, European and American ships had forcibly transported an estimated 10.7 million Africans to the New World. About 5 percent ended up in the territories that ultimately became the United States, while the lion's share went to the combined European colonies in all the Caribbean; Brazil was the next leading importer of enslaved Africans. Captives for the transatlantic slave trade were acquired from eight broad regions along the African littoral. Of those that disembarked in the United States, approximately 38 percent, were obtained in the three conterminous territories of Senegambia, Sierra Leone, and the Windward coast (present-day Liberia).⁶

Ironically, the prohibition that ended the transatlantic slave trade in the 1800s—first by Britain and the United States in 1807 and 1808—did not end the racism enslaved blacks had encountered all along. In the United States, the expansion of the free black population was met increasingly by white America's demand that it be removed because of black's proclivity to commit crimes. Thus, the ACS was organized in 1817 to spearhead the removal or colonization of free blacks in Africa. Widespread African American opposition to colonization ensured that immigration to Liberia remained small. In the end, the ACS transported an estimated total of 17,000 free blacks, nearly one-third of them emancipated from slavery basically on the condition that they immigrate to Liberia.⁷ In addition, approximately 346 emigrants from Barbados disembarked in Liberia in 1865.⁸ They also fled the racism and segregation that followed emancipation in the British Empire nearly three decades earlier.⁹ Besides their common experience of slavery, the Americans and Barbadians spoke English and practiced Western culture.

Another group that constituted the Liberian population also evolved from the slave trade. This was the recaptives or recaptured Africans. They were rescued sporadically from slave ships by the United States Navy, attempting to enforce that nation's 1807 ban on the slave trade. Efforts by the Navy resulted in the resettlement of approximately 5,722 recaptives in Liberia.¹⁰ A small number of recaptives included Igbo from present-day Nigeria. However, the bulk claimed to have originated in the "Congo," an allusion to the multi-ethnic kingdom of Kongo in West Central Africa. The recaptives are known as "Congoes" in Liberian history.¹¹ As Africans, the recaptives were culturally similar to Liberia's indigenous population. For instance, their seemingly discrete languages can be traced to a common stock; both were subsistence farmers and shared some basic foodways. Yet, politically and socially the Congoes tended to identify with the immigrants; many Congo youths had served as wards and apprentices in the homes of Americo-Liberians.

The majority indigenous Africans were relatively more heterogeneous than the English-speaking immigrants from the Americas. They consisted of various linguistic groupings from the West African savanna that "drifted" to the coast. Exactly when the migrations began is uncertain. Evidence does indicate, however, that by the eighteenth century most of the migrants were occupying the territories that they presently inhabit.¹² Their languages are classified into Mande, Kruan or Kwa, and West Atlantic or Mel, all of which belong to the much larger Niger-Congo language family of Africa. Mande-speakers constitute the largest population. Among the Mande, the Kpelleh-speakers from central Liberia are the largest of Liberia's sixteen ethnic groups. Another Mande group is the Vai, reportedly one of the earliest to arrive on the Atlantic coast. The Bassa, Dei and Kru represent Kruan-speakers, all of who played leading roles on the Atlantic coast before and after the formation of Liberia. The West Atlantic group consists of the smallest number of speakers.¹³

None of these groups asserted political control over the entire coast before the advent of the black Americans. Hence, the suggestion of a uniform reaction ("persistent conflict") with regard to relations with the settlers is mistaken. Instead, each group acted in its own interest, at times to the disadvantage of others; there are notable illustrations. When the fledgling colony was threatened by the Dei in 1822, the settlers received strong support from the powerful Sao Boso or Boatswain, king of the multi-ethnic Condo confederation.¹⁴ Also, according to the account of Jehudi Ashmun, agent of the Colony of Liberia (1822-1828), some "native Africans" fought on the side of the settlers in the crucial November 1822 battle that was led by the Dei.¹⁵ Finally, in the second decade of the twentieth century some indigenous groups were allied (or peacefully coexisted) with the Liberian government—e.g., the Vai. On the other hand, there was firm resistance from others, the Kru (1915-17) and the Gola (1918).

