Sovereign Rent in Post-World War II Liberia, 1945-1971: Imperative Foundation of State and Nation Building

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the Liberian state in the immediate post-World War Two (WWII) era of President William V. S. Tubman (1944-1971), through a critical assessment of Rentier State Theory. The Rentier State Theory predicts a set of negative relationships between state rent and political and economic developments in so-called 'late developing' states. The theory has also been used to account for the eruption and perpetuity of civil wars in Liberia between 1989 and 2003, in which rent revenue played a pivotal role. And yet, rent has historically accounted for a substantial share of Liberia's fiscal intake since its founding as an independent nation in 1847, especially with the arrival of the American firm, Firestone Rubber Company, in 1926. With the discovery and exploitation of iron ore, timber, and other commodities in early 1950s, government's proceeds from resource rent dramatically increased. It was precisely during this post-WW II period of immense sovereign rent that we witnessed the development of a strong, prosperous, and stable Liberian state domestically and internationally. The expected outcome of conflict due to state rent also remained absent during the period, and for a further twenty years. But despite these anomalies, the Rentier State Theory continues to dominate inquiries into Liberia's political economy particularly, and resource-rich African nations in general.

This dissertation produces new evidence to argue that, in contrast to widely accepted premises of rent's deleterious effects on the state, rent revenue in fact played a constructive and pivotal role in the dynamic processes of state and nation building throughout Liberia's history, but especially during the Tubman era (1944-1971). Accordingly, this dissertation makes three original contributions to knowledge. *Empirically*, it produces fresh evidence that contradicts the predicted negative outcomes of the Rentier State Theory, offering a new layer of empirical data in the debate. *Theoretically*, the dissertation deconstructs the Rentier State framework, arguing instead for a framing of sovereign rent not as a destructive element of governance, but as an inherent feature of modern state formation, and indeed of statehood itself. It argues that the very notion of a 'rentier state' as undesirable in postcolonial settings is an inaccurate, unstable, and misleading oxymoron. For the 'modern' state is by it very nature a rentier, on account of its exclusive rights to sovereignty. *Methodologically*, this dissertation uncovers more than a century of archival records on Liberia, to uphold the epistemological power of *longue durée* history and a politico-historical approach to critically examining the postcolonial African state.

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This work belongs to them.

Love!

SGT, Sr.

January 2020

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the research and its main aims. The theoretical origins and key elements of its contentions are introduced here, as are the thesis' organizational layout and main arguments.

Background

The empirical scenario I examine in this study is Liberia, Africa's first independent state, and by the mid-19th Century, one of only two "black republics" in the world. Originally settled by black New World emigrants fleeing slavery and racial hostilities in the United States between 1821-1822, these black settlers built a western-styled society along the Atlantic Ocean in the area of West Africa now known as Liberia. In 1847, the Commonwealth of Liberia – comprising the colonies of Monrovia, Bassa Cove and Sinoe – declared itself independent amidst tensions with Great Britain and France over the right to collect customs revenue within territories under settlers' control. These Afro-American settlers (and later Afro-Caribbean and African) became known as Americo-Liberians,[1] and ruled over Liberia from independence in 1847 until 1980 when a bloody military coup permanently ended their rule. Ten years later, civil war erupted in which an estimated 200,000 persons were killed, and another 250,000 uprooted as refugees or internally displaced persons (Ellis 2007; Nmoma 1997). Deeply implicated in the violence was the country's abundant mineral wealth – natural rubber, iron ore, diamonds, gold, forest timber, etc. Many scholars and international organizations have linked the eruption and perpetuation of civil wars to the presence and preponderance of these resource wealth, and the rents accruing therefrom (Collier 2006; Global Witness 2003; Reno 2015). Thus, rent – understood as 'unearned' gains derived primarily from monopoly possession of an asset or asset-position – is assigned a causal role in conflicts, bad governance, and other developmental malaise suffered by states in general, and Liberia in particular (Reno 1998; Addison & Murshed 2002; Collier and Hoeffler, 1998, 2004; Auty 2001, 2004; Bevan, Collier & Gunning 1999; Karl 1997).

[1] Some scholars argue that the term 'Americo-Liberian' as a pejorative misnomer for a society whose members did not only comprise Afro-American settlers. I content and insist, however, upon the historical significance of the term, and its function as an important signifier of settlers' deep heritage and affinities to the Unite States - politically, legally, religiously, culturally and ideologically. So profound was U.S. influence that to omit the 'Americo' would ammount to a signifcant obfuscation of a great historical fact.

The last five decades have witnessed the Rentier State Theory emerge as the dominant framework for examining and theorizing political and economic developments in so-called 'late developing' states, mainly in Africa (e.g. DiJohn 2002). It was developed out of the ruins of the 'dependency' and 'liberal' orthodoxies of the 1950s and 60s. Formulated in 1970 by the Iranian economist, Hossein Mahdavy (1970), the Rentier State framework was first deployed to explore dynamics in Arab Gulf oil producing states. Soon thereafter, it found applications in other mineral and resourse exporting countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America (Yates 1996, 2014; Omeje 2008, 2010; Sala-i-Martin and Bubramanian 2003; Bevan, D., Collier, P. & Gunning, J. 1999; Buxton 2008; Campodocino 2008). Broadly speaking, a 'rentier state' is defined as one in which rent pre-dominates the economy (often 40% or more), and is derived primarily from external sources, mainly as revenues from commodity and mineral exports. Such states are believed to engage mainly in wealth 'allocation', instead of organizing domestic 'production' activities (Yates 2014, 2015; Ross 2012; Mahdavi 1970; Beblawi & Luciani 1978). Thus, they have come to be associated with four main characteristics: (1) an economy in which rent dominates; (2) rent is derived primarily from external sources; (3) rent proceeds accrue to a small number of people within society; and (4) government, or the state, is the principal recipient of rent (Beblawi & Luciani 1978; Yates 2015).

From these characterizations have also emerged four main postulates within the Rentier State theoretical framework. *First*, rent is believed to lead to developmental impairments due to its negative impact on other non-rentier sectors of the economy, such as manufacturing and services, i.e. the "Dutch Disease" (Auty 2001, 2004; Bevan, Collier & Gunning 1999; Karl 1997). *Second*, rent is believed to encourage social waste, corruption and fiscal profligacy through the phenomena of rent-seeking, diversion of entrepreneurial talents, and intense competition over public offices in society (Ross 2012; Arezki & Gylfason 2013). *Third*, rent is believed to undermine democracy, encourage authoritarian rule, and inhibit the emergence of democratic institutions and civil society (Arezki & Gylfason 2013; Yates 2014). And *finally*, rent is believed to result to conflict, because it incentivizes rebellion and struggles over control of the state and its resources (Ross 2012; Woodward 2008, Deng 2010; Sach & Werner 1995; Collier 2006; Reno 2015).

Key Research Puzzle and Questions

I began this research cognizant of the complicity of resource rent in Liberia's recent civil wars, and its role in fuelling violence through the financing of rebellion and purchase of weapons of war (Global Witness 2005, Reno 1998; 2000; 2015). Equally handy was the perceived usefulness of the Rentier State Theory in accounting for these developments in resource-rich countries. But the preponderance of state rent, and the Government of Liberia's (GoL) reliance upon it, are nothing new. Ever since the entry into Liberia in 1926 of the American rubber company, Firestone, and the discovery and export of iron ore in the early 1950s, commodity rents have accounted for a substantial share of GoL's fiscal intake (between 60% – 90%) and GDP (b/t 40% – 60%) during the period 1950 and 1975 (GoL *Annual Report* 1974; 1978, 4-12). According to the dominant Rentier State theory, such developments would make Liberia a typical 'rentier state'. Thus, the impact – arising from the so-called 'resource curse' – is expected to be negative overall. However, preliminary evidence suggests that it was precisely during this period of intense state rent that we witness the emergence of a strong, prosperous, and stable Liberian state, which undertood credible efforts to liberalize politics and society. Furthermore, the expected effect of conflict due to bad governance remained absent throughout the period, and for a further twenty years. If the preponderance of state rent failed to result into the expected negative outcomes, as will be demonstrated in this study, why then does the Rentier State framework continue to dominate political-economic inquiries into Liberia's political economy particularly, and resource-rich African nations in general?

To address this analytical and empirical puzzle, this dissertation asks: In what ways, if any, does the Rentier State Theory account for political and economic developments in Liberia during this unique post-WWII era of President William V.S. Tubman? In response to this key research question, the dissertation carefully examines developments during the period, through a critical assessment of the Rentier State Theory.

Relevance of the Study

The questions raised by these anomalies concern themselves not only with the underlying theoretical foundation of the Rentier State framework, but also to its key postulates. But there is also an important historical dimension to these anomalies. Most comparative studies utilizing the Rentier State framework, including its first application by Mahdavy (1970), are limited to the decades of the 1960s and beyond, a uniquely postcolonial era in global politics and state development in the Global South, especially Africa (Collier and Hoeffler 2004; Collier 2009; Sach & Warner 1995, 1997, 2001). The implication, therefore, is the perception that the rentier state is relatively recent and unique to so-called 'late developing' states, as DiJohn (2002) has suggested, whose 'modern' statehood postdates the 1950s and 60s. If we suppose, as the Rentier State Theory suggests, that the rentier state is postcolonial, the question which arises, then, is: what purpose did rent serve in state development prior to the 50s and 60s? Did rent exhibit the exact same effects upon the state and society as are now being postulated by the Rentier State Theory? Does the transition from colonial to postcolonial statehood impact the dynamics of rent extraction? If so, how?

The experience of Liberia, Africa's first and oldest independent republic, therefore, offers great insight into these questions for two main reasons. *First*, Liberia's long experience as a 'modern' state provides a sufficiently broad historical spread across which the different forms and operations of state rent can be examined, thus offering an opportunity to discover different uses and functions across time. *Second*, the immediate post-1945 decades of state development in Liberia, while representing a moment of intense state rentierism, also coincided with a period in international political economy of permissive state involvement in the economy and markets for "just social causes". This was the era of 'embedded liberalism' described first by Polanyi (1944) and later Ruggie (1982). Perceived in this light, the experience of Liberia offers fresh perspectives regarding the theoretical foundations and analytical usefulness of the Rentier State Theory for understanding developments in postcolonial Africa.

A further relevance of this study is its implication for international development policies. The empirical anomalies discovered in the case of Liberia raise urgent questions not only regarding the usefulness of the framework for understanding so-called 'late developing' states, but also for international development policies which are derived from it.

Theoretical and Analytical Approach

The theoretical construct I use to understand developments in post-WWII Liberia is the *postcolony*. Borrowed from the postcolonial theorist Achille Mbembe (2001), the postcolony helps us think more critically about the post-colonial African state, the meaning of sovereignty and time, their relationships to power and resources, and how these are allocated across society. Given Africa's legacy of European colonialism, the African state is undoubtedly conditioned by this colonial past. But the postcolonial African state is also the result of Africa's historic relationship with the West – its peoples, cultures, ideologies, and systems of rule. In the synthesis of the postcolonial state, therefore, the 'modern' state which was fastened upon Africa at conquest (and indeed the world), has in many ways been radically transformed and infused with African notions of power, authority, and social order in the production of a new *postcolonial rationality* (p. 25). Mbembe describes this *rationality* as "the product of several cultures, heritages and traditions which have become entangled over time, to the point where something has emerged that has the look of "customs", without being reducible to it; and partakes of "modernity" without being wholly included in it' (ibid). In other words, the transformation from the colonial to the postcolonial, is rooted in various forms of connectedness and interconnectedness that Mbembe terms as *entanglements*.

Mbembe's (2001) concept of *entanglement* has direct bearing on ideas of post-coloniality in Liberia, in terms mainly *as a process of shifting relationships between 'colonizers' and the 'colonized'*. Thus, in this dissertation, we acquire a clear understanding of the various forms and hybridity present in Liberia's post-colonial era, which I argue commenced with the administration of President Tubman in 1944. Here, elements of the 'pre-colonial', 'colonial' and 'post-colonial', of the 'traditional' and 'modern', and of the 'Western' and 'African', fuse together to create a new post-colonial reality reflective of their essential elements.

The phenomenon of state rentierism in Liberia, and its effects on the economy and society, are indeed difficult realities to grasp. The vast and ever-expanding literature on the 'rentier state' is helpful, but only to a certain extent. Thus far, the classic approach to state rentierism has been to treat state rent, especially from mineral resources, as a 'curse' to be avoided. And when contracted, to be 'cured' through liberal strategies of privatization and state retrenchment (Ross 2012; Sach & Warner 2001). The classic 'rentier state' literature and its cognate 'resource curse' scholarship, have treated sovereign rent as a source of debilitating effects. Of course, the prepositions are helpful to understanding the possible effects of this category of state revenue in certain contexts. However, the framework demonstrates a certain inadequacy by the decisive causal role it assignes to rent.

Here, therefore, my dissertation takes a somewhat different approach to the concepts of 'sovereign rent' and the 'rentier state', and to claims about rents' debilitating effects on the state. By adopting a politico-historical approach to this study, I ask the important question about how this unique political configuration of the 'rentier state' took shape within an African state. In so doing, I trace the development of state rentierism across the entire state experience in Liberia, beginning from 1822 when black New World settlers arrived along the West African coast. This *longue durée* approach to sovereign rent, with a focus on the post-WWII era of William V.S. Tubman (1944 - 1971), reveals the existence of disparate forms, operations, and deployments of state rent, with varying effects upon the state and society. The overarching themes of state-building and nation-building recur consistently throughout these periods. But they acquire greater urgency and rapidity during the Tubman Era of massive state rent. In the post-WWII processes of state-making and nation building, state rent played a pivotal role, in contrast to past moments of failure. In this dissertation, I take the themes of nation-building and state-building, and their relationships to revenue, more seriously. I treat state rent not as an intrinsically destructive or corrupting phenomenon (i.e. a 'curse') which imperils state progress; but instead, I treat it as an indispensable tool in state sustenance and socio-political consensus-making which are necessary for successful state and nation-building processes. Rent is conceived, therefore, as a normal element of state fiscality vital for sustenance and longevity. Evidence from the Tubman Era, as I will show, offers ample support for this view.

Original Contributions to Scholarship

This dissertation produces over 100 years of new evidence from extensive archival research across three continents and three countries (i.e. Africa/Liberia, the N. America/United States and Europe/UK) to argue that in contrast to widely accepted premises that sovereign rent undermines democratic institutions, promotes corruption, hinders economic development, and leads to social wastefulness, resulting in conflict and civil wars – that in fact rent was indispensable to state-making and nation-building processes in Liberia, especially during the post-WWII era of President William V.S. Tubman (1944-1971). Accordingly, this dissertation makes three original contributions to knowledge, which will be elaborated throughout the dissertation. *Empirically*, it reveals that the predicted political and economic outcomes of the Rentier State framework are contradicted by developments in Liberia during the Tubman era. Through careful analyses of primary GoL records and independent studies, this dissertation reveals the diverse forms, sources, and operations of sovereign rent present throughout Liberia's early state development, offering a new layer of empirical evidence in the rentier state debate. *Theoretically*, the dissertation destabilizes and deconstructs the Rentier State framework, arguing instead for a theoretical framing of sovereign rent which perceives it as an inherent feature of 'modern' state formation, and indeed of statehood itself, based upon the state's exclusivity over sovereignty as a juridical asset in international law. The existence and decisiveness of sovereign rent at the inception of 'modern' statehood in Liberia suggest that the very notion of a 'rentier state' as undesirable in postcolonial settings is inaccurate, unstable, and a misleading oxymoron. The 'modern' state – born at Westphalia in 1648 – is by its very nature a rentier on account of its exclusivity (i.e. monopoly) over sovereignty. *Methodologically*, this dissertation upholds the epistemological power of *longue durée* history and a politico-historical approach to critically examining postcolonial African states.

Thesis Structure

The dissertation is divided into six chapters, excluding this introductory section and a conclusion. In this Introductory chapter, I present a broad overview of the thesis, its main arguments and original contributions to scholarship. Chapter 1 (*Literature Review*) surveys the literatures on rent and the 'rentier state', problematizing the dominant conceptualizations of the terms. Notwithstanding its value, I argue that the Rentier State framework demonstrates significant analytical limitations; and is therefore less effective in helping us understand developments in post-1945 Liberia and Africa at large. I therefore advocate for a more useful *politico-historical approach* to the subjects of rent and the 'rentier state'. The chapter demonstrates that the idea of the state as a rentier is not new; and that rent is fundamentally a product of monopoly (i.e. sovereign exclusivity, in the case of the state), in both its economic and political conceptualizations. What is new, however, is the application of the 'rentier' to a specific category of states in the Global South, especially in the post-WWII milieu, within the context of the re-emergence of liberal orthodoxy (i.e. neoliberalism). The evolution of the Rentier State as a dominant paradigm also appears to coincide with the rise of the Washington Consensus in the 1980s, and renewed efforts by international financial and monetary institutions to supplant Southern states from economies and markets, in favour of private market actors.

Chapter 2 (*Analytical Framework*) elaborates upon the concept of the *postcolony* proposed by Mbembe (2001), demonstrating its usefulness in understanding post-1945 Liberia and Africa more broadly. Traditional African notions of *allocation* and *social transfers* appear fundamental to the uses and application of state rents, and are therefore vital to forging socio-political consensuses, thus helping us grasp the underlying postcolonial *rationalities* at play in the postcolony. Although Mbembe focuses on the idea of the *postcolony as entanglement* from the perspective of time and temporality (i.e. a fusion of the pre-, during- and post-colonial), the case of Liberia illustrates a more spatial understanding of the concept between Liberia, the United States, and the wider Euro-American world throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries.

Chapter 3 (*History as Methods*) discusses what it means to employ history as methodology and a mode of socio-political inquiry. Accordingly, I uncover and systematically analyse over 100 years of state records from archival sources in Liberia, the United States, and United Kingdom, for the period between 1822 and 1971, with a particlar focus on post-1945. These archival materials comprise a large segment of official GoL *Reports*, including 19th and 20th Century records of the Treasury, State and Interior Departments; *Acts, Resolutions,* and *Statutes* of the National Legislature; speeches, *Inaugural Addresses,* and *Annual Messages* of Liberian presidents. A large amount of original state records did not survive the various episodes of civil wars in Liberia. However, important segments of the archives did survive as a result of private recovery efforts by historians and foreign universities.[2] These materials are now scattered across various continents and universities around the world, depending upon the institution leading its recovery. Together with other independent studies, they make possible a significant amount of original analyses (e.g. Huberich 1945; Brown 1941; Dunn 2011). The combine edited works of Townsend (1969),[3] Guannu (1980), and Dunn (2011) also provide over 160 years of *Inaugural Addresses (IA), Annual Messages (AM),* and other speeches of Liberian Presidents, in which important historical events and fiscal developments are elaborated in great details. These and other sources offer first-hand insights into developments during more historical periods. To uncover and analyse processes and themes in these records, I employ Braun and Clark's (2006) framework of 'Thematic Analysis'.

Chapter 4 (*Sovereign Rent and State-making, 1822-1944*) examines the central theme of the state's 'revenue imperative' – that central prerogative essential for its sustainance. In so doing, the

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[2] For example, the *Liberian Collection Project*, http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/search?repository=lcp&sort=title, and the *Endangered Archives Program* of the British Library, see https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP139/search?fbclid=IwAR3rFtSJlKvES7lRfGxjc8_LDHTY84iLQsx77LO9s_JF6sPsPopEPoNcmE0.

[3] Townsend (1969) focuses of President Tubman's official and private speeches.

chapter highlights four historical episodes in relation to this 'revenue imperative', each shedding light on an aspect of the main theme. The first episode, the *Little Ben Affairs of 1845,* illustrates how, in fulfilment of the 'revenue imperative', the leaders of the Liberian Commonwealth took actions declaring themselves independent in 1847 as a means of averting further protests by Great Britain and France to pay customs duties to Liberian authority. The second episode was the *British Loan of 1870,* Liberia's first international debt. Desirous of greater access to the African hinterland in the aftermath of economic decline in the 1860s, Liberian authorities felt pressured to contract foreign debt from a British bank. Mismanagement of what was already a usurious loan agreement, led to the start of major fiscal difficulties and new restraints upon sovereignty imposed by international private interests. The third episode was the *Barclay Consensus of 1904.* The term consensus is used to underscore the unprecedented levels of cooperation with indigenous African leaders which characterized President Arthur Barclay's approach to Hinterland Administration in the first quarter of the 20th Century. Under precarious fiscal conditions and imperial pressures to demonstrate 'effective occupation', the Liberian state forged a new political arrangement with surrounding indigenous politics, whereby these African societies were incorporated into the 'modern' Liberian state and granted limited self-government. In exchange, they pledged allegiance to the Liberian state, granting it increased access to hinterland commodities and fresh revenues from labour and land rents. The result was a radical fussion of Liberia's Western republican state model with 'traditional' African notions of power, authority, and social order, forever altering the character of the state.

The fourth and final episode was the *Fernando Po Labor Crisis of 1930.* Here, we see how fiscal exhaustion and the quest for revenue led GoL to exploit African labour for rent generation. African men and boys were forcibly recruited and exported to plantations on the Spanish island of Fernando Po (now Equatorial Guinea) and elsewhere. This chapter exposes how state sustenance up until 1944, especially for *Internal Revenue*, came to rely inordinately upon taxes from African labour and land rents through Head Money, Hut Tax, and unpaid labour duties. The year 1926 was, however, a turning point in the dynamics of labour rent extraction in Liberia. With Firestone's entry and the start of industrialized rubber cultivation, a new era of private labour rent extraction was introduced, from which Firestone came to dominate and profit.

Chapter 5 *(A New Phase in Sovereign Rent, 1944-1971)* interrogates the major new sources, magnitude, and patterns of state rentierism during the immediate post-WWII decades of the Tubman presidency (1944-1971), focusing on evidence from commodity export and growth in government revenue. The argument being made here is that the preponderance of sovereign rent emanating from commodity exports and international aid, was instrumental and indispensable to the successes attained under President Tubman's twin agendas of state and nation-building. This observation contrasts with the predicted negative effects of the Rentier State Theory.

Chapter 6 (*Discussions and Key Findings*) engages directly with the four main postulates of the Rentier State Theory, using evidence from the period 1944 to 1971 to evaluate each of the predicted effects. Employing thematic analyses of primary records, I find significant contradictions with each of the four postulates, leading to a conclusion that popular claims about "growth without development", bad governance, and eventually civil war in Liberia, are not borne out by evidence from the period. In other words, Liberia during this period does not comport with the predicted outcomes of the Rentier State Theory.

In concluding section, I summarize the study's key arguments, original contributions, and implications for larger scholarship. Some suggestions are offered for potential paths to future research.

Central Argument

The central argument of this dissertation is that Rentier State Theory is ahistorical, and demonstrates significant theoretical and analytical weaknesses as an intellectual tool for properly understanding post-colonial state development. Careful analyses of the 'modern' state development reveals that the history of state rentierism has not been confined to a specific phase of its development (e.g. 'late developing'); but instead, has persisted throughout the entire state experience in one or another form of revenue generation. Perhaps more important than any other period when state rent was most decisive, is the early period of state and nation-building when the imperatives of administrative centralization, and the forging of a cohesive community of diverse peoples (through various forms of political consensus-making) are most urgent. For most of postcolonial Africa, the element of nation-building was an unfortunate afterthought, commencing only after decolonization. The periods of decolonization and post-independence also coincided with the emergence of an embedded liberal order within the international system, with its permissiveness towards state actions in economies and markets. Thus, intense state rentierism emerged as a key feature of many African states. In the case of Liberia, specifically in the post-WWII era, state rent played a pivotal role in the socio-political consensuses which underpinned the relative success of President Tubman's nation-building efforts, within the context of Liberia's postcolonial transition. The evidence suggests that the imperatives of nation-building in Liberia were advanced through Tubman's sagacious use of state rent.

When it comes to the predicted negative effects of the Rentier State theoretical framework in a postcolonial African context, they are contradicted by developments in Liberia during the Tubman Era (1944-1971). In contrast to the predicted negative effects, the evidence supports the view that rent was particularly instrumental in the state-remaking and nation-building processes – two key imperatives of that period. This contradictory evidence exposes inconsistencies in the Rentier State framework; thus, highlighting the need to revisit its efficacy as an intellectual tool for analysing developments in resource-rich nations like Liberia, and Africa more broadly. Moreover, it highlights the urgency to distance postcolonial research from a Eurocentric and monolithic paradigm developed to frame a vast continent through a single, ahistorical conceptual structure. Consequently, this dissertation advocates a careful historical analysis of the Tubman period. Unlike the dominant liberal ideological construction of Rentier State Theory, the *longue durée* politico-historical framework I advocate engages more intimately with both the domestic and international complexities of a postcolonial African milieu.

Conclusion

In this Introductory Chapter, I have laid out the background, research problem, aim and key research questions. An introduction of the empirical environment (Liberia) is presented, as well as a brief presentation of the study's key contributions to knowledge. Its *longue durée* political-historical approach is introduced as a distinct and particularly useful strategy of inquiry into the subjects of rent and 'rentier state'. I argue that instead of deleterious claims about rent, a view of the larger and more salient phenomenon of revenue generation is a more pertinent framing of the subject.

What follows is an in-depth analysis of the literature on 'rent' and the 'rentier state'.

Chapter 1: Literature Review

Introduction

It is impossible to write satisfactorily about sovereign rent and the 'rentier state'. A thoroughgoing and all-inclusive review of the literature is bound to omit aspects which may appear relevant to one scholar or another. This is partly because the 'rentier state' literature is constitutive of various sub-scholarships such as the 'resource curse', 'greed vs grievance' and 'rent-seeking', themselves vast and ever-expanding, each with its own research questions, and ideological and methodological agendas. Economists, political scientists, geologists, mining specialists, public choice theorists, security experts and peace researchers have all had something to contribute. My more limited goal in this literature review, therefore, is to provide a brief overview of the 'rentier state' scholarship, and what I consider to be its four central tenets, namely, that (a) rent leads to economic and developmental impairments; (b) that it causes social waste and corruption; (c) that it weakens democracy and enables authoritarianism; and finally, (d) that it leads to conflicts and civil wars. I present and examine the debate around each of these postulates. Although rarely appearing all at once, I treat them together here to summarize the scholarship and its essential pillars. Rent, as I will soon show, is considered here in its broadest sense, to include gains from natural and non-natural resources. I close the chapter with a critique of this dominant 'rentier state' approach to sovereign rent, identifying gaps and limitations, and thus, a justification for my study's sharp departure from its, in favour of more politico-historical approach to rent and the 'rentier state'.

The 'Rentier State' Debate

One of the most lucid summaries of the Rentier State Theory is offered by Douglas Yates (2015) in his highly polemical critique of John Heilbrunn's book, *Oil, Democracy and Development in Africa* (2014).[4] In *Oil, Democracy and Development in Africa*, Heilbrunn writes particularly optimistically about Africa's petroleum wealth, that "oil revenues are hardly a curse; rather they are an opportunity for poor states to grow economically and establish conditions for democracy" (p. 9). He went so far as to suggest that "oil brings stability" (p. 115), that "as more money flows into their economies, Africa's emerging petrostates adopt better laws that enable benefits from oil production" (p. 119);

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[4] Yates (2015, 121-27). Heilbrunn's response appears in the same issue.

that "as a petrostate transits from being an emerging to a mature producer, there should be a reduction in the rate of corruption" (p. 140); that "the accumulation of wealth in even the most corrupt and autocratic state creates a possibility for development, and over time, the enactment of political reforms" (p. 151); that oil rent "creates institutional conditions that are conducive to democracy and development" (p. 121); and that 'democracy and development are probable outcomes in oil exporting states as they move through their phases of production" (p. 219).

These assertions clearly angered Yates who did not hold back from berating Heilbrunn for ignorance and a careless disregard of the rich scholarship on the subject. Yates (2015) writes:

> Many fine books have been published on the 'resource curse', such as Terry Lynn Karl's *The Paradox of Plenty: oil booms and petrostates* (1997), Alan Gelb's *Oil Windfalls: blessing or curse* (1988), Richard Auty's Resource Abundance and Economic Development (2001), Paul Collier's *The Bottom Billion* (2007) and Michael Ross's *The Oil Curse* (2012), alongside many articles by scholars such as Michael Watts, George Frynas, Ricardo Soares de Oliveira, Ian Gary, Anne Krueger, Jeffery Sachs, Andrew Warner, Ian Taylor, Alex Vines, and many reports by anticorruption organisations such as Global Witness and Publish What You Pay fighting a 'Pandora's box' of problems unleashed by petroleum production. – So many authors, so much empirical evidence, so many memorable turns of phrase, new concepts, testable hypotheses, so much compelling eyewitness testimony, field research, transnational activism – and for those brave whistle-blowers who have provided the evidence, martyrs – that it has become something of an established paradox to read that massive oil revenues may appear to be a blessing, but are really a curse; that democracy, development, peace and security are goods which oil money ultimately cannot buy. – [Yates 2015, 121].

Although Yates (p. 123) attempts to clarify that the term "curse is only a metaphor", that the correlations asserted are "at best arguments of statistical inference," and that "they explain how oil revenues are an intermediate variable and not a first cause", the causal claims intended, however, have never been in doubt. And although the Yates/Heilbrunn debate may have centred on Africa's so-called "petrostates" – Nigeria, Angola, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, etc. – other scholars have asserted similar claims in reference to other forms of natural and non-resources (e.g. Collier & Gunning 1999; Karl 1997; Sach & Werner 1995). For Yates and many proponents of the Rentier State Theory, there can only be one conclusion: that rent is bad. But such a conclusion does not give an accurate picture of the phenomenon of sovereign rent, or its evolution within the context of state development in Africa and elsewhere. Neither does it help up clarify the central questions of the debate: Is it a question about rent's intrinsic quality? Is it a question about state behaviour? Is it a question of what qualifies a state as a 'rentier'? Or the causal effects and channels of rent upon the state and economy? Or is it a question of why do some rentier states fail, while others succeed? This ambivalence has taken the debate in many directions, resulting invariably in many different outcomes. What follows, therefore, is a broad discussion and problematizing of the 'rentier state' scholarship.

But first, it would be important to understand the derivative term 'rent' which sits at the heart of the 'rentier state' debate.

Problematizing '*Rent'* and the '*Rentier*'

The term ***rent*** generally refers to the surplus that arises from a resource (or any asset for that matter) after other inputs such wages on labour, interest on investment, and profit on risk management, have been paid according to their opportunity cost (Hagan 2015). Buchanan (1980, 3) defines rent as 'the part of the payment to an owner of resources over and above that which those resources could command in any alternative use.' 'Rent', Buchanan writes, 'is receipt in excess of opportunity cost." (ibid). In this sense, rent is understood as income generated purely by ownership of the resource or asset itself, because at this stage, all other constitutive inputs have been satisfactorily accounted for. This form of rent is termed *economic rent* (analysed mainly within market contexts), and represents the earliest conceptualization of the term in classical economics. Most forms of rent have one or another kind of economic component. This point will become clearer as I examine other forms of rent.

The above elemental form of rent – economic rent – is rooted in 18th and 19th Century agrarian economics. Early classical economists such as Adam Smith (1723-1790), Thomas Malthus (1766-1834) and David Ricardo (1772-1823) understood rent as any surplus left over after the cost of production had been recovered. And it is paid to the owner of land simply as reward for the use of land as a natural asset.[5] Under Europe's feudal system, land was an incredibly important asset at the time. This land rent which a landlord received reflected both the scarce nature of land, and the 'differential value' between different farm lands. The 'differential value', for its part, was related directly to the quality, fertility and productivity of the land (Yates 1996). Rent was therefore calculated as the difference between the market price of the harvest and its cost of production (i.e. wages for labour, the cost of seeds, interest on capital, profit for the farmer/entrepreneur, etc.) (Ricardo [1962]1821). It is along similar lines that calculations of rents on natural resources take into account 'differential value', or better still, 'profitability', between various mines and various mineral deposits. As a general rule, the 'deposits for which rents are the greatest are the ones that are the most profitable to exploit immediately'. This is determined by the price of the mineral on present and projected future markets (Pierce 1986: 99). But this apparently straightforward rule does not resolve confusions over mineral rents in the way that classic Ricardian theory had anticipated.

[5] A distinction can be made, however, with other earlier uses of the term, including within John Locke's earlier 'demand and supply' theory in which rent was synonymous to "demand" (Locke 1691).

In petroleum economics, for example, oil rent (or 'oil surplus') is defined as the difference between the world market price for a given quantity of oil (in the form of petroleum product), and 'the average cost incurred in discovering, producing, transporting, refining, and marketing the crude' (Yates 2015, 46). This definition would also apply to other forms of mineral and non-mineral rents (e.g. agricultural commodities), although important differences can be observed in their mode of production and rent generation (Ibid.). For example, agricultural commodities (e.g. rubber, cocoa, coffee) typically involve significantly larger labour participation, suggesting in theory the possibility of a wider and larger share of rent accruing to labour (e.g. Fearon 2005; Bazzi & Blatman 2014). Differences can also be observed in the degree of impact to the domestic economy (i.e. income to the state vs. income to households, peasant farmers and plantation workers) due to market price variations (ibid). And there is not always clarity in what delineates rents from royalty, profits and other forms of payment (Pierce 1986; Yates 1996); or for that matter the mode of its collection (i.e. through taxes vs. equity ownership). Is it rent when it is captured indirectly via taxes of profit? Or simply through direct state ownership of capital shares?

Smith (1776[1960]) and other early classical economists accepted rent's legitimacy as a factor income, although not without a caveat. For Smith, it was important to distinguish rent from other forms of income, and to delineate how it entered the price of a commodity. Smith thought that "Rent…enter[ed] into the composition of the price of commodity in a different way from wages and profit.' 'Rent', Smith believed, 'was the *effect* of higher prices, and never its *cause*, because it was only when prices were high or low 'that it affords a high rent, or a low rent, or no rent at all' (Smith, 412). It was in fact 'wages and profit', Smith proclaimed, that '*caused* higher prices, and never rents' (ibid.). In other words, rent could be eliminated by manipulating the price of a commodity. To Smith, rent was simply an effect. This point by Smith is reiterated by Ricardo when he writes, "Mines, as with land, generally pay rent to their owners…and this rent is the effect, and never the cause of the high value of their produce" (Ricardo [1821]1962, 590).

Smith's distinction between wage and profit incomes, on one hand, and rent income, on the other, therefore, had less to do with the legitimacy of rent as a factor output. For in classical and neoclassical economics, economic rent constitutes one of four primary factor incomes of the general equilibrium. Smith himself acknowledged this fact when he addressed the issue in his influential work *Wealth of Nations* (Smith 1776[2004]: Chapter XI, 125). Instead, the classical economic distinction, and the subsequent ignominy of rent, had and continues to have much to do with the value-laden conception of 'labour' and 'hard work' associated with 'private property' which dominated liberal economic thought at the time. The etymology is explained by an affinity to the Lockean idea of private property as an outcome of 'productive' labour. Hailing from a deeply Protestant tradition, John Locke (1632-1704) believed that all men were endowed by God with the physical earth, but that it was their action of 'mixing productive labour with the natural world' which enabled the acquisition of private property. Locke writes that "Whatsoever he removes out of the state that nature has provided, and left in it, has mixed his labour with, and joined to it something that is his own, and thereby makes it his property" (Locke 1663[1954, 1958]). It was, in Locke's view, when man traversed this 'state of nature', into legal contract-based arbitration with other individuals in society (presumably at the advent of monetary trade), that he exceeded his "rightful bounds' of property rights and 'began extracting rent from the surplus of the productive labour of others" (Yates 1996, 18). Smith, Malthus and Ricardo emerged out of this strictly Lockean understanding of *rent*. Thus, the *rentier* in Lockean tradition, "violated the most sacred doctrine of the liberal ethos: hard work." (Ibid). For "the rentier, absent from the value-added process, reaped a reward that does not make sense in the economic world of the Protestant work ethics" (Ibid). Smith later lamented that "[rent] is the income of men who love to reap where they never sowed" (Smith 1776[1904]). This Lockean disdain and criticism of the rentier did not, however, delegitimize rent as a normal factor income. In fact, rent's legitimacy and widespread acceptance prevailed throughout the 18th and 19th Centuries (Piketty 2014, 422). It would not be until the 20th and 21st Centuries that rent and the rentier began to earn more scathing lampooning in academic and policy cycles, especially when it involves the state.

In his ground-breaking work, *Capital in the 21st Century*, the French economist Thomas Piketty (2014) uses the terms 'rent' and 'rentier' in their original senses "to denote the annual payments produced by a capital asset, and the individuals who live on those rents" (p. 422). Piketty suggests that the "rents produced by any asset is nothing other than the income on capital, whether in the form of rent, interest, dividends, profits, royalties, or any other legal category of revenue, provided that such income is *simply remunerated for ownership of the asset, independent of any labour*' (ibid). He further argues that the existence of rent does not "denote an imperfect market (as in 'monopoly rent'), or more generally…any undue or unjustified income." The fact that capital, any capital for that matter, generates income, is in accordance with the original understanding of rent, "as annual [payment] produced by capital". This reality, Piketty insists, "has nothing to do with the problems of imperfection or monopoly…Rent is not an imperfection of the market: it is rather the consequence of a 'pure and perfect' market for capital, as economists understand it: a capital market in which each owner of capital, including the least capable of heirs, can obtain the highest possible yield on the most diversified portfolio that can be assembled in the national or global economy…If capital plays a useful role in the process of production," Piketty maintains, "it is natural that it should be paid" (p. 422).

It is important to note that the sense of monopoly (exclusivity, in the case of the state) from which rent derives, does not necessarily conflicts with Piketty's argument that rent "has nothing to do with the problems of [market] imperfection or monopoly". Piketty is simply stressing what, within liberal tradition, is a gain that flows naturally from the exclusivity (and indeed monopoly) associated with private capital ownership and property rights. In other words, rent flows naturally from private (monopoly) ownership. It is never produced if everyone are equal owners of capital and asset.

Rent's emergent pejorative, therefore, appears to be the result of what is believed to be a perversion of Locke's 'work-reward' causal logic. That is to say, the disconnect in the direct relationship between income and labour violates the Lockean 'work-reward' ethos. This so-called perversion of the Lockean logic is incredibly prevalent within the 'rentier state' discourse, because it is believed to create 'unearned' income for individuals disconnected from the production process; and has spun all manners of fantastical ideas about 'rentier mentality' and a 'rentier psychology' (Karr 1997; Blebawi & Luciani 1987, 52; Mahdavy 1970, 437). The rentier has thus emerged as a slothful, 'parasitic' social actor to whom 'unearned' rent effortlessly accrues, despite being disconnected from the production process.[6] A 'vestigial' by-product of surplus is what rent now connotes, although this characterization is most frequently and conveniently applied in reference to the state as a way of advocating state retrenchment from economies and markets. Rent within 'non-market oriented' settings – where the state is involved – is thus considered an ill because of the presence of 'imperfection', 'closeness', 'unfree-ness' and the 'uncompetitive' nature of the setting due to the state's presence. This is opposed to a 'market-oriented' setting in which the 'invisible hands of demand and supply' ostensibly ensure naturally equilibrating outcomes. If ever such a phenomenon as a 'rentier mentality' or 'rentier psychology' existed, it would, in my mind, and as Piketty (2014) suggests, most accurately describe the current financial capital markets where owners of financial assets receive hefty interests on investments "*remuneration for ownership of those assets, independent of any labour*" (Piketty 2014, 422).