Between the late nineteenth and mid-twentieth century the social divisions in Liberian society were obvious. The ruling class of Americo-Liberians included a few Congoes, like Daniel Ricks and

Abayomi Karna, along with a smattering of indigenes such as Momolu Massaquoi, Luke B. Anthony, and H. Too Wesley.¹⁶ Americo-Liberians have never constituted more than 10 percent of the population. Yet, they dominated political and economic life of the Republic by disenfranchising and relegating the indigenous majority or “country people” to the status of second-class citizens. The 1980 coup d’état that dislodged the Americo-Liberian ruling class was led by “country” soldiers—military men of wholly indigenous background. Still, in spite of the social stratification that existed, there was considerable cross-cultural interaction between Americo-Liberians and indigenous people.

The general dearth of information on sexual unions can be attributed to the lack of documentary sources. Furthermore, no oral tradition has been collected on the subject. Among the other reasons, one must include the following. Outside of the usual hush-hush that tends to surround topics of sexuality in Africa, was the self-righteousness of the Americo-Liberians. Ostentatiously Christian and monogamous, the settlers portrayed themselves as the agents of a supposedly superior Western culture. Consequently, members strove to project proper Christian behavior onto the so-called African “heathen” community which they were attempting to “civilize.” Propriety included limiting intimate associations with indigenes, as some feared that unwarranted interactions would cause the settlers to “relapse to barbarism.”¹⁷ Therefore, Americo-Liberians had to be discreet about sexual unions with the “natives.” But illiteracy among the settlers and local people likewise contributed to the scarcity of sources.¹⁸ Accordingly, stories of sexual union have largely remained—literally—under the blanket. Sources for the article comprised mainly the archives of the American Colonization Society, biographies, and the narratives of foreigners.

The sexual union that First Lady Victoria Tolbert described in the quotation that opens the article seems like polygyny.; Mr. Tolbert’s “other wives” were indigenous women. It is unclear whether he (“Father Tolbert”) and his Americo-Liberian wife lived in one big compound with the “other wives”, as is typical in African polygynous

relationships. Mr. Tolbert was a wealth Americo-Liberian farmer whose son, William Tolbert b Liberia and was later assassinated during the 198 exual union Victoria Tolbert indicated existed be -law and indigenous women in the early decades aratively more com- mon in the literature. Howe ral historic, monoga- mous relationships. One wa

Mr. Hill has in store fifty bags of coffee His influence upon the Aborigines has been most wholesome. Two of the *native youth trained by him* (Pessehs) are now their own masters, and *have their coffee farms* and live in *neat frame houses* One of them has recently married a highly *esteemed colonist*, widow of one of the prominent settlers [emphasis mine].¹⁹

The training that transformed the “Pesseh” (i.e. Kpelleh) youth into a “civilized” person included exposure to Christianity and education, cultivation of export staples like coffee, and the ownership of an American-style home, e.g., “frame” house. An illustration of the training is evident in the curriculum of the Muhlenberg mission, a Christian school mostly for indigenous boys near the Americo-Liberian town of Arthington, venue of the wedding. In 1887, the mission included a church and the students learned to cultivate coffee and sugar; as will be demonstrated below, the architecture harked back to wooden frame houses of the antebellum American South.²⁰

Civilizing the “heathen” Africans was a central goal of the American Colonization Society, and Americo-Liberians were agents of the mission. The meaning of “civilized” was by and large precise and has its roots in the nineteenth-century movement to abolish the transatlantic slave trade. Opponents condemned the slave trade not only because it was inhumane, but also for the economic waste it engendered. For instance, critics of the trade could point to the estimated 15 percent

or 1.8 million captive Africans who perished on the morbid Middle Passage or oceanic voyage to the Americas.²¹ Following the abolition of the slave trade in Britain and the United States, Christian missions in Africa pursued the agenda for “civilizing” Africans. It consisted of the production of tropical export staples by Africans—in Africa—for overseas markets. Abolitionists argued that the civilizing mission should involve converting Africans to Christianity and training them to cultivate crops for commerce (from whence the phrase, the *Bible and the Plow*). The new commerce was called “legitimate trade” to distinguish it from the slave trade that by the mid-1800s had become mostly illegal. In the end, the civilized African would acquire Western culture through education, commerce, and Christianity.²²

First, through the training he received from Mr. Hill (and probably the Muhlenberg mission) the Kpelle groom had acquired knowledge of the *Bible*; next, came *the Plow*. Like his mentor, Mr. Hill, the “civilized” Kpelle also learned to cultivate coffee for export, the *Plow*. Note that rice farming, which was (and remains) the subsistence agriculture of the Kpelleh and all indigenous people, was not mentioned in the quotation. The final proof of being “civilized” is the “frame” house, an American model that was typically made of wooden shingles and contained large windows and a verandah.²³ It was markedly different from the small, mostly round wattle-and-daub, palm-thatched huts of the Kpelleh and other autochthons. For example, houses on the Muhlenberg mission were described as “commodious . . . large building . . . splendid . . .”²⁴ By this period, up-and-coming Americo-Liberians constructed wooden frame houses, while the well-to-do used wood as well as stones in homes and businesses.²⁵ Therefore, the measure of a “civilized” (also called *kwi*) person in the nineteenth century was Christianity and literacy, commerce and the possession of some form of Western material culture, represented here as a “frame” house.²⁶ In effect, to be “civilized,” the Kpelleh youth had to assume a new identity, one that almost certainly alienated him from his culture. Marriage to the “highly esteemed colonist,” marked the climax of his transformation.

is a teacher in Royesville . . . We furnish text-books to these schools . . .”²⁹ As a teacher, Mr. Simpson was among the Americo-Liberian elite of the town. But herein lay the rub. Those who scowled at his decision to wed Kamah believed that by marrying Kamah, teacher Simpson was sending a dangerous mixed message to his pupils (Americo-Liberians as well as “natives”). Basically, the marriage would undermine the public position of maintaining respectable social distance from the “heathen Africans” and their “pagan” customs. For one, although the wedding ceremony did follow Western customs, the groom had to still perform the “primitive” Vai marriage tradition by presenting the bride’s parents with the bridewealth, a gift of “cloth and household articles.”³⁰ Ultimately, the Americo-Liberian community probably shrugged in resignation. However, in the eyes of supporters, Kamah did possess one redeeming quality: like the Kpelleh youth, she is said to have “accepted the Christian religion and a measure of Western civilization.”³¹

It appears that more cross-cultural sexual unions existed in the twentieth century. Among the reasons was the continual expansion of the Republic from the coast into the interior throughout the century. The further inland the Republic extended its boundaries, the more the small population of Americo-Liberians became surrounded by throng of indigenes. For instance, as early as 1900 the Americo-Liberian population was estimated at merely 20,000, compared to “1,000,000 natives, who have been more or less favorably affected by contact with” the Americo-Liberians.³² This growing encounter meant greater interactions (belligerent as well as cordial) between the new “civilized” or *kwi* people from the interior and the Americo-Liberians on the coast. Sexual union is an example of the cordial interrelationships.

The polygynous relationship described by Victoria Tolbert seems to be the norm by the early decades of the twentieth century. Yet, evidence also indicates that other forms of sexual unions were widespread. Writing of the same period as Victoria Tolbert, the current Liberian president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, recalls that her father

also chased women with great enthusiasm. This was not unusual nor particularly frowned upon at the time. Polygamy was the dominant form of marriage . . . Even the settlers, who brought with them Christianity and its emphasis on monogamy, took up the practice of having *concubines and 'outside' children* [emphasis mine].³³

A contemporary narrative corroborates these accounts. The author was an American, Elizabeth Furbay, whose American husband, John, was president of the College of West Africa from 1936 to 1939; the Furbays lived on the school campus on Ashmun Street. She wrote that

a prominent family of Americo-Liberian aristocrats . . . is a splendid example of a *typical Liberian household*. . . There were a son and a daughter who were legitimate offspring; there were a son and a daughter who were *outside children of the father by two different native women*. . . [emphasis mine].³⁴

Illegitimate children were commonplace and could be found among the elite as well. For example, Furbay hinted that President Edwin Barclay (1930-44) was born out of wedlock. According to Furbay, sometime between 1936 and 1939 (when Barclay was president) a student of the College of West Africa wrote an essay about the president's accomplishments. (CWA was the preeminent high school with primarily Americo-Liberian students.) The essay praised the president's resourcefulness and ascribed it to his "illegitimate birth," an allusion to the disadvantages "outside" children had to overcome;³⁵ so far, whether Barclay's mother was a "native" remains a mystery.