Political rent – the second important form *of* rent – is defined as any 'artificial scarcity opportunity', 'a differential advantage', a 'contrived scarcity' or a 'monopoly property right' created by law or through government actions, in which some people benefit more or less than others (Buchanan 1980; Tullock 1967, 1993; Krueger 1974). In other words, political rent derives from a 'privileged position', one occupies relative to others, whether in a market setting or outside in society. Within a market-oriented setting, for example, a monopolist or group of oligopolies, may generate excessive rent by virtue of their relative positon of privilege in unduly and artificially setting prices. Within the arena of politics and public administration, also, privileged groups such as veteran groups, tribal nations and 'indigenous' polities or interest groups in the United States, for example, also derive

[6] It should be noted that Marx (1977) and his disciples have long acknowledged rent and the rentier as social constructions and social functions, respectively. Marx insisted upon a distinction between medieval rent which was paid to feudal landlords based upon 'use value', and rents received by capitalist owners of property as a result of 'exchange value'. Rent was therefore to Marx, a social relation, 'reflective and derivative of historically specific property relations in the dominant mode of production' (Yates 1996: 19). Contemporary Marxian scholars have explored the issue of natural resource rents within this tradition. For an in-depth discussion of Marxian conceptualization of rent, and resource rents specifically, see Marx (1977), Bina (1992), Sweezy (1970), Resnick (1987).

rents from government welfare, special grants, subsidies, tax breaks, etc., as a result of their privileged positions or special features (Tullock 1993; Lee & Orr 1980; McCormick & Tollison 1980; Brooks 2015; Buchanan 1980; Tullock 1993).[7] In both settings, the underlying concept operates similarly. Political rent, therefore, is simply an excess or surplus benefit derived (often from a privileged position), above legitimate opportunity cost. Within this context, certain political offices hold the propensity to generate significant political rent, and thus subject to political analysis (e.g. Buchanan 2003, 15).

A third and final form of rent discernable in the literature is ***sovereign rent***. This form of rent is central to this study of the 'rentier state', because it is the form of rent which accrues directly to the state; and will thus be given special attention. Sovereign rent is that form of rent which accrues to the state purely and primarily on account of its sovereign prerogatives, asset ot asset position, or based upon some special features which make it the object of external assistance and donor aid (Hagan 2015). Although Hagan (2015) discusses sovereign rent in regards specifically to donor assistance and aid,[8] other forms sovereign prerogatives are known to generate rent domestically and internationally. For example, when the state seeks to capture domestic economic surpluses through special tax regimes (e.g. Carlsson 1981); or a state's possession of strategic natural resource (e.g. uranium, plutonium for the making of nuclear weapons), cultural, religious and other ties (e.g. Israel and United States); or strategic geographic or geo-political location (e.g. Pakistan and Afghanistan in U.S. 'war against terror'), a crucial vote in an international body, or the situation of poverty (Ibid: 261).

Sovereign rent may also include external gains generated from commercial and other uses of sovereign territories or emblems by another sovereign or commercial actor [e.g. U.S. Land Lease Agreements during WWII (Dunn 2009), payments to Egypt for use of Suez Canal (Mahdavy 1970, 428)], or the use of a sovereign emblem by commercial actors [e.g. the maritime 'flag of convenience' in Liberia and Panama's maritime programs (Carlisle 1980, 1981; Sharife 2010)]. Occasionally, such special features, assets or asset positions are durable and may generate long term flow of transfers, as being a former colony of a western power (e.g. France and many Francophone West African states). Sovereign rent may also be non-durable and predictable (e.g. temporary state as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council), or unpredictable, example, being eligible for International Development Agency (IDA) funding (Hagan 2015). In this sense, therefore, sovereign rent can be thought of as gains accruing directly to the state combining the above two forms of rent already

[7] Public Choice Theory is the liberal intellectual tradition which considers state managers as rational agents, and thus applies rational choice theory to political and public policies and decision-making. For a detailed discussion of this scholarship, see for example, Buchanan (1980; 2003, 15), Lee & Orr (1980), McCormick & Tollison (1980), Brooks (2015).

[8] Svensson (2000) also examines foreign aid as the target of domestic rent-seeking, using an index of corruption to proxy for rent-seeking. He does not, however, term it sovereign rent.

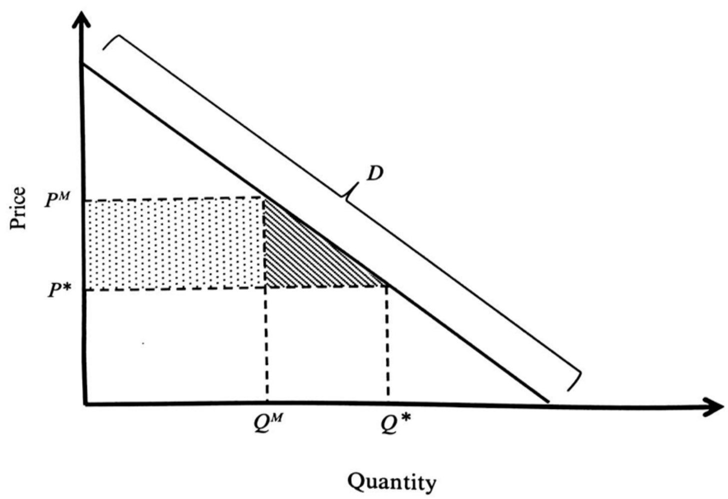
discussed – the economic and political. It is within the context of this specific form of rent that I discuss the 'rentier state' as a sovereign entity extracting rent both internationally and domestically. Liberia's historical experience as an African rentier state is assessed within the context of this broader category of rent which I dedicate in-depth treatment of in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

The existence of rent often triggers a process of competition over it, by actors seeking greater share of it. The idea of competition over rent therefore occupies a central place in the 'rentier state' literature; and constitutes a key element of the causal mechanisms suggested between rent and its debilitating effects. I will now turn to the important aspect of competition over rent which undergirds two key prepositions of the rentier state theory, that is, that competition for rent leads to waste and corruption, and that it causes conflict and civil wars.

Rent-seeking

It is important to be reminded of the origins of the concept of rent in classical economics, wherein market forces (i.e. demand and supply) and control of market shares determine the presence and magnitude of rent. In a market setting, actors are believed to be motivated simply by a desire for greater profit, and thus, greater rent. These may do so through monopoly, oligopoly, or other special privileges and means, including advertising, friendly or 'hostile' takeovers of small competitors; or through other forms of collusion. Within the public sphere, social actors position themselves to attain or rightly compete for rent-generating positions within government bureaucracies, political offices, etc. In these different forms of competitions, therefore, competing actors deploy financial resources that do not generally augment the total magnitude of contestable rent, but instead simply expand new resources in a competitive process disconnected to the rent-generating activity itself. It is this competitive process that Anne Krueger (1973) terms *rent-seeing,* and describes in her seminal article *The Political Economy of the Rent-Seeking Society*. Although Krueger (1973) has been credited for inventing the term, the idea undergirding it was not hers originally. It belonged to Gordon Tullock's (1967, 1969). Let me now offer an interesting and important backdrop in this tale, to historicize the uneven treatment of the term in western scholarship and the larger debates.

The origins of the concept of 'rent-seeking' within markets has its theoretical roots in the U.S. economy. The concept grew out of concerns about the health of industrial organization, and about losses which consumers (and society more broadly) suffered due to monopolies and tariffs introduced by the U.S. Government between the 1940s and 1960s. Within this period, the work of the economist Arnold Harberger (1954, 1959) grew increasingly influential. Harberger had determined through an examination of industrial data that, contrary to speculations by many economists of his day, the loss of economic welfare caused by monopoly in the United States was relatively marginal. He termed this loss 'welfare loss', or 'deadweight', and defined it as "'the consumers' surplus that would have been obtained through purchase of quantity of commodity [i.e. unites between Q(m) and Q(*) in the graph below] but which are neither purchased nor produced under monopoly" (Deacon & Rode 2015, p. 229). He estimated this loss to be one tenth of one percent of US Gross National Product (GNP). The Harberger Triangle depicted under the simple demand curve (in graph below) came to define the 'welfare loss' in modern economics. The surplus over the gain of the monopolist, i.e. "the difference between the monopoly price [P^M] and the competitive equilibrium price [P^*], multiplied by the quantity sold at the monopoly price [Q^M]," came to be known as 'monopoly rent' (or monopoly transfer) and is depicted by the Harberger Triangle in the graph below (Deacon & Rode 2015, p. 229; Tullock 1993, p. 2). Harberger's calculation of overall welfare loss, therefore, could be captured by the sum of all the Harberger Triangles under the demand curve



(Tullock 1993).

Figure 1: New social losses from a monopoly (Deacon and Rode 2005, 230)

Gorden Tullock (1967) was unconvinced by Harberger's Triangle.[9] For Tullock, a successful monopolist, although in control, could not be expected to sit supinely. For she remains at risk from potential competitors seeking to wrestle her monopoly powers. Thus, the monopolist is constantly investing large amounts of resources in defending her position. This investment by the monopolist occurs alongside all others made by other firms seeking to depose the monopolist; and can thus be reasonably expected to increase the Harberger 'welfare loss'. This was the kernel of Tullock's key critique, which the Harberger Triangle ignored. Although Tullock's insights found little embrace at the time, it was extremely powerful. It appeared identical to Anne Krueger (1974) reasoning about rent-seeking years later.

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[9] Harvey Leibenstein's 1966 work a year earlier offered Tullock's great insights, laying the foundation for the launch of his own critique of the Harberger Triangle. See Leibenstein (1966).

Tullock (1993) later acknowledged that Anne Krueger (1974) was unaware of his insight at the time of the publication of her famous article in the *American Economic Review* in which she invented the term 'rent-seeking'. But Krueger's conclusions seemed to bear much in common with Tullock's central thesis, although Tullock himself had never used the term rent-seeking by then (Tullock 1967, 1971, 1993), and Krueger was writing about India and Turkey, instead of the United States. Tullock offers an interesting perspective, in hindsight, as to why until Krueger's paper appeared in the *American Economic Review*, his own contribution suffered at least two rejections by the same U.S. journals which published Krueger, and other major journals at the time. Tullock writes, frustratingly:

> It is interesting to speculate as to why Krueger's paper was accepted by the *American Economic Review* following the journal's rejection of my two earlier articles on an almost identical theme. It does not seem to me that the intrinsic randomness of the refereeing process was entirely responsible. I believe that three factors contributed to the editorial decision. Krueger's paper was somewhat more lengthy and a little more technical than either of my two papers. Second, her paper contained some statistical measures, albeit very crude, of the magnitude of rent involved. Third, and most significant in my judgement, was the fact that her analysis focused on rent-seeking in India and Turkey, whereas my articles utilized examples clearly relevant to the United States. Referees tend to be less troubled in recognizing insights that challenge the status quo if such insights appear to be directed at far distant lands. They become much less comfortable when acknowledging that they have been teaching their students falsehood that impacts directly on an understanding of their own domestic economies.' Tullock 1993: 20. *Rent-Seeking*. Glos and Massachusetts: Edward Elgar Publishing Ltd., p. 20.[10]

It would be an interesting coincidence that Tullock's contribution to rent-seeking in the U.S. was rejected at the very moment that U.S. orientalism is believed to have been at its peak (Said 1979). Tullock's remarks, if anything, alerts us to the likelihood that indeed *Orientalist* thinking in the U.S. academy contributed undermining the dissemination and recognition of his contribution years before Krueger's article appeared in 1974.[11]

Returning now to Krueger (1974) work on rent-seeing, the author seemed more interested in the resources expanded in the import and export sectors of Turkey and India as a result of government-imposed licensing and monopoly structures in those countries. Krueger found that the competition for economic rent associated with those monopolies was leading to the deployment and consumption of scarce resources – talent, time, training, money, advertising, bribery and other material assets – without increasing the magnitude of the rent sought, or generating any other form of productive income for the firms involved. She therefore concluded that government's restrictive role in a market-

[10] Tullock (1993).

[11] Said (1979) ground-breaking work *Orientalism* had led to the re-evaluation of 'Area Studies' programs in Europe and the United States, and the emergence of post-colonial theory as a critical and counter-hegemonic discourse.

oriented economy, "especially quantitative restrictions on international trade" (i.e. tariffs, quotas, licensing, etc.) created more damaging tendencies than it solved, and gave rise to the practice of competitive rent-seeking of diverse forms. Rent-seeking was thus conceived and defined as the activities and processes associated with the competitively wasteful quest for rent, in which considerable amounts of resources are deployed in a manner that does not lead to productive income. Within a process of pluralized rent-seeking, the resources lost to this unproductive competition may rise to incredibly high levels, representing a social efficiency loss ("welfare loss") because such resources could otherwise be directed towards other productive activities. This understanding of rent-seeking implies, therefore, the presence and pursuit of *political rent* as previously defined, owing to the presence of government actions, and can be contrasted with economic rent associated with 'free market-oriented' activities (Deacon & Rode 2015; Buchanan 1980).

As to distinctions between rent-seeking and profit-seeking, in Buchannan's opinion (1980), they rest upon two factors: (a) the social consequence of each process, and (b) the institutional setting in which each occurs. Within a 'free' market-oriented environment involving private corporate actors, *economic rent* is generally considered profit because it is believed to generate 'social surplus' (as opposed to 'social loss') – that is to say, when social marginal product exceeds private marginal product – in the form of a 'good' or 'service' which society desires. Entrepreneurs are thus incentivized by its continuous generation, to constantly seek new opportunities to maximize its intake, thus spurring increased productivity, growth and development (Buchanan 1980: 5). The full dissipation of *economic rent* (i.e. profit) is believed to occur over time as resources are re-allocated and new competitors enter the market, thereby diminishing the magnitude of available rent, and thus returning prices to equilibrium levels (Buchanan 1980). The opposite is thought to be true for *political* rent. Thus, *rent-seeking* within both 'market' and 'non-market' settings has come to be defined as the socially wasteful competitive pursuit of rent. In 'market-oriented' setting, however, the term profit-seeking is preferred, in order to suggest socially beneficial process (Tullock 1968; Krueger 1975; Buchanan 1980). This distinction, I suggest, is one without a difference.

With this background of the various forms of rent, and the concept of rent-seeking, I would like now to move on to a discussion of the 'rentier state' literature. In so doing, I treat each of the four main postulates of the Rentier State Theory independently.

The Rentier State Theory

The Rentier State Theory developed out of the ruins of the debate between 'liberal' and 'dependency' orthodoxies, and the related claims regarding the causes and remedies of 'underdevelopment' in so-called 'Third World' nations. Crucial to the debate was the role natural resources play in the process of development. 'Dependency' scholars contended, on one hand, that the continuous underdevelopment of Third World countries resulted directly from sustained surplus drain (i.e. 'surplus transfer' through mineral export and capital transfers) from 'peripheral' economies, to the developed 'core' economies of the West. To address this situation of 'surplus transfer' and 'unequal exchange', they argued, Third World economies needed to 'selectively [and radically] de-link' from the global system, and pursue the path, among other things, of import substitutions (e.g. Frank 1967, 1772; Amin 1974; Dos Santos 1970; Marini 1972; Wallerstein 1983, Mytelka 1983; Githinji and Adesida 2011). The liberal response to the 'dependency' school was that notwithstanding a 'major advantage' of resource endowment,[12] continuous underdevelopment of Third World economies was the result neither of 'unequal exchange' or 'surplus transfer'; but instead, of failures to adopt appropriate domestic policies along the lines of those suggested by the Washington Consensus (e.g. World Bank 1980; 1981; 1884).[13] Neither the 'liberal' nor 'dependency' orthodoxy proved sufficient in accounting for differences in economic performance between nations, and the role natural resources played in the process of Third World development. These limitations, thus, fuelled mounting criticisms of both schools of thought,[14] and helped advanced the debate into contemporary scholarship, the main offshoot been the 'rentier state' scholarship.

The *Rentier State* Theory has remained, therefore, a fascinating and useful analytical framework since its development more than four decades ago. At its inception, the theory provided the framework for accounting for political and economic developments in oil-producing Arab and North African states. Today, one can rightly say it stands in need of corrective and update (Hertog & Luciani 2013). The framework was developed and advanced by substantial and well known studies on Libya by Robert Mabro in 1969, on Iran by Hossein Mahdavy in 1970, and subsequently in 1987 by Hazam Al Beblawi and Giacomo Luciani, also writing about Gulf States. Its birth as an academic and political inquiry is therefore rooted in Middle Eastern scholarship. Early proponents of the theory sought to understand the impact of oil windfall on Arab Gulf societies of late 1960s and early 1970s,

[12] Interestingly, early liberal scholars such as Rostow (1961), Ginsburg (1957), Balassa (1980), Krueger (1980) and Drake (1972) positioned themselves in support of the view that natural resource endowment was 'a major advantage' for Third World nations as they embarked upon a process of rapid economic growth (Ginsburg 1957: 211). It was thought that such endowments could 'fuel' economic 'take off', as well as the "provision of domestic markets and investible funds for the process of development" (Balassa 1820, 2.). This view seems directly opposite to those now espoused by liberal proponents of Rentier State Theory.

[13] The so-called Washington Consensus was built upon an emphasis on economic growth and integration via international trade. It was based upon the following 10 planks: (1) fiscal discipline with a focus on limiting budget deficits, (2) public expenditure priorities away from subsidies, and towards sectors with high economic returns, (3) tax reforms which expands revenue base and slashes marginal tax rates, (4) financial liberalization of interest rates pegged to market, (5) exchange rates structures which stimulates growth in non-traditional exports; (6) trade liberalization; (7) increased foreign direct investment by reducing barriers; (8) privatization of state enterprises; (9) deregulation and abolition of barriers to market and competition; (10) secure intellectual property rights; and (11) retrench the role for the state. The so-called Consensus was centred on policies conceived and implemented by the IMF, World Bank and the US Treasury, with heavy doses of foreign debt to developing nations.

[14] For in-depth discussions of the debates and critiques of each school of thought, see Baran (1978), Baran & Sweezy (1966), Shafer (1986), Githinji and Adesida (2011).

who came to be recipients of tremendous oil rents. The implication was that for a time, the Rentier State Theory was explicitly defined in connection to Middle Eastern Arab states, and to oil rents specifically. Soon, however, the theory began to lend itself to applications beyond Arab states, into Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America and elsewhere (Bellin 1994; Yates 1996; Clark 1997).

In its summative and most basic rendering, the 'rentier state' theory posits a negative relationship between rent (especially resource-generated rent), on one hand, and development, democracy, and political stability on the other. Thus the 'rentier state' emerges within the theory as (a) developmentally impaired, (b) socially wasteful and corrupt, (c) authoritarian and democratically weak, and (d) prone to conflicts and civil wars (e.g. Auty 2001, 2004; Bevan, Collier & Gunning 1999; Karl 1997; Wheeler 1984; Sach & Werner 1995). [15] These four prepositions, therefore, constitutes the core of the 'rentier state' theory. Rent is thus treated as a 'curse', specifically mineral-generated rent. In this sense, the 'rentier state' scholarship differs from its earlier 'modernization' counterpart. Whereas the latter viewed mineral wealth as an important 'fuel' for growth and development – essentially, as a 'blessing' (Balassa 1980; Ginsburg 1957), the rentier state paradigm perceives rent as a debilitating 'curse', thus the 'resource curse' discourse (Karl 1997; Gelb 1988; Auty 2001).

Mahdavy (1970) first defined the 'rentier state' as 'that state which received on a regular basis substantial amounts of external economic rent' (1970, 428). Conceptualized within the context of the Iranian state and the unfolding geo-politics, Mahdavy's definition appeared to capture the essential character of the Iranian State at the time. But it hardly distinguished it from any other state which generated external rent from non-oil or non-mineral sources.[16] This apparent analytical huddle would first need to be overcome. But equally important was Mahdavy's (1987) attempt to restrict analysis to (a) the state – as an entity independent of, and separate from the economy, and (b) its dependence upon external sources of rents. For Luciani and Beblawi, however, the attempt by Mahdavy's to focus upon the state made little sense, when a proper understanding of the economy and society more broadly were equally crucial. Therefore, Luciani and Beblawi (1987) expanded their focus from the *rentier state* as the primary object of analysis, to the *rentier economy* and *rentier society.* Luciani and Beblawi's notions of the state did not appear to differ from Mahdavi's. Whereas Mahdavy's conception of the state implied a meaning synonymous to 'society' in which the role of government, as the controlling actor, was central. Luciani and Beblawi clearly embraced a version of

[15] See also Ross (2003), Bevan, Collier & Gunning (1999), Nankani (1979), Shaxson (2005), Bruckner and Ciccone (2009), Savun and Cook (2010).