This author has yet to find a refutation of Furbay's suggestion that Barclay was born out of wedlock. Her book was published in

1943, the year Barclay retired from the presidency, and a dozen years before his death. Additionally, Furbay notes that the Liberian Legislature enacted a law whereby “an illegitimate child is made legitimate,” which apparently was passed “for the benefit of the present highly respected President.”³⁶

Legally, Americo-Liberians were monogamous. Therefore, liaisons or concubinage such as the one Barclay’s father supposedly committed was illegal; so were the numerous affairs of President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf’s father. Polygyny was, however legal. Early on, the Liberian government recognized polygyny since it is central to the social order of the various indigenous groups. Therefore, an Americo-Liberian could also legally marry more than one “native” wife. But the form of polygyny practiced by Victoria Tolbert’s father-in-law was more popular among Americo-Liberians, although it appears bigamous: The men were already involved in a monogamous relationship with Americo-Liberian wives. According to Victoria Tolbert, her mother-in-law opposed polygyny and challenged “Father Tolbert” about his sexual relations with the “country wives”; her challenge was spirited and at times confrontational.³⁷

George Padmore sheds more light on the type of polygyny that was practiced by Americo-Liberian men:

Customs in Liberia at the time were that farmers married an educated lady mainly to maintain his prestige with the civilized community. He could likewise have as *many native or farm wives* as he might find financially possible. ... Some farmers had *two or three such wives who never mingle with his city home or family* [emphasis mine].³⁸

Padmore’s account is of the 1930s and 1940s, and the farmers were cultivating rubber, the new export staple. Much earlier, in 1913, a similar depiction was given by an American, Frederick Starr:

Living in the same neighborhood with Dr. Lewis is Jacob Logan . . . His father was a Liberian [Americo-Liberian], and his mother a Bassa . . . he is *legally married to one wife*, but has the reputation of *maintaining a considerable body of native women* . . . [emphasis mine].³⁹

These polygynous practices occurred in the twentieth, not nineteenth century. However, Padmore's story about Americo-Liberian rubber farms is somewhat similar to a late nineteenth-century anecdote also about farms or "half-towns" as they were called at the time.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, a small group of Americo-Liberian farmers owned large farms where they cultivated coffee and sugar; both crops were exported primarily to the United States.⁴⁰ In 1877, Edwin Wilmot Blyden wrote about one of these farms:

On my way from Boporo . . . I purposely made for Arthington, the nearest American settlement. The first farm we came to was Mr. Solomon Hill's. His name is known as far as Boporo . . . because his land runs in the native haunts. Indeed, he has a small native town on his land, and its inhabitants speak very highly of his treatment of them. When about a mile from Arthington, in a dense forest, we came suddenly upon a cluster of native huts, containing only women—the men had gone off to 'cut farm.' We inquired, 'what town is this?' 'This be Sol. Hill's *half-town*,' we were told [emphasis mine].⁴¹

Solomon Hill (whose "Pesseh" youth married the widow) was one of the largest coffee planters in Liberia. Having a native town or "half-town" on his farm was not unusual. Other large farmers, like his fellow townsman June Moore, also owned half-towns on their coffee farms. These "half-towns" were occupied by the locals, who maintained the coffee farms. There is no proof that Hill or the other farmers practiced the polygyny that Padmore indicates had become customary by the twentieth century.

While polygyny was popular in the twentieth century, monogamous relationships did exist. One illustration was the wedding of Momolu Massaquoi, a Vai, and Rachel Johnson, an Americo-Liberian. Massaquoi, educated in Liberia and overseas, was enterprising, intelligent, and cosmopolitan. He and Rachel married in 1915. She was the great granddaughter of Elijah Johnson, one of the original settlers that defended the colony against the Dei attacks in November and December 1822. In 1884, Elijah's son Hilary W. R. Johnson became the first president to have been born in Liberia. Massaquoi held prominent government jobs including secretaries of interior and postal affairs, and Consul General to Germany. He had presidential ambition in 1931, but withdrew after being accused of misappropriating public funds, an allegation he believed was concocted by his political enemies, specifically President Edwin Barclay.⁴²

To sum up, this century-plus account of sexual unions reveals a level of interaction between the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous people that has previously been ignored in the historiography. The broader question is how do the anecdotes about cross-cultural sexual relationships impact the historiography? How do these accounts expand our understanding of the relationship between two groups that are assumed to be locked in a perennial struggle? The following are some observations to consider about these intermarriages.

In the story about the mixed marriage of his parents, Clarence Simpson appreciates his "native" mother thus:

I also greatly respect certain characteristics of my mother's people, respect, tradition, learn and a sensitivity whether they are *diplomatic circle* which I was part of. *In the world in a eternal legacy has always been an asset and a source of pride [emphasis mine]*⁴³

Considering the foregoing, can the historiography continue to view the early contact period as solely one of "assimilating" and "civilizing the natives"? Simpson certainly believes that his mother's culture contributed significantly to his upbringing. Therefore the influence was mutual, that is, acculturation was bilateral: his mother adopted Western values and transferred some of her cultural traits to the Simpson family. In the end, both Americo-Liberians and indigenes influenced one another.⁴⁴

Next is the revelation by Victoria Tolbert that her father-in-law practiced defense, the older Tolbert is reported to have respected a lot of women around me, but I have to . . . I'm women do lots of special work . . ." ⁴⁵ Americo-indigenous knowledge to succeed in the new environment, for instance, was dramatically different from the accustomed to in the United States. One difference was the planting season. In most parts of the United States, crops could be cultivated in different seasons throughout the year. On the other hand, Liberia's farming regime is divided into dry and rainy periods. Out of the twelve months in a year, there are only four months or so of the rainy season to plant, or risk starvation the next year.

Also, "Father Tolbert" obviously used his social status to facilitate his farming operations. The Tolberts lived in Bensonville (now Bentol), a town that was surrounded entirely by indigenes, the largest being

the Kpelleh. The prosperous "Father Tolbert" was a prominent member of the elite Americo-Liberian clan. He served in the House of Representatives and was superintendent of his home district. Tolbert was also a Baptist deacon, the "civilizer" among the "country people." He spoke Kpelleh and joined the Poro society, the secretive all-male group that wields considerable influence and power among West African Mande speakers.⁴⁶ Tolbert's comments that he was "a big farmer" and his country wives were laborers—"do lots of special work"—confirms the uneven power relationship. Indigenous men took similar advantage of multiple wives in polygynous relationships.⁴⁷ Tolbert's assimilation of Kpelleh culture (e.g., speaking Kpelleh) enabled him to navigate challenges presented by Kpelleh cultural traditions. Lastly, his adaptation further suggests significant interactions with indigenes, contrary to notion of perpetual separateness that is implied in the historiography.

Finally, the story of Momulu Massaquoi's matrimony also raises some interesting questions. His biographer observed that his marriage to Rachel Johnson, a descendant of an Americo-Liberian president, "catapulted Momolu into the midst of the Liberian elite."⁴⁸ The biographer, Raymond Smyke, does mention that Massaquoi was already acquainted with some prominent Americo-Liberians when he wedded Rachel. One was Daniel E. Howard. In 1911 Howard encouraged Massaquoi to leave Vai country and relocate to Monrovia, the nation's capital.⁴⁹ When Howard became president a year later, he immediately appointed Massaquoi an official in his administration. Howard probably played a critical role in Massaquoi's decision to wed Rachel. According to Smyke, Howard had persuaded Massaquoi to "regularize his conjugal situation because Monrovia people would not accept a native man in their midst with all his wives by traditional marriage."⁵⁰ Massaquoi married Rachel thereafter. He worked in the Howard administration until its termination in 1919.

The Massaquoi matrimony is an illustration of how upward social mobility could be reached in Liberia's highly stratified society. One must wonder if this kind of mobility was common for ambitious in-

indigenous men seeking to join the ruling Americo-Liberian class. Massaquoi's marriage poses a major question about the concept of perpetual conflict between the indigenous and the proud "native" Liberian, was reflected inside and outside Liberia. His ties to both the Vai prince and and Marcus Garvey, two pioneer pan-Africanists, reflected their strong anti-colonial stance.⁵¹ Yet, Massaquoi's "colonial" or "black imperialist" government of the Americo-Liberians at a time when some indigenous groups challenged Americo-Liberian hegemony—e.g., the Kru, 1915-17 and Gola, 1918. One explanation for his action confirms that the various indigenous groupings reacted differently to Americo-Liberian rule.