[16] Several significant global developments bolstered the 'rentier state' appeal, generating renewed interest in it as a research project. The oil crisis of 1973, the rise in influence of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) nations, the fall of the Iranian Shah in 1979 and corresponding upward pressures on global oil prices, all combined to heighten the region's geo-political importance, and thus renewed scholarly interest.

Weberian *institutional state* (Weber 1978; Hay 1996) which on one hand, functioned as the "overall social system subject to government authority", and on the other hand, they defined as "the apparatus or organization of government or power that exercises the monopoly of the legal use of violence" (Beblawi & Luciani 1987, 4). The state was therefore "the combination of essential indicators describing the relationship between the state and economy", in which 'the state does not coincide with society', but 'rules over it' (Beblawi & Luciani 1987, 4). It suffices to say that the authors broadly espouse the Weberian *institutionalist* notion of the state, that is to say, the state as a "set of apparatuses and practices unified through some form of centralized coordination", and analytically distinguished from society, and the economy (Hay 1996, 9; also Weber 1978). Unified in this institutional approach to the state, Luciani and Beblawi diverge, however, on one important aspect of the Rentier State Theory in their separate contributions to the 1987 edited volume *The Rentier State*.

For Beblawi (1987), the foreign orientation of rent, and mode of organization of the domestic economy constituted the central features of the theory. On this basis, he proposed four defining characteristics which today dominate our understanding. First, rent predominates the economy. Second, it originates externally, i.e. only from foreign sources, implying a largely export-oriented system mainly of raw and unprocessed materials. Rent from domestic sources, despite being dominant, does not qualifier under Beblawi's framework because under such circumstance, it would be considered a normal factor income which can only result from production (Yates 1996, 14). I will very shortly make apparent the problem of such a rendering. Third, a majority of the economy and society does not engage in the generation of rent; but participates mainly in its distribution and consumption. Fourth and finally, the government is the primary recipient of external rent in the economy (Beblawi 1987, 51-52).

That the state is the direct recipient of external rent matters less to Luciani (1987). Of greater concern, however, is the effects that such external inflows exert upon the state and the economy. Luciani argues that such rent "liberates the state from the need to extract income from the domestic economy", thereby creating a state 'autonomously disconnected' from the domestic economy and its citizenry on the need for taxation (Luciani 1987, 67). This formulation by Luciani leads him in distinguishing between two state functions: the 'productive' and 'allocative' functions of the state upon which he bases his proposed new categories of the states. A "production state", he proposed, is one which is reliant upon domestic productivity and taxation for income; whereas an "allocation state" receives income largely from external sources; and engages primarily in its allocation and spending across the domestic economy (Ibid, 67-68). The 'production state' is therefore preoccupied with the imperative of economic growth, whereas the 'allocation state' 'fails to formulate anything deserving of the appellation of economic policy' (Beblawi & Luciani 1987, 70). Instead, it specializes in allocation, distribution and spending (Luciani 1987, 73). With this new thinking, Luciani proceeds to define the 'rentier state' as "the state whose revenue derives predominately (more than 40%) from oil or other foreign sources…and whose expenditure is a substantial share of GDP. [This rent revenue] liberates the state from the need to extract income from the domestic economy" (Luciani 1987: 67). It is important to note the arbitrariness of Luciani's 40% threshold. One needs construe it as an attempt simply to indicate the extent of rents' dominance of the economy. Luciani's notions of an 'autonomous state' and his distinction between the 'production state' and 'allocation state' are, however, rather innovative and crust of his key contribution to the theory's formulation. As I have already noted, 'rentier state' scholars, including Mahdavy, Beblawi, and now Luciani all agree upon rent's externality as a central feature (although not always). It is important to note, however, that while Mahdavy and Beblawi appear focused on *the defining characteristics of the rentier state* (i.e. external inflow, rent's ubiquity, and direct government receipt), Luciani focuses instead on effects (i.e. 'autonomous disconnection', 'allocation' v. 'production'). Construed in this way, the two renderings do not upset or invalidate each other, but complement each other in providing a more holistic formulation of the theory. Luciani's contribution seems formulated to predict and explain certain patterns and effects upon the state, economy and society emanating from reliance upon external rents. This predictive capacity has, therefore, permitted the discerning of a wider array of empirical regularities now associated with the 'rentier state'.

With this etymology finally addressed, I would like now to discuss the four major postulates of the Rentier State Theory. I shall address them independently, together with their known limitations and contradictions. The chapter will conclude with analysis of important gaps, and my own point of departure from the scholarship's dominant approach to sovereign rent and the 'rentier state'.

The Rentier State Theory: Four Major Postulates

<u>Postulate 1</u>: Rent Leads to Economic and Developmental Impairments

The first major postulate of this scholarship concerns negative economic and developmental effects associated with rent. In this regard, the literature has centred primarily upon oil and mineral rents resulting from mining and extraction, what is now known broadly as the 'resource curse' scholarship (e.g. Gelb 1988; Sachs and Warner 1995; Gylfason et al. 1999; Rodriguez and Sashs 1999; Ross 2012).[17] This scholarship, as I have already noted, is not equivalent to, or the same as the as the 'rentier state' scholarship. Nor can it be 'subsumed' by the latter.[18] As has been shown, the 'rentier state' scholarship constitutes a much broader inquiry of economic and political concerns

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[17] For a broad overview of this literature, see for example, Gylfason (2001) and Sachs and Warner (2001).
[18] Hachemaoui (2012) wrongly asserts this point.

emanating from a larger category of rents, whereas the 'resource curse' scholarship focuses specifically on rents from mineral and natural resources. The two scholarships only partly overlap.

Focused primarily on natural resource rents, the 'resource curse' literature examines the broad effects of various types of natural resources on development and political stability; and finds a generally negative relationship. Resource rich countries are thought to be disproportionally afflicted by economic underperformance, including low per capital income (Auty 2001, 2004; Bevan, Collier & Gunning 1999; Karl 1997), low or negative growth rate (Wheeler 1984; Sach & Werner 1995), poverty (Collier 2007; Ross 2003; Bevan, Collier & Gunning 1999), low agricultural growth, lack of export diversification and high inflation (Nankani 1979). These societies, it is suggested, tend to succumb very easily to external commodity price/market shocks (Shaxson 2005; Bruckner & Ciccone 2009; Savun and Cook 2010). Additionally, state failure (i.e. state capture) is common (Ayoob 2001; Reno 2000, 2015; Ballentine & Sherman 2003; Shafer 1986), corruption thrives (Leite & Weidmann, 1999; Arezki & Brueckner 2011) as does political oppression (Stewart 2002; Le Billion) and civil wars (Collier & Hoeffler 1998, 2005; Doyle & Sambanis 2000; Ross 2004). In this section, I focus mainly on the purported deleterious effects on economic developmental.

In surveying rent's effects on economic developmental, Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian (2003) report, for example, that Nigeria (the 3rd largest exporter of oil in Africa) suffered a 30% reduction in per capita GDP between 1965 and 2000, despite oil revenue of roughly $350 billion during the same period (Ibid. p. 4). In oil-rich Venezuela, terms of trade increased by 13.7 % between 1970 -1990, [19] at the same time that the country witnessed per capital output decline at a rate of 1.4% per year (Lane & Tornell 1996). Saudi Arabia, with the world's largest oil reserve, witnessed a similar real capital GDP decline between 1970 and 1999 (Lane & Tornell 1996), while the entire Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) also experienced decline between 1965 and 1998 of 1.3% annually (Gylfason 2001). These figures are contrasted by an average 2.2% growth rate for all other lower and mid-income countries for the same period. It is suggested that extraction and mining booms tend to develop in enclaves which hold limited backward or forward linkages with other sectors of the economy (Frank 1980, 89).[20]

Based upon the nature of causality intended, economic and developmental malaise are believed to occur through two principal channels. The *first* channel is through the *market-based* dynamic of 'crowding-out' associated with the 'Dutch disease'. The 'Dutch disease' is the

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[19] A nation's Terms of Trade (ToT) is the ratio of the value of its total exports relative to its total inputs, expressed as a percentage (i.e. total export divided by total imports, multiply by 100%). A ToT greater than 100% is always desirable, because it means the value of export is greater than that if imports. Where the opposite is true, the problem of balance of payment emerges, where the country must now pay more to purchase its needed imports.

[20] Backward linkage is defined as purchases and other transactions involving local inputs. Forward linkage is the domestic use of outputs in further productive operations (Frank 1980, 89).

phenomenon which inversely correlates booms in a country's mining sector with declines in its manufacturing, agricultural and other tradable sectors (Corden & Neary 1982; Bruno & Sachs 1982). The 'Dutch disease' has been used to describe the adverse effects on the value of a country's export commodities (e.g. manufacturing and agriculture) caused by increases in the economic value/development of other sectors (e.g. natural resources). As revenues increase in the emergent sector (usually mining), the given country's currency becomes stronger (appreciates) compared to currencies of other trading countries. This strength is manifest in exchange rate appreciation, and therefore leads to the country's other exports becoming more expensive on the international market, while imports become cheaper, leading those sectors in diminished competitiveness.

Its usage in reference to natural resource discovery is rooted in the the 1959 discovery of the large Groningen natural gas field in the Netherlands, and the negative impact this development had on economic valuation as a result of large inflow of foreign currency, including a sharp surge in natural resource prices, foreign assistance, and foreign direct investment (Bruno and Sachs 1982). The resource boom is believed to have triggered appreciation of the country's exchange rate, as well as a concomitant diversion of economic activities away from other productive sectors of the economy (The Economist 1977; Frankel 2010; van der Ploeg 2011). Because of the supposedly central role of manufacturing (in other cases, agriculture) plays as a growth engine, any activity which *crowds out* manufacturing and renders exports less competitive (through exchange rate appreciation) are believed to instigate adverse effects on overall economic health (Sach and Werner 1997, 2001). There is, however, evidence to the contrary. Other studies challenge these conclusions and show that crowding-out in manufacturing does not always result from resource boom. For example, Bulte et al. (2005) has shown, based upon studies of Canada, Norway, Malaysia, Botswana, Mauritius and Chile, that mining occurred without a concomitant decline in manufacturing and other sectors, thus demonstrating the tenuousness of claims of the 'Dutch disease' based upon market models (Rosser 2006; van der Ploeg 2011).

Th*e second* channel of transmission is believed to occur via state institutions. Weak pre-boom institutions, bad governance, degraded rule of law system (Deacon and Rode 2015; Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian, 2003; Mehlum et al. 2006, 2008), as well as the nature of resource dispersal and/or geographic concentration (Leite and Weidmann, 1999, Isham et al 2003; Boschini et al 2007) interact with rent-seeking in ways that trigger fiscal profligacy, expropriation, distributive policies instead of investment and development (Sala-i-Martin and Bubramanian, A. 2003; Arezki, R. and Gylfason, T. 2013; Arezki and Bruckner 2010). Deacon and Rode (2015) discuss two rent-seeking models related to the economic and developmental malaise of 'resource curse': *voracity* and *entrepreneurial diversion*. A third rent-seeking model discussed by Deacon & Rode (2015) is that of *institutional decay,* and relates more to the effect of social waste and corruption. Its effects will therefore be treated under a separate heading of the same name.

The *voracity* model has been advanced to explain government's coercive actions of wealth transfer from the private (formal) sector, to more powerful special interest groups in society (informal sector) (Deacon & Rode 2015; Lane & Tornell 1996; Tornell & Lane 1999). These transfers occur through taxation, nationalization, bribe taking, forced participation and expropriation. All of these are believed to occur against the backdrop of weak institutions. In this model, government functions primarily as a 'conduit of wealth transfer' by extracting rent from one sector of the economy, and transferring it to others (Deacon & Rode 2015, 235). If, therefore, the 'vulnerable' capital exist mainly within the formal sector (i.e. the regulated sector of the economy where tax authorities have easy reach; but also includes international capital markets), as opposed to the informal sector, the model posits that capital will flow from the formal sector (where it is plentiful and vulnerable) to the informal sector (where it is limited and 'invulnerable'). This dynamic would lead to slow economic growth (Ibid.).

When juxtaposed against the growth experiences of different resource-rich countries, however, this conclusion seems misleading for several reasons. The first reason is because productivity and growth do not automatically result into capital transfers from the formal to informal sectors (Tornell & Lane 1999). While resource windfalls increase returns on formal capital resulting either from increased productivity or higher prices, the potential for very large payoffs to formal sector groups remains very high despite government transfer, if productivity and price remain high, and the number of formal sector groups remain relatively small (Ibid). Furthermore, expected shrinkage in formal sector capital stock are often overly compensated by a large enough return on capital which serves to continuously incentivize retention of capital in the sector, thus potentially perpetuating growth (ibid). This scenario is especially true where rents from natural resources constitutes the core of formal sector capital (Deacon and Rode 2015; Lane & Tornell 1999). As is typical of oligopolistic setups, this dynamic appears to undergird the continuous presence of massive rents within the mining/mineral sector. Under such profitable circumstances, and contrary to predictions by the *voracity* model, the inevitable "flow of capital from the formal [mineral] sector, to the informal [non-productive] sector' cannot be expected. If the mineral sector suddenly emerges as the primary magnet for investment and growth, there is ample reason to believe, therefore, that a form of *capital diversion* would constitute a viable means of ensuring continuing capital formation in other non-extractive sectors, including manufacturing and agriculture, contrary to the dominant thinking; unless a greater quantum of mineral rent takes flight internationally.

The *entrepreneurial diversion model,* for its part, rests upon the intuitive assumption that entrepreneurial talents are siphoned away from so-called productive activities, into unproductive but lucrative rent-seeking activities once resource windfall occurs. Once diverted, these entrepreneurial talents which would otherwise engage in wealth-creation and return-to-scale industries are no longer available. The model assumes the absence of strong institutional barriers against rent-seeking, and is based upon a human capital perspective (Torvik 2002; Mehlem et al 2006, 2008). Thus, 'diversion' is believed to contribute to slower growth and overall reduction in income (Torvic 2002; Mehlem et al. 2006, 2008). Once again, a central conclusion of this model, as with the 'voracity' model, is that institutions (i.e. bureaucratic, administrative and rule of law institutions) are key mediating factors for the 'resource curse.'

But there is another important aspect of the rent and economic development postulate which deserves equal mention. It is the perceived relationship between taxation, institutional capacity, and state autonomy. The financial autonomy generated by external rent inflows, as much as it relieves the state of reliance upon domestic revenue sources, is said to diminish the necessary institutional and bureaucratic capacities essential to domestic taxation and revenue generation – 'the tax effect' (Chaudhry 1989; Luong 2001). Once again, this prediction draws inspiration from analyses of the early development of the Western European state, when it relied disproportionately upon the "extractive apparatus as the most intrusive and first economic act" in administrative consolidation (Chaudhry 1989, 114; see also Hachemaoui 2012). The extractive processes involved in domestic taxation and "the centralization of the fiscal apparatus, territorial control, political and economic decision-making about target groups, the acquisition of information, and the design and implementation of collection mechanism and enforcement procedures", all combine to strengthen state institutions and viability (Ibid). With a decline in domestic revenue generation capacity comes long-term decline in fiscal information gathering, tax collection infrastructures and enforcement mechanisms. This effect is believed to be especially acute when rent windfall coincides with early state formation and the forging of important institutions. It is believed, therefore, that financial autonomy generated by external rents overall engenders institutional decay, because it "reverses previous gains in institutional entrenchment and state penetration" resulting from the systematic institution of domestic taxation and revenue generation (Chaudhry 1989, 114).[21] This postulate, like all others, will be tested as we examine the evidence from Liberia.

Postulate 2: Rent leads to Corruption and Social Waste

The social wastefulness postulate of the Rentier State Theory is most associated with the rent-seeking framework suggested by Tullock (1967) and Krueger (1974). Therein, wasteful and unproductive competition for a finite quantity of rent leads to 'social loss'. Many scholars exploring the subject in Africa where a plurality of ethic polities and interests exists, have found it useful to merge this rent-seeking framework with a model of 'ethnic heterogeneity' in understanding the

[21] This argument is sharply refuted by scholars in the Developmental State scholarship who view state autonomy more favourably, and an essential ingredient for independent actions against narrow particularistic interests in society (Chaudhry 1989, 118; Przeworski & Limongi 1993; Shafer 1986).

extremity of the phenomenon in Africa. Easterly and Levine (1997) were amongst the first to construct an empirical framework for examining ethnic heterogeneity as a cause of anaemic growth in Africa. They concluded that ethnic heterogeneity was a 'significant cause', compared to other nations. Miguel's (2001) study of primary schools in Kenya found that the quantity and quality of schools in different school districts were correlated to ethnic diversity, with higher levels of diversity directly correlating with 'worse off' school facilities. They conclude that the trade in 'patronage goods' also rises to levels of extreme waste in African societies, as government spending on them increases in relations to spending on other more legitimate public goods (Cohen 1995; also Kimenyi 2006). In another study of Kenya, Cohen (1995) found that ethnic particularistic interest appeared to have a significant impact upon how aid projects were designed and implemented, thereby adversely impacting growth prospects. This model of rent-seeking and the 'rentier state' is interesting because it illustrates the frameworks application to a broader array of rent beyond natural resources. In demonstrating how groups compete for common resources, the model focuses on group interactions where trade-offs between productive and rent-seeking activities are present (Hodler 2006, 2007; Svensson 2000). In the example of a government budget (funded perhaps, from a combination of aid assistance, resource rents, maritime rent, etc.), rent-seeking incentives related to budget resources can be expected to increase as the budget 'pie' is enlarged, or the number of competing groups increases, thereby undermining non-rent seeking cooperation (Ibid).

Social waste is also believed to occur through the process of *diversion* whereby economic resources and entrepreneurial talents are diverted from the productive to the unproductive sector (Torvik 2002; Mehlum et al 2006, 2008; The Economist 1977; Frankel 2010; van der Ploeg 2011). Here, rent-seeking and forms of public misappropriation are said to suffocate resources out of economic, social and cultural programs in society. One can associate social waste with Luciani's (1987) idea of the 'allocation state', and the corollary notions of 'rentier mentality' and 'rentier psychology'. The 'rentier mentality', within the context of the 'allocation state', is believed to have a profound impact on economic productivity. Going back to Locke's 'work-reward' causation, the 'rentier mentality' is said to facilitate a disruption in that logic, where rewards, income and wealth are transferred as 'isolated facts' unrelated to any productive activity (Beblawi & Luciani, 52; Yates 2015, 53). Rentier elites in the 'allocation state' are said to engage in profligate distribution and expenditure on ambitions projects, welfare programs, luxury consumption, overseas trips, and the setup of programs of patronage and clientelism meant to 'jealously guard the status quo' (Mahhavy 1970, 443; Yates 2025, 53). Yates (2015:53) has derisively suggested that in Africa, "big oil money has been so corrupting… that it makes the leaders too lazy to steal. Civil servants see their principle duties as being available during work hours. Businessmen abandon industrial manufacturing and enter into real estate speculation or other special service sectors associated with a booming oil economy." Thus, corruption, it is said, seizes the imaginaries of the 'rentier state', especially in times of rent windfall (Leite and Weidmann, 1999; Arezki and Brueckner 2011).[22]

In a quantitative study by Arezki & Bruckner (2009, 2011) of 30 oil-exporting states (covering the period 1992-2005), the authors found a strong negative correlation between increases in oil rents, on one hand, and increases in measures of corruption and state instability in terms of political rights.[23] These results were found to occur especially where state participation in oil production was direct and significantly high. In a similar qualitative study of 29 sub-Saharan counties for the period 1985–2007, Arezki & Gylfason (2013:552) also found that "higher resource rents led to greater corruption, and that the effects were significantly stronger in less democratic countries." Transparency International (TI) *Corruption Perception Index* has been one means to quantitatively capture corruption perceptions in society, and has painted dire picture of the so-called African rentier states such as Angola, Chad, Congo-Brazzaville, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Nigeria, and South Sudan, just to name a few (Yates 2015:55). We are told that these forms of waste and corruption simply siphon away resources from legitimate public expenditures such as education, health, social and physical infrastructures.

There is, however, evidence to the contrary. The case of Botswana, for example, has been highlighted as an instance where the government has successfully circumvented large-scale corruption in the forms and manners observed elsewhere, for example, in Nigeria (Acemoglu et al. 2003). Similarly, In Indonesia where corruption has been observed, it has not resulted into deleterious effects on the economy and growth (MacIntyre 2003). In the rentier state scholarship, these anomalies and contradictions are taken to be that which distinguish 'successful' and 'unsuccessful' rentier states, although little attention is given to the differences in constitutive elements underlying each of the various corruption indices used, such as the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) and Polity Index (Rosser 2006; Hachemaoui 2012). In the case of corruption, 'strong institutions' (i.e. public accountability, fiscal and monetary competence, etc.) are believed to serve as antidote (Robinson et. al. 2005; Atkinson & Hamilton 2003). I will elaborate on this notion of 'strong institution' in the following section. But as I have shown, the verdict on the rent-corruption/waste nexus is mixed, as the evidence point to disparate results in the forms and extent of the practice across different rentier states.

Postulate 3: Rent Leads to Democratic Weakness and Authoritarianism

[22] See also Ades and Di Tella 1999; Leite & Weidmann 1999; Sala-i-Martin & Subramanian 2003; Isham et al. 2005; Arezki & Bruckner 2010; Karl 2004; Arezki & Gylfason 2013; Ades and Di Tella 1999; Sala-i-Martin and Subramanian 2003.

[23] The study's results were published separately. See Arezki & Bruckner, M. (2009, 2011).

A more contentious postulate of the Rentier State Thesis concerns the purported effects rent asserts on the institutions of democracy and property rights. Here, institutions are broadly understood as sets of practices and procedures governing the conduct and discretionary actions of actors within an environment, as well as the possibilities of transformation. Deacon and Rode (2015) model of *institutional decay* predicts erosion of democratic political institutions, including property rights, due to competitive rent-seeking by groups in society (Hodler 2006; Tornell & Lane 1999; Robinson et al 2006; Ross 2001, Karl 1997). The model is based upon Hodler's (2006) framework of institutional erosion; and sets out this effect through rent-seeking for a fixed value of rent. A negative relationship is predicted between resource wealth, public institutions, and capitalist property relations, especially where intense social fractionalization exists (2006, 239; also, Schrank 2004). Social fractionalization is measured by the degree of ethnic, religious and linguistic heterogeneity. The central goal of Hodler (2006) study was to explain why some resource-rich countries such as Nigeria and Angola, succumb to the 'resource curse', while others, such as Norway and Botswana do not. A key conclusion by Hodler was that 'good quality' institutions asserted a mediating effect within the domestic political economy by safeguarding capitalist property relations (Hodler 2006), and ensuring that the rule of law, bureaucratic quality, and government accountability, that is, anti-corruption policies, are upheld (Atkinson & Hamilton 2003). In light of this institutional effect, Hodler determined that Nigeria's extremely large ethnic diversity (with three large "rivalling" ethnic groups – Hausa, Yuroba and Igbo), was the cause of intense rivalry and competitive rent-seeking, leading to reductions in property rights and per capital income (p. 1382).[24] Particularistic inclinations, accordingly, is believed to engender group rivalries, which impact negatively on political consensus-building and the institutional channels facilitating them. The quantitative study by Robinson et al. (2006) also focuses on the quality of institution as an explanatory variable for rent-seeking pathologies. In their model, institutions dictate the extent to which political incumbents may deploy resource rents to influence election outcomes. Weak institutions, they concluded, make for easy use of rent to sway elections outcome.

But more significant than any other effects on authoritarianism is rents' perceived effect on political regimes and elites. Here, the literature focuses on the effects on democracy as a preferred political arrangement and regime-type. From the point of view of democratic development, therefore, resource windfall and the attending 'state autonomy' is said to undermine democracy by enabling independent state actions that are less reliant upon taxation as the essential glue holding together the people and their representative government (e.g. Herb 2003; Bates & Lien 1985).[25] Here, the 'no taxation without representation' dynamic is believed to be at work (ibid.). With rent windfall,

[24] Hodler (2006) relies upon Alesina et al. (2003, 155-194) discussion of 'Fractionalization'.
[25] See also Hachemaoui (2012, 10), note # 2.

dictators and autocratic regimes are accorded a steady and secure stream of revenue which tend to diminish the need for effective taxation, and with it, political representation. Flush with external rent, these regimes are aided in ensuring their longevity through a combination of patronage, rewards and punishment. Thus, a patron-client logic is injected into politics that therefore limits the scope for democratic changes possible under the circumstances (Rosser 2006; Lam & Wantchekon 2003; Blebawi and Luciani 1987; Le Billion 2001; Bates 1981; Bryant and Purnwell 1996; Ross 2001). We then witness the emergence (or consolidation) of neo-patrimony and the patronage state based upon autocracy, often perpetrated through military-style repression (Wantchekon 1999; Jensen & Wantchekon 2004). The examples of former President Mobutu Sekou of mineral-rich DR Congo, and William V.S. Tubman of Liberia are often cited, illustratively (Acemoglu, Robinson & Verdier 2004; Sawyer 1992). Both Sekou and Tubman, it is argued, erected monumental patronage regimes across their political domains, and perpetuating their rules for life. The long-term results of such dynamics across Africa is said to be the emergence of one-party states throughout the 1960s, 70s and 80s (Bratton & van de Walle 1997; van de Walle 1999, 2001). These dynamics are presumed to dampen the process of democratization (Lam & Wantchekon 2003).

Another way rent windfall is believed to assert a deleterious effect upon democratic development is by stifling important social and cultural transformations conducive to democratization, such as improved levels of education and occupational specialization (Ross 2001; Miguel 2000; Miguel and Gugerty 2005). This outcome is also related to the *diversion* model whereby rent-seeking and corruption suffocates resources out of education and other social and cultural programs.

As can be expected, disagreements abound regarding the above conclusions. Heilbrunn (2014), Herbs (2003) and Clark (1997) have all challenged them, offered arguments and evidence to the contrary. These scholars suggest that rent windfall does in fact lead to various social and cultural advancements, as well as opportunities for democratic advancement. Drawing upon other scholars, Hachemaoui (2012) has argued quite excellently, among other things, that not only do conceptual variations of the terms 'democracy' and 'democratic consolidation' lead to disparate conclusions, but the terms are neither consistently used, nor unambiguously specified within the debate. For example, Munck and Verkuilen (2002) have revealed ambiguities regarding conceptualizations and measurements of democracy as an empirical concept, as has Hachemaoui (2012a, 2012b) regarding limitations in the popular indices of measurement, such as Polity Index, ratio of military spending to GDP, etc. Conceptualizations of democracy, and the indices measuring it, often seek reference to liberal democracy as they are perceived and understood in western societies. But as Hachemaoui (2012, 8) has suggested, such understanding often omits underlying socio-political and historical dynamics associated with ethnic fractionalization, and how democracy may operate differently with such contexts. This latter point is important if we are to accurately depict democracy, its growth or decay, or the nature of the state itself.

Drawing on examples from Latin America and Africa, Hachemaoui (2012) also challenges the theoretical premise establishing democracy as a necessary or desired outcome of taxation, a relationship which appears central to liberal democratic institutions, and which sits at the heart of 'the autonomous state" critique of sovereign rent. Hachemaoui suggests this relationship is in fact the result of a misreading of the Western European state process rooted in the 'Whig' interpretation of the history of representation in Europe (Hachemaoui 2012, 10; Herb 2003, Butterfield 1931). He argues that in claiming to establish "a necessary and universal evolution of an institution towards progress," the Whig's mismatches the development of 19th Century elected parliamentary forms of government, with its 18th Century antecedent of representative institutions (Hachemaoui p. 10). If there must be a verdict on the taxation/representation relationship, Hachemaoui argues, it is that "taxation contributed to the emergence and the longevity of representative institutions where these had a direct role in the collection of taxes" (ibid.).[26] And that in the general scheme of things, the role of taxation was relatively 'minor' to the development and continuity of modern representative institutions (ibid. see also Herb 2003).

It would be inaccurate, therefore, to suggest citizens in so-called rentier states are undertaxed due to the presence of enormous rent. Evidence from the Middle East – which comprises among the wealthiest Arab oil 'rentier states' believed to be 'authoritarian' – suggests that between 1975 and 1985, its citizens were taxed on average 25% of GNP, compared to Latin America, for example, where taxes amounted to only 12% of GNP (Waterbury 1997).[27] In Tunisia, too, fiscal taxation accounted for a high 26% of GDP at the height of Ben Al's authoritarian regime, according to Henry (2004), and was reflected also in the high levels of household debt (Hibou 2011). Hachemaoui (p. 10) suggests these anomalies are no longer mere exceptions to the rule. Certainly, a set of diverse pathways, unrelated to the taxation/representation dynamic, does exists which may lead states towards democracy. He then points, for example, to democratic 'imitation' which occurred in India; the 'cascades' effects in Eastern Europe in 1989; 'collapses' in Russia in 1991; 'revolution' in Portugal; 'external imposition' in West German and Japan; and 'negotiated settlements' in South Africa (Hachemaoui, 12).[28] In Africa under European colonial rule, one cannot in any serious way speak of democracy as a result of 'representation through taxation'. And neither did the emerging post-colonial states establish democracy on this basis. Evidence from Liberia (although circumventing European colonial subjugation) does not diverge from this general trend in Africa. As I will show when examining the evidence from Liberia, any relationship between taxation and

[26] Hachemaoui (2012,10), based upon the reading of Carsten (1959) and Major (1980).
[27] World Bank Statistics, as presented by Waterbury, J. (1997), in Entelis, J.P. ed.
[28] See the work of Munck & Leff (1997, 343-62), Shapiro (2003, 80).

representation existed only within the relatively small societies of Afro-Liberian settlers and their descendants. Beyond these relatively small jurisdictions, the various forms of taxations levied upon indigenous Africans, included the dreaded Hut Tax, did not in any way result into representation until late 1940s.

Drawing upon examples from Latin America, Hachemaoui (p. 12, 13) also demonstrates that authoritarianism has not always followed the causal sequence of proceeding rent windfall. In many instances, it has in fact occurred prior to rent windfall, thus negating rent as causal variable within the temporal sequence. In places such as Saudi Arabia, the evidence suggests that state rentierism has in fact helped "strengthen opposition and dissidence during periods of boom", due to inherent contestations over inequitable distribution, and the economic empowerment it "provided potential dissidents…for a hostile mobilization against the regime" (Okruhlik 1999, 295-315). Under such conditions, it is reasonable to conclude that other socio-political, religious and historical factors may also be at play. Perhaps the most significant aspect of Hachemaoui's critique regards the conclusion that rent is bad for democracy – that the two are compatible phenomena (p. 22, 23). Citing the experiences of Venezuela, Chile, Bolivia, and Ecuador, Hachemaoui's demonstrates the positive impacts rent has asserted on the distributive policies of these nations which helped sustain egalitarian relationships within countries, by helping "to amortize the redistributive cost of democracy", thereby easing redistributive tax pressures off of capitalist bourgeoisies; and helping to forge viable 'democratic consensus' (p. 13; also Dunning 2008). Elsewhere, for example, in Ecuador, rent has facilitated the bursting forth new democracies (Martz 1987). Hachemaoui's (p.13) conclusions regarding rents potential positive effects upon democracy and development, therefore, seems to buttress a key contention by Heilbrunn (2014) in *Oil, Democracy and Development in Africa.*

<u>Postulate 4</u>: Rent Leads to Violence and Civil War

The fourth and final postulate of the Rentier State Theory I discuss here pertains to the perceived negative relationship between rent, on one hand, and political stability and civil wars, on the other. Like the 'resource curse' sub-literature on the effects of mineral rents, this postulate is most animated within the sub-literature of 'greed and grievances'. Popularized by the works of Collier (1998, 1999, 2002) and other rationalist scholars, this sub-literature concerns itself with violent conflicts and civil wars as consequences of rent-seeking, which it approximates to the idea of 'greed'. Paul Collier's early work establishing the 'greed' theory of civil war resulted from a World Bank study in 1990 examining the economic factors fuelling civil wars, mainly in Africa. At the time, intense violence and conflicts raged across the continent, from Liberia to Sierra Leone, DR Congo, Sudan, and elsewhere. Utilizing quantitative data for civil conflicts from 1960 - 1999, Collier and Hoeffler sought to empirically establish linkages between natural resource abundance (and dependency) and the eruption of civil conflicts. Exploiting econometric tools to analyse post-WWII conflicts, they found that (a) natural resource abundance was strongly correlated to civil war outbreak, consistent with the 'greed' theory; and that insurgents appeared motivated strongly by a desire to profit; (b) that various quantitative measures of socio-political 'grievances' were statistically insignificant, and thus insufficiently account for conflict outbreaks; and (c), that countries with poor or declining per capital incomes and growth measures were more likely to implode into conflict, consistent with a logic of opportunity cost (Collier and Hoeffler 1998; 1999; 2002, 2004). Collier and Hoeffler's findings found a hearty embrace in scholarly and policy communities, especially those operating within rationalist tradition (e.g. Berdal and Malone 2000; Miguel, Satyanath and Sergenti 2004; Berdal and Malone 2000; Ross 2004; Keen 2000; Torvik 2002).

Underlying these findings are assumptions about the individual as a 'rational interest maximizers'. An individual's choice to rebel is thought to be conditioned primarily by expectations of gains in excess of opportunity cost (i.e. profit and rent). From this rational choice position, individual actions before and during conflicts are modelled upon expectations of gains, either through criminality and looting, or via the opportunity of state capture (Collier & Hoeffler 2004). Within the model, grievance-based motivations which are unrelated to rational opportunity cost calculus, carry little significance, thereby delegitimizing such forms of violence (Keen 2012). Violence, therefore, emerges as an economic dynamic, and an attractive and convenient means to rent and power acquisition. In this model, rent and rent-seeking provide the means and motive for conflict (Collier & Hoeffler 1998, 2004; Collier et al. 2009; Fearon and Laitin 2003; Smith 2004; Ross 2004; Humphreys 2005). While these arguments appear consistent with the 'state prize' theory – i.e. the idea that rising commodity prices increase resource rents, and thus transforms the state into a 'prize' for contestation (Grossman 1995; Bates 2008; Bates, Greif, and Singh 2002; Reno 1999) [29] – they ignore evidence from other political-economic models which suggest rent windfall in fact increases state capacity for defence and counter insurgency, as well as for buyouts and co-optations of political rivals, or further consolidation of coercive territorial control (Fearon and Laitin 2003; Ross 2012; Snyder 2006; Dunning 2008). Additionally, the market-oriented prescriptions put forward by Collier appears insensitive to other underlying social and economic discordances which likely undergird socio-political divisions and discontent (Starr 2006).[30]

Having carefully examined the key postulates of the Rentier State Theory, I will now attempt a broad and summarized critique of the literature, as I set the stage for a more useful postcolonial

[29] See also Fearon (2005), Ross (2006), Shafer (1968).

[30] For a more thorough discussion of the 'greed' model and the larger 'greed v. grievance' debate, including various case studies, see the works of Ross (2002, 2004), Regan & Norton (2005), Cater (2003), Reno (2000, 2015), Collier & Hoeffler (2004), Reynal-Querol (2002), Keen (1998), Ballentine & Sherman (2003), Dolye & Sambanis (2000), Ross (2004), Fearon (2005).

framework for examining sovereign rent and the rentier state in Africa. Later, in Chapter 5, I will test each postulate against the empirical evidence in post-World War II Liberia, in order to demonstrate the theory's limitations in understanding political and economic developments in postcolonial Africa.

Critique and Analysis of Gaps

To be clear, the 'rentier state' literature and its key postulates are helpful, but only to a certain point. While its focus on rent has broaden our understanding of this particular category of state revenue and potential effects upon state behaviour, it has not led us far towards a proper understanding the relationships between rent the state behaviour; nor about the diverse forms and uses of rent, or their historical developments within the life of the state. This is precisely the case because the literature is ahistorical and lacks any backward-looking orientation. All attempts at a backward-looking approach tend to be limited to the moments immediately following World War II. Only following Africa's decolonization and post-independence in the 1950 and 60s does the critique of sovereign rent begin (Collier 1998, 2000, 2002; Hachemaoui 2012; Sach & Warner 1995, 2001), leaving unanswered the question of whether the negative predictions regarding state rent are still valid within the context of the African colonial state. Without a proper understanding of rents historical forms and uses, one cannot fully understand its contemporary dimensions, particularly because these are also expected to vary across space and time. This is, in fact, my dissertation's main contention. From this main contention, therefore, the dissertation raises a series of contentions which together constitutes enough basis for distancing my study away from the rentier state paradigm.

The *first* adjunct contention concerns the ambiguities surrounding the 'rentier state' debate central research question. Is it a question about the state? Is it a question about rent? Is it about the most salient domestic factors mitigating negative effects of rent? How important are international factors, such as the prevailing international political economy, or the nature of international commodity markets, in the instance of natural resources? Is it a question about why some rentier states succeed, while others fail? I suggest that this lack of clarity about the central research question(s) engenders a certain academic and research impasse.

The dissertation's *second* contention concerns the tendency of the dominant scholarship to homogenize and universalize the state. Aside from failing to unambiguously define the 'state' ontologically, the 'rentier state' scholarship makes no distinctions between various 'rentier states'. But upon careful consideration, one finds an unmistakable reference to the Weberian state. And yet, there exists great disparities between states based on their institutional, structural, and historical characteristics. This shortcoming appears to be a key factor behind the infusion of historically unique Western European features within the theory, such as the perceived relationship of taxation and democratic representation, as well as the Lockean 'work-reward' logic which has so deeply influenced our understanding about what constitutes just and legitimate rewards. It is the latter pejorative view of rent that has pushed it far below other normal factor incomes, such as wages, interest and profit, and now occupies an adjunct position. The pejorative imagery of the 'rentier' is, for all intent and purposes, an ideological artefact of Locke, although applied unevenly between different sectors of the economy and markets.[31] Although the idea of a 'free', 'structured' and 'competitive' market advocated within the mineral resources sector presumes that rent is fully dissipated over time under conditions of resource reallocation, leading eventually to price equilibrium, the evidence, however, reveals a different reality due largely to monopolistic and oligopolistic nature of the mining sector, and its high barriers to entry due to high capital requirement (Shafer 1986; Campbell 2009; Moyo 2012). This situation effectively ensures that only a handful of international conglomerates are available to maximize enormous economic rents, while state presence is systematically discouraged.

Taken together, these limitations reflect a *third* important contention about the Rentier State Theory: its Eurocentric tendency of privileging liberal market theories. The Lockean idea of what constitutes private property and legitimate gains within its 'work-reward' logic, as well as perceived relationships between taxation and representative democracy, are deeply rooted in a uniquely European experience which are now being universalized across other societies and economies. Furthermore, liberal market theories celebration of rent as profit, and excess rent, excess profit has provided justification for its constant pursuit within economies and markets. The privileging of market-oriented rent over other forms of rent is increasingly problematic and rises to the level of a moral conundrum, especially as it constitutes a growing source of wealth and income inequalities between nations, and between individual within and among different societies (Piketty 2014). Within the context of the 'rentier state', the result (purposefully or not) has been the systematic retrenchment of the state from markets (*sovereign rent*), in favor private actors (*economic rent*).