This brief bedroom history illustrates the complexity of Liberian society, a society of seemingly fixed social boundaries. Sexual union, like politics, is just one of the many sides of the multifaceted human story called history. To fully appreciate history, one must access the multiple layers. History is like "onion" one keen observer of world history noted, "whose layers are to be peeled back in search for historical understanding."⁵² The "total history" approach is the perfect model for disentangling the complexity, because it analyzes all human activities—including politics and sexual unions.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Victoria Anna David Tolbert, *Lifted Up: The Victoria Tolbert Story* (Minneapolis, MN, 1996), 51-52.
- ² The idea of "persistent conflict" is the underlying thread in the historiography, as evidenced in the title of Eckhard Hinzen and Robert Kappel, *Dependence, Underdevelopment and Persistent Conflict: On the Political Economy of Liberia* (Bremen, Germany, 1980); see also J. Gus Liebenow, *Liberia: The Evolution of Privilege* (Ithaca, 1969); M. B. Akpan, "Black Imperialisms: Americo-Liberian Rule over the African Peoples of Liberia, 1847-1964," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 7 (1973): 217-36.
- ³ For discussion of the concept of the Annales historical method see, Fernand Braudel, *On History*, trans., Sarah Matthews (Chicago, 1980); T. Stoianivich, *The French Historical Method: The Annales Paradigm* (Ithaca, 1976); Peter Burke, *New Perspectives on History Writing* (Pennsylvania, 1991); Chapter 1; T. Stoianivich, *The French Historical Method: The Annales Paradigm* (Ithaca, 1976).
- ⁴ Jim Sharpe, "History From Below," in Burke, *New Perspectives on History Writing*, 33.
- ⁵ Liberians referred to all bedclothes as "blanket." The notion of history being made "in the bedroom" is inspired by Fernand Braudel, *Memory and the Mediterranean*, ed., Roselyn De Ayala and Paule Braudel and trans., Siân Reynolds, (New York, 2001), xvi.
- ⁶ Data on slave trade extrapolated from <http://www.slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces>.
- ⁷ E.g., Annual Report of the American Colonization Society (hereafter Annual Report), Proceedings of the Board of Directors, 1867, 56-64; Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 33-35, 116-19, 155 and 188-89.
- ⁸ AR, 1865, 236-42.
- ⁹ E.g., Hilary Beckles, *Great House Rules: Landless Emancipation and Workers' Protest in Barbados, 1838-1938* (Kingston, Jamaica, 2004).
- ¹⁰ E.g., Annual Report, 1867, 64.
- ¹¹ The African Repository and Colonial Journal (hereafter AR & CJ), 1839, 9; AR, 1861, 94; Wiley, *Slaves No More*, 210; Eltis "Volume and Structure," Map II.
- ¹² P. E. H. Hair, "An Account of the Liberian Hinterland c. 1780," *Sierra Leone Studies* 16 (1962), 218-26.
- ¹³ On migration and ethnic groups, see, Walter Rodney, *History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800* (Oxford, 1970), 6, 15. Svend Holsoe, "The Cassava-Leaf People: An Ethnohistorical Study of the Vai of Liberia With a Particular Emphasis on the Tewo Chiefdom, Ph.D. diss., (Boston University, 1967), 67-70; D. Elwood Dunn, Amos J. Beyan, and Carl Patrick Burrowes, ed., *Historical Dictionary of Liberia* (Lanham, Md., 2001), 1-2; Mary Moran, *Civilized Woman: Gender and Prestige in Southeastern Liberia* (Ithaca, New York, 1990).