The *fourth* contention pertains to the literature's overreliance upon quantitative and/or econometric correlations as the basis for causal postulates. Statistical correlation techniques have certainly grown more sophisticated with regression and other analyses. However, correlations do not necessarily establish causation in the manner the literature tends to suggest. This is in addition to inadequacies identified in the major indices employed in these quantitative assessments (e.g. Hachemaoui 2012). These concerns rise to a different order of magnitude which cannot be dealt with using the literature's current dominant approach.

The *fifth* and final critique of the rentier state scholar regards the scant attention given to the international political economy, international commodity markets/trade, and their relationships to

[31] For example, Picketty (2014, 423) points out the widespread acceptance of rent in capital markets, compared to the real economy.

state rentierism domestically. On such crucial matters as natural resources and the mining sector, rarely do individual states and economies operate in isolation of the larger global economy, for example, when export rules, commodity prices, and trade were routinely negotiated and established within such framework as the UN Conference of Trade and Development (UNCTAD), or today's World Trade Organization (WTO). Further, the involvement and operations of international mining conglomerates across national borders suggest an important international element rarely scrutinized within the debate. Research by Campbell (2009), Moyo (2012) and others have shown how prevailing international mining codes, operating largely upon liberal market principles, have often disadvantaged national governments in favour of private mining companies operating in Africa. And yet, these important political economy considerations are yet to feature permanently in the debate.

There is another important aspect of the Rentier State Theory that deserves equal attention and critique. It is the erroneous assertion that state rentiersim is unique to so-called 'late developing' states, especially in Africa (e.g. Yates 2015; DiJohn 2007). In contrast, the history of the 'modern' state in Western Europe reveals that the concepts of 'sovereign rent' and the 'rentier' are deeply intertwined (e.g. North & Thomas 1973; North 1981; Tilly 1985; Weber [1922] 1978). The ontological contours of 'sovereignty' itself – understood within liberal tradition as a juridical asset, that is to say, as an exclusive property right monopolized by states – forms a key element of what we now understand as sovereign rent. Sovereign rent, therefore, is defined as the gain accruing to the state purely and primarily on account of its monopoly over sovereignty as an exclusive property right of states. This view has been expressed most forcefully in liberal theories such as public choice (Weber 1978; Brennan & Buchanan 1985).[32] And although rarely emphasized within liberal academic tradition, I underscore this fact here to draw attention to a view of the state as inherently rentier because of its monopolistic sovereign prerogatives, the most dramatic expressions being its exclusive rights over the exercise of violence in society (although not always), and its right to extract rent, revenue, and other tributes within its territories.

Broadly speaking, revenue is, therefore, by its very definition, a form of rent. Levi (1988, 2) defines revenue as the income of government which is needed, among other things, "to elaborate [and sustain] the institutions of the state, bring more people within the domain of those institutions, and to increase the number and variety of those collective goods provided through the states." These prerogatives are all derived from the state's exclusivity to sovereignty as an asset. In contemporary states, revenue generation is typically achieved through various forms of taxations, government fees, licenses, duties, and other monetary payments prescribed within codified statutes and revenue laws, which the state can enforce in situations of non-compliance. Thus, sovereign rent in both its political

[32] Brennan and Buchanan (1985) takes the view that all revenue is theft. This rather extreme view, however, cannot be justified in situations where certan productive state activities (not merely its sovereign rights) are the direct basis of income or revenue.

and economic manifestations, is first and foremost the product of this monopoly right exercised by states. In this sense, then, the 'rentier' and indeed state rentierism, can be understood as fundamental features of 'modern' statehood present at its very inception. Such conceptualization of the state sharply contrasts with claims within Rentier State scholarship that state rentierism describes bad governance associated mainly with 'late developing' states in Africa (Yates 2015; DiJohn 2007). This very notion of a 'rentier state' is therefore tautological, and a misleading oxymoron.

In the case of Liberia, the evidence appears to suggest, contrary to the general claims of rent's deleterious effects on economic and political developments, that in fact rent played a pivotal and constructive role in the processes of early state and nation building. Further, one is hard-pressed to find convincing and uncontested evidence of the negative effects on development, corruption, democratic decay, and civil wars in the immediate post-WWII era. As I will demonstrate in Chapter 5 when examining the empirical evidence against each of theories four postulates, sovereign rent was instrumental in the enormous economic and political transformations of the period, and in positioning Liberia as a strong and vibrant state domestically and international. And it is here, that my research takes a different approach to sovereign rent, and to claims about its pernicious effects upon the state. In so doing, I impute no intrinsic value or characteristic to rent, except that which it is made to function. Like any other forms of revenue, rent is viewed as inherently neutral despite its means of extraction, and the uses to which it is put. Instead, I seek to understand the various forms, sources and operationalization within the dynamic processes of state making and state sustenance.

Such an approach implies, therefore, eschewing temporally myopic circumspection of rent, in favour of a more *longue durée* understanding of the concept across time and space. In the case of Liberia, I examine the entire experience of state development beginning in early 1800s, but with a particular focus on the immediate post-WWII era. In this regard, *longue durée* history plays central role. Furthermore, greater attention is given to the nature and character of the prevailing international political economy. Whereas state rentierism occurs variously across time and space, its occurrence is hardly in isolation from developments at the level of the international system. The perspective I adopt is therefore a *longue durée political-historical* approach to rent and the rentier state, in which I give serious considerations to the prevailing global system, especially when examining evidence from the immediate post-WWII era.

Conclusion

In this literature review, I have presented an overview of the Rentier State Theory and related debates, highlighting the scholarship's central thesis that sovereign rent is bad. The chapter also presents and discusses the theory's four key postulates: (1) that rent undermines economic development, (2) that it leads to social waste and corruption, (3) that leads to democratic decay and authoritarianism; and (4) that it results to civil way. The dominant view that rent is bad has, however, not precluding contrasting evidence associating rent windfall with the occurrences of democratic consolidation, economic growth, and institutional consolidation in other countries, as Heilbrunn (2014) argues in the Yates/Heilbrunn debate previously discussed. Similar conclusions will be presented when we carefully examine evidence from Liberia which for more than one and half centuries, has relied upon rent extraction domestically and internationally. Regarding the African 'rentier state', unlike many others, it is that we understand it first and foremost as a post-colonial entity. Only by situating the African state properly within its colonial legacy can be understand the African 'rentier state' as a unique politico-historical phenomenon within a particular international political economy. I use this critique of the literature and the gaps identified therein, to distance my research from the dominant Rentier State theory, in favor of *longue durée political-historical* perspective of rent and the 'rentier state', which pays keen the larger international political economy.

In this respect, I adopt the concept of the *postcolony* within post-colonial theory as my organizing analytical and theoretical framework, a discussion of which now follows in the subsequent chapter.

Chapter 2: The Postcolony

Introduction

> "Post-colonial African regimes have not invented what they know of government from scratch. Their knowledge is the product of several cultures, heritages, and traditions of which the features have become entangled over time, to the point where something has emerged that has the look of "customs" without being reducible to it, and partakes of "modernity" without being wholly included in it." – Mbembe (2001, 25)

This study is written within the framework of postcolonial theory, specifically the concept of the *postcolony* proposed by Achille Mbembe (2001) in his book *On the postcolony*. In building upon the preceding literature review on the Rentier State Theory, this chapter conceptualizes sovereign rent and the 'rentier state' from a wholly politico-historical perspective, suggesting that both rent, and indeed the 'rentier state' itself, are historically contingent in time and space, a consequence of a *longue durée* development domestically and internationally. And although Liberia has for long been thought of as exceptional – the only African nation never to have been colonized by an external power – the evidence shows that relationship which existed between Afro-American settlers and indigenous inhabitants was colonial in nature.

Akpan (1973) and Gershoni (1980) are among the earliest Liberianist writers to seriously examine Americo-Liberian rule from the perspective of colonialism, perceiving it more as a mimetic act patterned after Europe, and designed to respond to the prevailing realities of 19th Century international relations and politics. Other writers such as Whyte (2016) and Luthi, Falk & Purtschert (2016) construe Americo-Liberian rule from the perspective of 'settler colonies', or better still, "colonization without colonies", emphasizing the particular political and geographical arrangements undergirding the practice.[33] Without exception, these writers have focused exclusive upon the political, economic and geographical dimensions of Americo-Liberian colonialism, paying little or no attention to the crucial ideological dimensions underpinning it. That ideology was the idea of the *Divine Plan* by which America's Negros were, through Divine Providence, educated and acculturated

[33] For discussions of settler colonialism and examples in the New World and elsewhere in the West, see Wood (2017, Chap. 3 & 4), Batemen & Pilkington (2011), Veracini (2010), Keene (2002).

in slavery in the United States, and thus prepared for the task of enlightening and Christianizing their benighted and backward brethren in Africa. I trace the *Divine Plan* to late 19th and early 20th Century colonization movements in the United States. These issues are examined more closely in Chapter 4 when we considered evidence from Liberia's founding and the 19th Century colonial state. For now, it is important to examine the thesis organizing framework of postcolonial theory.

Post-colonial Theory

As an intellectual tradition, postcolonial theory has been variously defined and articulated by scholars in diverse fields of knowledge and practice. Slemon (1994, 16-17) hints at this conceptual diversity when he suggested that the term has been used

> as a means of ordering the critique of totalizing forms of Western Historicism…; as a portmanteau term for a retooled notion of 'class'; as a subset of both post-modernism and post-structuralism'; as the manacle for 'a condition of nativist longing in post-independence national groupings; as a cultural marker of non-residency for a third world intellectual cadre; as the inevitable underside of a fractured and ambivalent discourse of colonialist power; an oppositional form of reading practice; and as the name for a category of literary activities which sprang from a new and welcomed political energy going on in what used to be called "Commonwealth" literary studies' ('The Scramble for Post-Colonial Theory,' p. 16, 17)

Central to postcolonial theory's diverse mode of deployment, is the challenge it poses to biases inherent in Eurocentric and Western paradigms. Such biases have for long underpinned Europe's and Western construction of not only themselves as intellectually, racially, culturally, and biologically superior within the Cartesian dichotomy of self-other relations which justified imperial and colonial domination (European 'self' v. non-Western 'others'), but also the contrived distinctions between colonizers and colonized, human and non-human, of master and slave, and the politics of life and death within the colony (Said 1979; Mbembe 2001; Mudimbe 1988, 1994). In this particular sense, the 'post-colonial' denotes an ideological and conceptual apparatus rooted in the legacy of a uniquely European construction. This understanding of post-colonialism as an ideological and conceptual construct represents, therefore, a central pillar within post-colonial intellectual tradition, which in the case of Liberia, is exemplified by Americo-Liberians ideology of the *Divine Plan* – that enduring idea that Providence had ensured their survival and acculturation during slavery in the United States, for the singular purpose of returning them to Africa to rejuvenate and uplift the so-called 'lost race'.

The term post-colonial also denotes a specific temporality in reference to European colonization and post-independence, in the case of Africa. This temporal notion of the post-colonial as the period *after* colonization and independence, is also prevalent within African post-colonial scholarship. Mbembe's (2001) own conception of the *postcolony,* which I shortly elaborate, is closely associated with both notions of the term as time, as well as an ideological construct.[34]

To be clear, postcolonial theory is eminently tied to the history of European colonization. As Ashcroft (1995) stresses, this historical fact cannot be ignored when reflected upon the framework. Nor must the realities of the system of domination by Europe of the non-European world, in which distinctions between European 'colonizers' and non-European 'subjects' have featured permanently (Mbembe 2001; Mudimbe 1994; Ashcroft et al. 1995). Within Europe's colonization project, the dominant hegemonic entity was often of territorially foreign origins (although not always), and asserted power and control over colonized territories and subjects from afar through a combination of brute force and 'manufactured consent' (Ekeh 1975; Mbembe 2001, 25)[35]. In this respect, one can locate the history of modern European colonization to the so-called Age of Discovery (between 15th[th] – 18[th] Centuries) when Portugal and Spain (initially the Crown of Castile) are said to have 'discovered' and annexed large swathes of lands across the oceans for purposes of mercantilist trade, economic extraction, and human settlement. The last of Europe's modern-day colonies were in Africa where these colonies only acquired political independence beginning in the middle of the 20[th] Century. What started as mercantilist ambitions by competing European powers, eventually morphed into a system of violence, seizure, invasion, subjugation and control of the territories and subjects under European control, in some cases in complicity with segments of the colonized populations (Bayart 2000; Sawyer 1992).

The systems of subjugation imposed were based entirely upon policies and practices designed by European powers in what is now known as colonialism. At the height of Europe's colonialist expansion (roughly between 1815 and 1914), at least eight European powers were involved (Belgium, Britain, France, Germany, The Netherland, Italy, Portugal and Spain), their dominance having grown from about 35% of the earth's surface to 85% (Magdoff 1974; Fieldhouse 1967). Despite the multiplicity of contemporary postcolonial discourses, and their vast analytical deployments to other forms of oppressions and marginalities,[36] one cannot ignore this historical specificity. For it is central

[34] The distinction between the terms 'postcolonial' (un-hyphenated) and 'post-colonial' (hyphenated) reflects a key difference in scholastic usage, with the former often denoting the ideological and conceptual package (often followed by the word 'theory'), and the latter, suggesting historically specific demarcations, or post-independence in the case of Africa (often followed by the words 'state' or 'society'). Many scholars deploy them interchangeably.

[35] 'Manufactured consent' not in the exact sense that Herman & Chomsky (1988) depict it with respect to modern mass media (although the dynamic is similar), but in the sense discussed by Derrida (1994) and Foucault (in Spieker 2011), whereby power and authority authenticate themselves through everyday rituals and banality, such that their morality and acceptance become universalized over time.

[36] Such marginalities may be unrelated to the historical phenomenon of European colonization. Here, I have in mind such the experiences of exile, diaspora and migration; multiculturalism, contemporary liberation struggles, religion and culture in new nationalism; identity politics, race and ethnicity; feminism, gender and sexuality, indigenous 'third' and 'fourth' worlds cultures, and neo-colonialism. An increasing number of

to understanding the channels of colonialism's material, ideological, cultural, and discursive manifestations even after the formal end of the practice (Rutazibwa & Shilliam 2018; Ashcroft et al 1995: 2). In this regard, two important channels of operations have been suggested by Slemon (1994) based upon readings of Said (1979), Asad (1973), Young (1990) and others. These two channels have greatly influenced the formulation of postcolonial theory's central pillars introduced previously.

The *first* channel of operation involved direct political and economic control of the colony. During colonialism, this was achieved mainly through 'brute force' (Slemon 1994; Said 1979), what Mbembe (2001, 25) has termed the 'founding violence'. In this respect, colonial authority can be thought of as three distinct forms of violence. The "founding violence" which enabled territorial conquest and control, including the coercive supremacy of colonial laws and statutes; 'legitimizing violence', designed to manufacture legitimacy of colonial authority by "giving it meaning" and by "justifying its necessity and universal mission" via "the production of imaginaries capable of converting the founding violence into authorizing authority" (p. 25). The third form of violence was one designed to ensure the effective "maintenance, spread, and permanence" of colonial authority (Ibid). The everyday banality and repetitiveness of elements of colonial power occurred through a vast array of ordinary acts of rituals that ultimately served to constitute colonial authority as "the central imaginary that the [colonial] state shared with society, and thus had an authenticating and reiterating function" (ibid). Europe's attainment of direct political and economic control of the colonies can thus be thought of as having been achieved through the former two more coercive forms of colonial violence.

In Liberia, territorial control of African territories occurred through a combination of land 'purchases', commercial and trading agreement, and military alliances; but also, through brute force by which indigenous people and territories were occupied and incorporated into the state. (Buell 1928; Huberich 1947; Akpan 1973; Gershoni 1985). The latter form of violence, in effect, naturalizes and universalizes the former. Their summative effects have been conquest, oppression, seizure, theft, slavery and various forms of force labour and indentured servitude, as well as the appropriation of the colonies' natural, human and cultural resources, assets and artefacts. Overall, colonial power and authority were effectively naturalized and universalized across colonial dominion in an almost unquestionable manner (Rodney 1982; Fanon 2005; Dunn 2003; Harris 1987; Lindqvist 1996).[37]

academic journals dedicated to these developments (e.g. the *Intervention)* is further testaments of this development.

[37] Bayart (1993, 2000) suggests, quite controversially, that for Africa south of the Sahara, European colonialism and various other forms of Western subjugation occurred with a large degree of African cooperation and complicity, in full dramatization of agency. For detailed discussion and critique of Bayart's arguments, see notably Leys (1996, 40 et seq.), Mamdani (1996, 10–11), Chege (1996, 9 Feb., 30–31), Clapham (July 1994, 433–39; 1989, 528–29) by D. B. Cruise O'Brien; Coquery-Vidrovitch (1989 July, 9; 1990, 71–5) by J. F. Médard; O'Brien (1994 May, 247–51).

The *second* channel of operation Slemon (1994) discusses involves the use of a complex array of conceptual tools and ideological techniques to "regulate and subordinate" colonized people without the use of direct coercive instruments (Said 1979). In a purely Gramscian sense (1971), this amounts to 'cultural hegemony', that is to say, the tacit acceptance of dominance through the fabrication of 'consent'. This most foundational pillar of postcolonial theory sits at the core of Said's analysis in *Orientalism* (1978). This trajectory of conceptual and ideological regulations itself operates through a set of distinct secondary mechanisms, namely, what is termed the "constitutive powers" of state apparatuses such as state education, academic societies, and professional fields of knowledge within these systems. These systems, Slemon argues, are involved in the production and reproduction of the colonialist relationships (1994, 47). The second mechanism in this second channel of operation, according to Slemon, involves "the different ways ideology reproduces colonialist relationship through the strategic deployment of a vast semiotic field of representation, literary works, advertising, arts and sculpture, travelogues, exploration documents, map making, pornography, and so on" (ibid). In other words, popular culture. In this sense, post-colonial theory is, at the very least, an understanding of colonialism not merely as a violent technology of domination (although this is a necessary and indispensable element), but also as "an ideological and discursive formation", that is to say, "an apparatus for constituting subject positions" through the various fields of knowledge and representation (ibid, p. 17. See also Said 1979).[38] In Liberia, Americo-Liberian leaders deployed various 'civilizing and Christianizing' techniques to culturally cleanse African peoples as a prerequisite for admittance into citizenship, and by so doing, justify and strengthen colonial authority and relationships (Martin 1969; Gershoni 1985). It is this second channel of domination – the ideological and discursive formation of subject position via official institutions of knowledge and representation – that Edward Said (1979) tackles in his ground-breaking work on *Orientalism.*

Said's *Orientalism* planted amongst the earliest intellectual foundations for postcolonial theory. But colonialism's material and ideological effects were long described by colonial subjects as they comprehended them, doing so in political and literary critiques, including *Things Fall Apart* by famed Chinua Achebe (1957), and *The Wretched of the Earth* by Frantz Fanon (2005). And it is this particularly conceptualization which sets European colonialism apart from imperialism and other forms of empire (Slemon 1994; Said 1978). For Said, this mode of colonialism was the indispensable tool in Europe's construction of the Orient as a 'deployable unit of knowledge', not as it was in reality;

[38] For example, Asad (1973) and Young (1990) have examined the role of anthropology in the creation of the 'native'. Bishop (1990) analyses the deployment of Western concepts of 'mathematics' against African school children; Mitchell (1988) has examined how the professional field of 'political science' came into being through a European colonialist engagement with the cultures of Egypt. And Viswanathan (1989) has examined the foundations of 'English' literary studies within the structure of colonialist management in India. Further critiques have appeared to further discredit professional fields within Western syllabus of the 'humanities' (Slemon, p. 46, 47; Said 1979).

but as it was 'imagined' and designed to function by European scholars (Said 1994, 88). Inherent in the 'orientalization of the Orient', Said suggests, were key 'ontological and epistemological distinctions' between the Orient and the Occident (European), between Europe and the non-European 'other', and between 'colonizers' and the 'colonized'. These contrived distinctions based upon race, religion, reason and intellect, culture and biology, emerged, amongst other things, as justifications for Europe's conception of itself as a superior entity over the colonized world. Thus was born the legitimating impulses for Europe's domination of the Orients and others.

Similar to Europe's construction of the Orient, was the construction of subject positions for other colonized peoples (Said 1979). But nowhere has this discursive formulation been more permanent, and arguably most destructive, than in Africa where Europeans constructed fantastically negative imageries of the African 'natives', as the basis for dehumanization, dispossession, control, and in some cases, extermination (Mudimbe 1988; Conrad 1902; Lindqvist 1996; Hochschild 1998; Mbembe 2001). Knowledge of and about the colonized world therefore evolved within the 'framework of colonial domination,' whereby the ostensibly 'objective European scholar…approached his subject from a general position of [superiority and] dominance' (Said 1997, 163). Early Christian missionary activities were an integral part of this system of domination (e.g. Barry et al. 2008; Sinha 1995, 2; 2006). Rising out of this cradle, postcolonial theory has since evolved in firm opposition to forms of European/Western-centric knowledge based upon contrived distinctions between Europe/The West and the 'rest'. Postcolonial theory has thus won for itself the status not only of an *oppositional praxis,* but also a *deconstructive discourse,* comprising, for example, feminist critiques, critical literary and cultural discourses, and a diversity of other discourses of marginality based upon historically unequal power relations (Petersen 1984; Mohanty 1988; Spivak 1985).

Also central to post-colonial theory is the concept of the subaltern. Originally derived from Gramsci's expose on cultural hegemony, and his depiction of 'history from below' (Gramsci 1957, 1966; Thompson 1963), the subaltern refers to populations living outside of the social, political and geographic structures of hegemonic power. By their marginality and exclusion, such populations are rendered speechless, voiceless and powerless, without agency or representation in the power structures of society (Spivak 1988).[39] Throughout history, it must be said, this cohort of oppressed and quieted voices has constituted colonized peoples, 'natives', slaves and former slaves, 'third' and 'fourth' worlds citizens, black and brown races; women, sexual minorities, and a variety of other oppressed and marginalized subjects. Thus, a central agenda of postcolonial theory is one of

[39] In colonial periods, the subalterns resided outside of the hegemonic power structures of the colony and of European colonial homeland. For the development of *Subaltern Studies* as a field of knowledge and inquiry, see for example Ludden, D. (undated).

liberation: to emancipate the quieted voices 'speaking on the margins of power,' and to 'bring them to the centre of [political and intellectual] analysis' (Madison 2012, 57).

This 'emancipatory' agenda has however not proceeded without criticisms. For example, Ashcroft et al. (1994, 2) have argued that "the tendency to deploy the term 'post-colonial' to refer to any kind of marginality at all, runs the risk of denying its basis in the historical process of colonialism.'[40] In effect, Ashcroft is insisting upon a firm nexus of postcolonial theory with the "historical fact of European colonialism, and the diverse material effects to which the phenomenon has given rise" (ibid). By this reasoning, all other analyses outside of this historically specific European reality merit separate appellations. Ashcroft et al. (1995) criticism may appears germane, considering postcolonial theory's origins in a uniquely European colonial experience. However, its implications are far-reaching and therefore cannot be narrowly circumscribed only to the European experience. To do so would limit the scope of the theory's analytical deployment as an *oppositional praxis* and *deconstructive discourse,* irrespective of time and space. To insist upon such an inextricable yoking of postcolonial theory to the European experience would not only enclose postcolonial analyses to a mere six centuries of official European colonial historiography (starting with Portuguese and Spanish annexations in 15th Century, until 20th Century European colonies in Africa and the Orient), but it would obfuscate and omit analyses of important non-European colonial experiences. We now know, for example, that Russia also colonized the Americas across the Bering Strait, and for a time dominated the Orient (Hopwood 1969; Said 1979). We also know that Ottomans and Arabs colonized parts of Europe, Asia and Africa (Muiu and Guy 2009; Said 1979); and for that matter, that Japan and the United States also colonized and dominated Asia, Latin America and the Pacific (Pillar 2016; Hilfrich 2012; Ninkovich 2001; McMahon 1981).

Here, I am particularly concerned about the case of Liberia, and its general neglect from African postcolonial historiography based on this European bounded-ness – the notion that to be postcolonial, one must have emerged out of the European colonial experience. Such demarcation has the tendency to ignore and omit the devastating colonial project of Afro-American settlers in the territories of West Africa now known as Liberia beginning in the early 19th Century. It also has the propensity to perpetuate the myth of Liberia's exceptionalism as the only African nation never colonized, whilst obfuscating proper understanding of the ideologies and mechanisms of Americo-Liberian colonialism, and how its legacies may be impacting contemporary Liberian *postcolony*. As I will show in Chapter 4, Liberia's escape from European colonization neither insulated its state processes from the dominant colonial logic; nor engendered any marked difference in its settlers'/indigenes relationship. The ability of Liberian leaders to demonstrate colonial authority over

[40] See also Spivak's own critique of the relevant deployment of subalternity as 'any form of marginality and oppression', in de Kock, L. (1992).

autochthonous African societies was crucial in dramatizing sovereignty, and averting the wholesale usurpation of its territories within the context of the *Scramble for Africa* (See Map 2, in Appendix B).

At this junction, I shall now reflect more deeply upon Mbembe's (2001) concept of the *postcolony* and its salience in properly understanding rent and the 'rentier state' within the context of an African state.

The Postcolony

In his early discussion of the 'grotesque and obscene' as characteristics of the *postcolony*, Mbembe (2001) lays the following foundational pillars of the concept.

> The notion "postcolony" identifies specifically a given historical trajectory – that of societies recently emerging from the experiences of colonization and the violence which the colonial relationship involves. To be sure, the postcolony is chaotically pluralistic; [but] it has nonetheless an internal coherence. It is a specific system of signs, a particular way of fabricating simulacra or re-forming stereotypes. It is not, however, just an economy of signs in which power is mirrored and *imagined* self-reflectively. The postcolony is characterized by a distinct style of political improvisation, by a tendency to excess and lack of proportion, as well as by distinctive ways in which identities are multiplied, transformed and put into circulation. But the postcolony is also made up of a series of corporate institutions and political machinery that, once in place, constitutes a distinctive regime of violence. In this sense, the postcolony is a particularly revealing, and rather dramatic, stage on which are played out the wider problems of subjection and its corollary, discipline. (p. 102, 103).

Mbembe introduces two important notions of the postcolony in the above rendering. First, he suggests that the postcolony is first and foremost a *historical trajectory* based upon a set of unique experiences related to colonization and its inherent relationship of violence. Related to this *historical trajectory* are also important ideas of *age* and *durée* as fundamental characteristics. Mbembe's emphasis on the postcolony as time (or temporality) suggests that the African postcolony is in fact the latest phase in a long and particularly torturous process of colonization and its aftermath. I shall elaborate on this particular temporal conception of the postcolony. But a second important notion of the postcolony exist which is important to mention. It relates to its chaotic plurality, its "distinct style of political improvisation, and tendency to excess and lack of proportion," and its constitutive elements "of corporate institutions and political machinery that, once in place, constitutes a distinctive regime of violence." In short, the postcolony, according to Mbembe, represents a specific mode of sovereignty, central to which are elements of hybridity, synthesis, simultaneity, "improvisation", and the lack of form. While violence is an outcome of the corporate cum political machinery, it is, however, not the only one. Inherent in the concept of the postcolony, therefore, are the two important notions of *temporality* and *sovereignty.* I shall now examine each in further detail. In so doing, it is important to keep in mind our goal of understanding the 'rentier state' through these notions of the postcolony.

Postcolony as Time

As a specific temporality, the *postcolony as time,* according to Mbembe, is based upon specific understanding of *age* and *durée* (Mbembe 2001: 14). By age is meant "'not merely a simple category of time, but a number of relationships and configurations of events, often visible and perceptive, sometimes diffused, 'hydra-headed'" (Ibid. p. 14). In other words, the postcolony can be thought of as enclosing multiple temporalities and *durées* made up of "discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another" (Ibid), themselves being inscribed within a *longue durée*. It is useful, therefore, when reflecting upon the Liberian postcolony, to think of it not merely as a particular historical epoch which comes after past ones, but instead as the outcome of a 'before', 'during' and 'after' colonialism, in what can be understood as a *age of entanglement* (Mbembe 2001,15). By *age of entanglement,* the postcolony is therefore thought of as enclosing multiple temporalities – a sort of fussion – each overlapping and interlocking the other, while retaining or modifying their original constituents (p. 15, 16).

For a proper understanding of the postcolony as an *age of entanglement*, one cannot rely upon traditional notions of history. Such notions of history treat time as a mere chronological sequence of events – from a past time, to a present and future time, each proceeding the other.[41] In order to fully understand the postcolony as a temporal entanglement, a different notion of time is needed which transcends traditional understandings. It is here that Mbembe's formulation of history as *time of entanglement* acquires particular usefulness. Mbembe advocates a view of 'time in the postcolony' not merely as a "linear current which transposes individuals and societies from a background to a foreground, with the future emerging necessarily from the past and following that past, itself irreversible" Mbembe 2001, 16). Neither is it "a simple sequence in which each moment effaces, annuls, and replaces those that proceeded it, to the point where a single age exists within society" (ibid.). Instead, time in the postcolony is the "interlocking of presents, pasts and futures, that retain their depths of other presents, pasts and futures, each age bearing, altering, and maintaining the previous ones" (ibid.).[42] Rutazibwa and Shilliam (2018) has also deployed the 'postcolonial' as a

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[41] In his book *Time and Narratives,* Paul Ricoeur (1990) has, for example, discussed two concepts of time: cosmological and phenomenological (action-oriented) times, both of which are underpinned by notions of a chronological or time sequence.

[42] From a purely philosophical perspective, the postcolony as a time of entanglement is "precisely that moment when different forms of absences become mixed together: the absence of those presences that are no longer so and that one remembers (the past), and the absence of those others that are yet to come and are anticipated (the future)" (Mbembe 2001, 16-17).

heuristic device in order to make us aware of "the multiple, contending and overlapping legacies of colonial rule and imperial administration that inform contemporary global politics," in other words, the postcolony, or 'coloniality' can be thought of as "the afterlives of colonialism, those principles and rationalities of colonial and imperial rule that survive even in the absence of formal colonialism" (p. 4). This temporal entanglement and its operating logic are assumed to govern the transmission of socio-political imaginaries and cultural artefacts between and across the colonial and postcolonial epoch. To understand these complex, overlapping and slow-moving dynamics, I have adopted a *longue durée politico-historical* approach to examining the postcolony and the phenomenon of sovereign rent, both epistemologically and methodologically (Chapter 3).

Mbembe (2001) discusses the notion of entanglement from the perspective of temporality. However, the case of Liberia suggests that the notion of entanglement transcends temporality; and may exhibit important spatial dimensions. As I will demonstrate in Chapters 4 and 5 when examining the evidence of pre-1945, the postcolonial Liberian state which emerged following the end of WWII retained many important elements of the colonial state. The post-WWII postcolonial transition was only the latest iteration of state transformation which began with the Barclay Consensus of 1904 when indigenous societies were more firmly incorporated into the Liberian state, fusing the 'modern' and 'traditional' into a new colonial hybrid. An important aspect of this early example of fusion was the framework rent and revenue sharing between Americo-Liberians and indigenous leaders (Barclay *AM* 1904). The dislocation of Afro-Americans from the United States to Liberia in the early 1800s, while forcible, did not separate Americo-Liberian society from the United States in terms of politics and ideology, the economy and trade, culturally and religiously. These Americo-Liberians remained deeply entangled with and influenced by the United States throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries to the extent that developments in the United States directly and immediately impacted them as if they inhabited the same geographical space. For example, the end of the U.S. Civil in 1865 and renewed opposition to black colonization led immediately to a halt in emigration to Liberia, with the adverse effect of slowing down state expansion and the formation of settlers' enclaves within the hinterlands. This spatial entanglement continued to be exhibited during and until the end of the post-colonial transition in the mid-20th Century.

The Postcolony as Sovereignty

Regarding sovereignty in the *postcolony*, that is, the right to rule, I am particularly concerned about the forms of domination and subordination which, although operating ostensibly within legal-rational institutional frameworks, constantly veer from core formalisms of private/public distinctions, and other legal-rational precepts, into oftentimes wholly personalized, patrimonial and autocratic relationships. Here, Mbembe (2001) articulates a very useful lens for understanding important premises of postcolonial sovereignty and stability. Just like the colonial state, the post-colonial state exhibits a distinct *rationality* – a wide range of political, social, cultural and religious ethos – while simultaneously displaying "eminently indigenous social principles", the latter being the outcome of a long process of 'indigenization of the state'. In colonial times, *colonial rationality* consisted of the constellation of concrete and imaginary apparatuses which governed life under colonial rule, comprising first and foremost, colonial power and authority and all their manifestations. In the case of colonial Liberia, these apparatuses included the construction of the 'native' as inferior and backward (e.g. Schwab & Harvey 1947), and the the regulation of 'native' life through a plethora of *Hinterland Regulations* (Barclay *IM, AM*, 1904, 1905) and *Aborigine Laws* (1956).

As has already been noted, the permanence and persistence of colonial sovereignty rested upon a *founding violence* which enabled coercive subjugation and juridical control; *violence of legitimation*, which justified the necessity and authority of colonial power – as an authorizing authority; and the *sustaining violence*, which ensured colonial authority's maintenance, spread and permanence 'through… repetitive enactments of banal and everyday rituals meant to construct a central cultural imaginary what the state shared with society, and thus had an authenticating and reiterating function (p. 25).[43] Thus, the transformation of the post-colonial state has occurred to the point where "something emerges that has the look of 'customs', without being reducible to it; and partakes of "modernity" without being wholly included in it' (ibid). Permanent amongst the indigenous social norms and customs which constitute the ethos of postcolonial rationality, therefore, are African notions of *transfer,* and its interplay with systems of *allocation* at the micro and macro levels of society. These transfers and allocation involve abstract and immaterial assets and imaginaries which state authority shares with society. But they also involve the material and concrete – of financial assets and wealth. This is particularly true when we consider how public resources, rent and wealth are often channeled away from the public to the private domains through various methods of transfer and allocation. These modalities do not occur by accident, but are design with the intention not only of asserting state influence and creating complicity (or is stability?) within society; but also to cater to the welfare of members of society.

Mbembe (2001, 46) argues that the most widespread forms of *transfer* in African societies occur via communal social ties. Such ties are in fact the building blocks of the community, and define both formal and informal relationships between members of society. These ties involve a complex system of reciprocity and obligations that bind members within families, households and villages. Meant to ensure the security, protection and assistance of every member of the community, these obligations are expected to remain in place as long as members conform to prevailing rules and forms

[43] For details of these three forms of violence, their operative deployment as instruments of colonial power, and the colonial relationships they were designed to regulate in the public and private spaces, see Mbembe (2001, 25-27), Guyer (1984, 33-59), Asaacman & Roberts, eds. (1995, 147-79, 200-67), Vaughan (1991).

of subordination, while being obliged to reciprocate under varying circumstances and capacity (Mbembe 2001, 46-47).[44] While binding individuals at the micro-levels – the family, village and ethnicity – this system of transfer is by no means limited to them. It can be extended to an entire clan, district or even a province. Such transfers, and the practical manifestations thereof, may even rise eventually to dominant the workplace, religious orders and fraternities, and even important national organizations and state bureaucracies – far beyond the remits of the household, and deep into national public life (ibid). Within this social system of transfer emerges 'a regime of *social complicity',* that is to say, the widespread acceptance and indulgence of modalities of exchange, alliances and protection (p. 48). These forms of complicity cut across society; and could rise from the village and extend into national governance (Mbembe, 46-47).

It is important, once again, to emphasize that these forms of transfers, exchanges and social complicities transcend the abstract and imaginary, and often involve material assets, financial resources and wealth within society. In examining postcolonial Nigeria, Peter Ekeh (1975, 92) also argued that important material and resource transfers do occur between the two spheres of society created by colonialism – the *Civic Public* which is the public realm historically associated with colonial administration and popular politics, and the *Primordial Public* which is the public realm "in which primordial groupings, ties and sentiments [such as clanship and ethnicity] influence and determine the individual behavior." Ekeh suggests that the two publics occupy separate moral orders within the postconoly: the civic public is amoral, while the primordial public is moral, and occupies the same moral order as the private realm. Based upon these moral distinctions, therefore, Ekeh argues that resources and material transfer from government and the public sector towards private individuals and groups in society do not violate any moral code, suggesting that "The unwritten law of the dialectics [in the postcolony] is that it is legitimate to rob the civic public in order to strengthen the primordial public." Within the context of this complex dialectics within the postcolony, what is popularly termed as 'corruption' by Western observers do not violate any moral code, and are deemed to conform to legitimate expectations.

With this system of transfer in place, what follows is the enactment of processes of allocation across society meant not only to "strengthen the primordial public", but also to ensure social protection, cohesion and stability (Mbembe 2001). Not to understand these social particularities of the African postcolony is to misread (sometimes, but not always) policy choices of post-colonial states with respect to how jobs are created and allocated across spheres of society, and choices of investments and economic production,[45] as they may not necessarily reflect the rationality of

[44] See also the overview by Mahieu (1990), Glazier (1985), Berry (1993), Guyer (1981).

[45] For example, choices of investments, allocation of titles to properties and bank loans, granting of administrative and public works contracts, regulation of the import-export trade, public consumption, price controls and rules for subsidies, granting of licenses and other permits, control of foreign exchanges, customs

"[economic] competitiveness or any effective concern for profit" (p. 43-44). This understanding may help us account for the strong desire of post-colonial African states, especially in the immediate aftermath of WWII, to inject themselves into productive activities designed not only to achieve political payoffs (through policies of recruitment and the allocation of government benefits, salaries and perks), but also to guarantee the provision of basic social utilities vital for citizen's protection and survival (ibid).

Within the above system of social transfer and allocation, Mbembe argues, we we also find a "purely state type of allocation" (p. 44, 45), suggesting that this type of allocation is itself composed of two kinds. First and foremost, it involves the granting of salary to public servants and bureaucrats in the process of "constituting political subjects". In other words, by granting its recipient a means of livelihood, the salary does not only compensate productive work (for which there is often none; and to which the notion of the 'rentier' is often ascribed), but it also establishes debt and creates claims against individuals in society, which they may satisfy through complicity or the acceptance of submission, domination and unquestioned subservience (p. 45). Collier (1971, 1) has revealed, for example, how the concept of debt (via monetary transactions) among the largest ethnic community in Liberia – the Kpelle – has been used to "build durable power and claims to legitimate [political] authority…and for the building of political following" (also Gibbs 1962, 1965). By such pecuniary gestures, strong bonds of loyalty, and even lasting friendship, have been developed and forged.

The second kind of state-type of allocation is the private appropriation of public resources for the purpose of creating allegiance (p. 45, 46). According to Mbembe, this type of allocation involves

> [F]irst the advantages and privileges that holders of positions of authority granted themselves, a cumulative value far greater than their salaries: housing, furniture, water, electricity, cars, domestics helps, entertainment and travel expenses, bonuses, reserve funds. Then there was a system of double accounting (misappropriation): double payments of rents, false administrative leases, secret commissions, 'backhanders,' and under-invoicing in the granting of public contracts, allocation of property rights or bank loans, misappropriation under cover of performing custom and tax procedures. Then…there was the parallel cuts in state financial flows. Down to quite junior levels, public services could be turned into personal account… Thanks to these two forms of allocations, economic things [are] converted into social and political things. – Mbembe (2001, 46).

The multiplicity and degree of ethnic fractionalization within African postcolony requires a particularly delicate balancing act if the imperative of state and nation building must be achieved, and if the state must function as a guarantor of social welfare, order and progress. Fulfilling these roles has often involved the creation of centralized mechanisms for the organization, production and

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and tax procedures, management of exchanges between cities and countryside, and between industry and agriculture, and in short, the very definition of economic policies.

distribution of economic rent, surplus and wealth across society (Mbembe p. 44). Therefore, in order to properly assess sovereign rent and the 'rentier state', it is not enough to invoke fashionable claims of authoritarianism, corruption or violence. While these characterizations may be useful in understanding one or another legitimate practice in the postcolony, they demonstrate a certain limitation in their ability to help us understand state rentierism in Africa; or for that matter, how it may be reformed. This realization makes crystal clear, therefore, the importance of comprehending colonialism and its afterlife.