- ¹⁴ Svend E. Holsoe, "A Study of Relationship Between Settlers and Indigenous Peoples in Western Liberia, 1821-1847" *African Historical Studies*, IV, 2 (1971), 335-337.
- ¹⁵ Archibald Alexander, *A History of Colonization on the Western Coast of Africa* (New York, 1971), 187.
- ¹⁶ Abayomi Karna, *History of Liberia* (Liverpool, 1926), 12-13; Frederick Starr, "The People of Liberia: Sketches of Native Liberians in Public Life—Kru Boys who Are Eager for an Education—Native Schools," 75 (1913), 482-83.
- ¹⁷ E.g., Frederick Starr, "The People of Liberia," 484.
- ¹⁸ While data on literacy gathered prior to emigration is incomplete, most emigrants were illiterate: teaching slaves to read or write was mostly illegal. And although some Muslims such as the Vai and Mandingo could read and write Arabic (or the Vai Script) there is no evidence as yet that they wrote of sexual unions. See Tom W. Shick, "Emigrants to Liberia, 1820 To 1843: An Alphabetical Listing," (Liberian Studies Research Association Working Paper No. 2, 1971); Robert T. Brown, "Immigrants To Liberia, 1843 to 1865: An Alphabetical Listing," (Liberian Studies Research Association Working Paper No. 7, 1980).
- ¹⁹ The African Repository (hereafter AR.), 65, 2(1889), 45.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 63, 2 (1887), 60-61.
- ²¹ E.g., Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York, 2007), 5.
- ²² T. F. Buxton, *The African Slave Trade and its Remedy* (London, 1840); J. B. Webster, "The Bible and the Plough," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*, 2, 4 (1963): 418-34; P. J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816-1865* (New York, 1980), e.g., 49-50.
- ²³ See pictures in Svend Holsoe and Bernard Herman, ed., *A Life and Land Remembered: Americo-Liberian Folk Architecture* (Athens and London, 1988)
- ²⁴ R, 63, 2 (1887), 60.
- ²⁵ AR & CJ, 1, 1 (1825), 26; AR, 41, 4 (1865), 22, 139; AR, 58, 1 (1882), 26; Annual Report, 1865, 22.
- ²⁶ Generally civilized (or *kwi*) and native are polar terms, with the first connoting advanced Western culture and the latter, the supposed backward African way of life. To understand how the meaning has evolved in one area, see, Moran, *Civilized Woman*, e.g., 2-3, 63-72.
- ²⁷ C. L. Simpson, *The Memoirs of C. L. Simpson: The Symbol of Liberia* (London, n.d.), 68-70.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 68, 70.
- ²⁹ Eighty-Ninth Annual Report, 1906, 4.
- ³⁰ Simpson, *The Memoirs of C. L. Simpson*, 70.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*, 71.

- ³² Eighty-Third Annual Report, 1900, 12.
- ³³ Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, *This Child Will be Great: Memoir of a Remarkable Life by Africa's First Woman President* (New York, 2009), 17.
- ³⁴ Elizabeth Dearmin Furbay, *Top Hats and Tom-Tom* (Chicago, 1943), 121.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*, 134.
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Victoria Anna David Tolbert, *Lifted Up*, 51-52.
- ³⁸ George Padmore, *The Memoirs of a Liberian Ambassador: George Arthur Padmore* (Lewiston NY, 1996), 25-26.
- ³⁹ Starr, "The People of Liberia," 484.
- ⁴⁰ William E. Allen, "Sugar and Coffee: A History of Settler Agriculture in Nineteenth-Century Liberia," Ph.D. diss., Florida International University, 2002.
- ⁴¹ A R, 53, 1(1877), 92.
- ⁴² Raymond J. Smyke, *The First African Diplomat: Momolu Massaquoi (1870-1938)* (Xlibris Corporation, 2004), 159, Chapter 19.
- ⁴³ Simpson, *Memoirs*, 71.
- ⁴⁴ On the difference between assimilation and acculturation, see, David Buisseret and Steve G. Reinhart, *Creolization in the Americas* (Arlington, TX, 2000).
- ⁴⁵ Victoria Tolbert, *Lifted Up*, 52.
- ⁴⁶ Dunn et al., *Historical Dictionary of Liberia*, 268.
- ⁴⁷ See example for the Kru in Moran, *Civilized Women*, 43-44.
- ⁴⁸ Smyke, *The First African Diplomat*, 159.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 182.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 183-84.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 216, 217, 245-48.
- ⁵² Jared Diamond, *Guns, Germs, and Steel: The Fates of Human Societies* (New York, 1997), 11.