Conclusion

The Rentier State Theory may offer important insights and empirical assessments of resource-rich African postcolonial states. I argue, however, that it is limited in helping us understand the underlying social, political and historical factors which influence the various forms, operations and deployment of sovereign rent within the process of state development. This is because it is deeply ahistorical, and fails to take into account the politico-historical dimensions of the 'rentier state'. From this vantage point, I have constructed the African 'rentier state' as first and foremost a postcolonial state. Invoking Mbembe's (2001) notion of the *postcolony* and its unique concepts of the *entanglement of time* and the *postcolony as sovereignty*, I have demonstrated that sovereign rent and the African rentier state are unique politico-historical phenomena that reflect the fusion of multiple heritages and temporalities, in an ever evolving process of state formation. As a unique form of sovereignty and political domination, sovereign rents serve the important functions of resource transfers and allocation towards legitimate social purposes such as nation-building and social stability. Through such transfers and allocations, however, the state also places its citizens in debt, for which submission and 'subjectification' can be negotiated and often painfully enforced. The postcolonial state has thus emerged as the latest phase of state development in Africa.

What follows in Chapter 3 is a discussion of the *longue durée* approach to historical research.

Chapter 3: History as Method

Introduction

> "Only a dialogue with the past can produce originality." – Wilson Harris
>
> “We see farthest into the future only when we can discern deep into the past.” – Winston Churchill

A politico-historical approach to rent and the rentier state entails answering questions about how these political configurations emerged, and the various forms and diverse operations they assumed over time. Answering these questions involves more than quantitative assessments of historical data on the economy and fiscal affairs of a state (i.e. state revenue, trade, etc.). It also involves examining and interpreting qualitatively, historical materials that say more than numerical figures can reveal. The researcher must seek to understand the ‘spirit’, traditions and sentiments of the times, the socio-political conditions, the relevant actors and their motivations for agency. In order to clearly comprehend these configurations, their persistence and transformations over time, therefore, one must adopt a *longue durée* perspective to historical analysis. This is so not only because of the special role history plays in postcolonial theorizing, and the latter’s rejection of forms of ‘imperial history’ as tools of subjugation (Hulme 1986[1995]; Carter 1987[1995], Chakrabarty 1992[1995]; Walcott 1974[1995]); but also because of the interesting questions about change and divergent forms of rent and the rentier state which develop over time.

The absence of much rigidity about what constitutes ‘historical research’ has left wide open a diverse and innovative range of inquiries of historical nature. Some scholars have suggested that in practice, research tends to be ‘historical’ when it focuses on periods “prior to the experience of most [or all] of those conducting the research” (Abbott 1994, 80, as cited Schutt 2004, 338). In other words, historical research, according to Abbott (1994), is that which is bounded by moments about which the researcher(s) has limited direct “live experiences.” The implication of such rendering is a highly restrictive and problematic demarcation of historical research. If the ‘historical’ emerges as a function of biological age and direct “live experiences”, then one instantly encounters problems about distinctions between what is ‘contemporaneous’ and what is ‘historical’. Certainly, a historian who, although living now, has direct “live experiences” with past events can, without question, undertake historical research. But another more problematic aspect of such dichotomy, I think, rests with its assumption about the disconnect between the past (history) and the present (contemporality) – with one following and coming after the other in a linear 'irreversible' procession, in the manner Mbembe discusses (2001,16). Such a view of time supposes that the past and the present are distinguishable, and thus warrant distinctions.

This is not to suggest the absence of a 'past' moment, or a 'present' time, or a 'future' time against which the relevance of historical research may be established chronologically.[46] Instead, it is simply to underscore the inextricable connections between historical time (the past), and contemporary (present) and anticipated (future) times, so as to necessitate a framework capable of accurately capturing this interconnected moving and overlapping train. It is, I believe, such conceptual conundrum that Mbembe (2001) has sought to overcome with his proposition of *time of entanglement*. Mbembe (2001, 16) suggests that historical time "is not a current that carries individuals and societies from a background to a foreground, with the future emerging necessarily from the past and following that past, itself irreversible…[and] It is neither linear time or a simple sequence in which each moment effaces, annuls and replaces those that preceded it to a point where a single age [past or present; history or contemporary] exists within society." For Mbembe (2001), any moment in time is not merely a processional and 'irreversible' occurrence. Instead, it is a constellation, "an interlocking of the past, present and future, each age bearing, altering and maintaining the previous ones' such that each moment constitutes, in a truly philosophical sense, the mixing of various absences: 'the absence of those presences that are no longer so, and that one remembers (the past), and the absence of those others that are yet to come and are anticipated (the future)" (ibid).

To be clear, every age, including the colonial and postcolonial, are in reality a combination of multiple ages and temporalities (Mbembe 2001, 22). Therefore, in order to properly comprehend this notion of time and age – i.e. *time as entanglement* – one must therefore adopt a long, processional and panoramic view of history that considers not only temporal entanglement akin to Braudelian *longue durée* notion of history (1966[1980]), but also, as I have suggested, spatial entanglement.

Braudel pioneered a set of heuristic tools for analysing social change which pays very keen attention to persistence, continuity and structural stability, which imply a relatively long historical sweep. Braudel was also interested in ruptures and conjunctures, cognizant of the discordance and interconnectedness of various ages and forms of change over long periods of time. Braudel's intellectual commitment to the concept of *longue durée* was important to his application of 'traditional' event history. But Braudel cautioned against focusing on any one historical event, if it is

[46] Paul Ricoeur (1990) treats the subject of chronological time in his book *Time and Narratives.* Therein, Ricoeur discusses two concepts of time: cosmological and phenomenological (action-oriented) times, both of which are underpinned by notions of a chronological sequence.

not connected to some larger historical interest. Analysis of historical events, according to Braudel, must therefore "contribute to the 'light[ing] up of some dark corner or even some wide vista of history" (*The Mediterranean* p. 901-2).[47] In postcolonial theory, this notion of "lightning up" takes on greater significance in light of the theory's agenda of scrutinizing imperial and colonial history, revealing hidden historical truths, and liberating silent and subjugated voices (Spivak 1988; Chakrabarty 1995; Foucault 1970). In this respect, the postcolonial scholar and historian carries with her a duty, when assessing the archives or oral historical materials, to liberate those voices and perspectives long subjugated by dominant political and ideological forces, in the same manner Ricoeur (1981, 1990) and Foucault (2006) speak about it.

From the perspective of methodology, both Braudel (1966, 1980) and Mbembe (2001) can be understood as advocating for the integration to two forms of historical research: *historical process research* – i.e. a form of historical research focused specifically on a series of events occurring over a long period of time and leading to a more complete understanding of historical developments; and *historical event research* – i.e. historical research focused on specific historical events instead of processes or long-term series of events.[48] Within the context of this study, historical process research will involve analyses of some 150 years of fiscal data; while historical even research will involve a careful examination of four historical episodes which shed important light on the various forms of rent and their uses within the context of state development.

The sorts of questions raised within this *longue durée politico-historical* approach to research can be adequately addressed using a mixed-method technique to data collection and analyses. This mixed-methods approach to data and data analysis is driven mainly by the nature of the research questions. Accordingly, the study was organized in two phases: a quantitative phase (Phase I) which involved the collation of statistical data describing forms, quantities and patterns of rent across various historical periods of state development in Liberia (i.e. *longue durée),* with a special emphasis on the period 1944-1971 when the magnitude of state rent was most intense. Then there is a qualitative phase (Phase II) which examines social and political developments and configurations across these long historical periods. The quantitative phase is geared towards providing a backdrop for the second (qualitative) segment of the study, whose goal is to explore sovereign rent and the rentier state through various themes. Both Phase I & II draw upon rarely examined archival materials on Liberia. Although

[47] This framework views history as a combination of multiple temporalities, and therefore historical analysis as the unpacking of multiple layers of time which are interconnected to each other. This appears to be partly Braudel's motivation for formulating the idea of *histoire totale* (total history) – a concept that all history has a governing principle. Braudel used his concept of *histoire totale* to try to bring together his four previous forms of history. Braudel failed to develop this framework in great depth, and thus they have been rarely applied in popular historiography (Lai 2004,11-18).

[48] For a discussion of these two forms of historical research, see for example Schutt 2014: p. 340-346.

the quantitative and qualitative approaches to data and data analyses are distinct forms of methods, they are often employed simultaneously to create a clear picture of the dynamics of interest.

In applying a mixed-method approach to data and data collection, I first utilized a quantitative research approach to contextualize sovereign rent in Liberia. By so doing, I construct a base of knowledge which then facilitates the more effective use of qualitative data. Together, I hope to assess and present a holistic picture of Liberia as a case, both idiographic – that is to say, creating a 'thick description' (Geertz 1973); and getting at the heart of politico- historical understandings. Only then are we able to access and uncover new 'truths' and hidden perspectives rooted in the politico-historical realities of the actors involved, consistent with a postcolonial agenda. The goal is to generate what Greene & Caracelli (1997: 14) have termed "a plurality of perspectives", partly by overcoming limitations involved in the use of a single research approach. In so doing, the study's credibility and conclusions are enhanced and validated (Creswell 2003).[49] What follow are comments on the specific quantitative/qualitative relationship at the heart of this mixed-methods approach, before turning to data collection and analyses.

Mixed Method: Theoretical Underpinnings and Design

Mixed-method research has long been celebrated for its ability to explore a single research problem using multiple approaches and forms of data sources. As a particular research design, it involves the use of both qualitative and quantitative methods in one or sequentially one or two studies to explore a particular research question or problem (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2006). The key logic behind the application of this design is that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts" (Green & Caracelli 1997, p. 13), meaning, an understanding of the larger, more holistic picture is of a greater research value than the understanding of its constituent parts. In many instances, mixed-methods research has involved the collapsing of multiple paradigmatic stances – a sort of 'conversation' between different methods and paradigms (Ibid. p. 10., also Greene, Benjamin & Goodyear 2001). But such mixing is valuable in so far as it avoids the 'paradigm war' (between, for example, positivist 'objectivity' and interpretivist 'subjectivity') and does not undermine research validity. It must therefore promote "more comprehensive, insightful and logical results than either paradigm could

[49] Greene, Caracelli & Graham (1989) have discussed five reasons and advantages researchers may choose to use mixed-methods: (1) *triangulation* - using multiple methods to answer a single research question in search of 'convergence' which enhance credibility and validity of the research findings; (2) *complementarity* – the use of multiple methods to achieve total understanding and different aspects of the same research question; (3) *development* - the use of one method whose results help develop and inform a subsequent method; (4) *initiation* - the use of one method whose results raise new questions and contradiction that then initiates a subsequent study which employs a different method; and (5) *expansion* – the use of multiple methods for the purpose of expanding the scope and comparative understanding of a research question across multiple settings and populations. For further discussions, see also Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2006).

obtain alone” (Tashakkori & Teddlier 1998: 10). This synergistic approach is particularly important in this study because of the dual nature of the research questions involved.

They involved assessments of both the ‘objective’ sizes and values of sovereign rents (quantitatively), and the qualitative interpretation of historical and documentary evidence relating to its social and political impact on the state, the economy and society. By quantitative, I mean an exploration which gets at the ‘over-all picture’ (and answers questions about how many? How often? To what extent? in a manner akin to a positivistic outlook (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2006: 317). By qualitative, I mean getting at issues of meaning, interpretation and ‘lived experiences’ (Ibid) – a sort of excavation of ‘subjugated knowledge’, ‘multiple truths’, and hitherto unexamined perspectives and understandings (Lincoln & Guba 2000; Tashakkori & Teddlie 1998). In this sense, this mixed-method research is both ‘pragmatic’ and ‘pluralist’ in so far as it not only circumvents the sort of paradigmatic puritanism which finds it impossible to traverse philosophical boundaries (see Guba 1985),[50] because by crossing philosophical boundaries (or simply by asserting an agnostic stance) it enables a quest for deeper, richer and more holistic analyses of qualitative data, in light of the research aims and questions (e.g. Frost 2009, 2011; Frost & Nolas 2011, 2013, Frost et al. 2010). In this sense, mixed-method research is more committed to ‘what works best’. (Tashakkori and Teddlier 1998).

Thematic Analysis

A similar pragmatic and pluralistic stance has been adopted by scholars and researchers working exclusively within a qualitative research tradition. Driven primarily by the need to cross multiple paradigmatic borderlines, and remain indifferent about them (ontologically and epistemologically). Braun and Clark (2006) have, for example, proposed a ‘thematic analysis’ framework to qualitative research, which they first applied to research in qualitative psychology (Braun and Clark 2006, 2013). As a research technique, ‘thematic analysis’ did not originate with Braun and Clark (2006), and had been applied earlier to describe a general approach to perceiving commonalities across larger sets of qualitative data (see, for example, Boyatzis 1998; Ryan & Bernard 2000, 2003). But it was Braun and Clark (2006, 2013) who insisted upon its presentation as a specific and unique qualitative approach, with a specified set of systematic procedures. They, therefore, define ‘thematic analysis’ as “a method for identifying, analysing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data…[that] minimally organizes and describes data set in (rich) detail” in a way that transcends words and phrases (Braun & Clark 2006). Such a thematic analysis “interprets various aspects of the research topic” by focusing on flexibility and paradigmatic independence/neutrality (Boyatzis 1998).

[50] On this subject, Guba (1985) has suggested, for example, that “…we are dealing with an either-or preposition, in which one [the researcher] must pledge allegiance to one paradigm or the other (Guba 1985, as cited in Byman 1988: 107-108)

Through this thematic approach, the authors demonstrated the useful possibility of combining and/or integrating various analytical techniques to "provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of data."[51] The qualitative segment of this research is therefore guided by Braun & Clark's (2006, 2013) framework of 'thematic analyses'.

By adopting a more pragmatic approach to methods, the study does not necessarily set out to undermine the usefulness of one or another methodological approach; or for that matter, their potential salience to a postcolonial stance. Neither do I embrace their ontological and epistemological imperatives. What is clear, however, is the study's emphatic repudiation of any positivist notions of the existence of a singular objective social reality 'out there', which is only accessible through the maintenance of so-called 'objective' moral and affective reticence. Accordingly, this research can be best described as embracing interpretivist and social constructionist orientations, both of which welcome the existence of 'multiple truths' and meaning-making as the co-creations of the researcher and his/her subjects (Andrews 2012; Schutt 2004).[52] The process of meaning-making may occur directly via interviews and participant research, or indirectly (as I've done) through historical analyses of periods and subjects long defunct. The role of history in post-colonial theory, and the need to uncover hidden meanings, marginalized perspectives, and 'subjugated knowledge' have also influenced my decision to prioritize qualitative approach in the quant/QUAL relationship articulated by Morgan (1998).

Although the study commenced with quantitative data collection, its approach is at the core, qualitatively driven. This means, qualitative data and data collection through the archives, constitute the primary mode of inquiry. But these are supplemented by a secondary mode of quantitative inquiry, despite the latter proceeding the former. In this regard, Morgan (1998) has suggested four mixed-methods designs based upon sequencing (time ordering) and relative importance (priority and weight). The method's qualitatively driven approach corresponds to Morgan's second design: 'quant followed by QUAL' – suggesting that a secondary quantitative method (designated by lower case 'quant-') is executed first in the study, followed by the main qualitative approach (designated by

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[51] In Braun & Clark (2006), the authors discussed similarities between 'thematic analysis' and, for example, 'content analysis' (CA) (e.g. Meehan, Vermeer & Windsor 2000; Wilkinson 2000). But they distinguished them on the basis on focus. They suggest that content analysis tends to focus more on micro level analyses utilizing (frequency) counts (Wilkinson 2000) for the purpose of quantitative analysis of initial qualitative data (Ryan & Bernard 2000). Thematic analysis, on the other hand, explore macro-level issues through the use of codes and themes which are not quantified (although sometimes they are) and tend to go beyond just words and phrases as units of analysis, as is the case with content analysis. See Braun & Clark (2006, 2013) for further discussions on the similarities, distinctions and integrated applicability between 'thematic analysis' and other qualitative analytics which employ coding and themes, such as, for example, grounded theory (Glaser, 1992; Strauss & Corbin, 1998), discourse analysis ([DA] (e.g. Burman & Parker 1993; Potter & Wetherell 1987; Willig 2003), interpretative phenomenological analysis [IPA] (e.g. Smith & Osborn 2003), and narrative analytical perspectives (e.g., Murray 2003; Riessman 1993).

[52] See Tashakkori & Teddlier 1998) and Schutt (2004) for a fuller discussion of these philosophical divergence.

upper case 'QUAL-'). The quantitative segment of empirical work supplements (as a form of complementarity) the qualitative study by strengthening its analysis (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie & Turner 2007). On the basis of this quant/QUAL relationship, the empirical work was divided into two phases: Phase I (Quantitative) and Phase II (Qualitative). Each phase of data collection and analysis occurred over a 3-4 months' period, between November 2016 – March 2017. What follows is a description of each phase, the processes and nature of the data involved.

PHASE 1: QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

The very nature of qualitative research presupposes an iterative and reflexive process of data collection, documentation, and analysis which are inextricably intertwined. This makes it difficult to delineate one component from the other (Parlett & Hamilton 1976; Stake 1995; Anderson 2003). Stake (1995) has suggested that data analysis begins not when data collection and documentation have ceased, but at the very moment that data is being collected. And the process occurs continuously throughout the research process, fusing various components in a close relationship. For simplicity and ease of reference, data collection and data analyses are treated as separate processes (though rarely separated), but from time to time will be highlighted for their important convergences and overlaps.

Quantitative Data and Data Collection

The study's empirical work commenced with collection of quantitative data in a very straightforward manner, focusing on available archival and historical evidence of state revenue and rent. At its heart are mainly economic, trade and fiscal data – i.e. export, revenue statistics, Government of Liberia (GoL) budget, GDP figures, labour force participation, etc. GoL revenues from rent-related activities[53] form a central focus as they are contained and presented in annual reports, national budgets, tax records, economic surveys, international reports, and other independent sources for the periods 1822 – 1944, and 1945 - 1971. In Chapter I (Introduction), I have already rationalized the selection of these periods. A broad overview of Liberia's prior *longue durée* (1822 - 1944) is necessary, as I have suggested, to provide a backdrop against which developments in the subsequent period (1944 – 1971) are cast. With these periods treated separately, similarities and contrasts can be drawn in terms of forms, sources, magnitude and deployment of rent, and the diverse international political economic order during which they occurred. A key similarity between the two

[53] Here, I am interested in data on export and trade in rubber, iron ore, timber, diamonds, etc., as well as receipts from maritime payments and foreign aid and assistance. These constitute the most significant forms and sources of external rents during the period.

periods under consideration is the presence of Americo-Liberian dominance, a pursuit of foreign capital, and Liberia's reliance upon international trade and export of primary commodities, especially to Europe and America (Gerdes 2013; Carlsson 1981). At this juncture, I would like to comment on the significant qualitative difference(s) between pre- and post-1944 data.

For the period 1822 – 1944, I focus exclusively on revenue and trade statistics, due to their reletive availability. Prior to the 1950s, the key instruments of economic and fiscal analyses comprised trade statistics, reports of the Treasury Secretary, the national budget, and Reports of Customs and Financial Receivership (e.g. Roberts *Messages* 1841, 1842, 1845; De la Rue 1924/25). It wasn't until the mid-1950s that more systematic estimates of key economic indicators such as GDP, GNP, gross domestic money income (GDMI), capital formation, balance of payment analyses, and employment and population figures, were compiled, systematically analysed and published. (Clower et al. 1966; McLaughlin 1966). The GoL, as the central mechanism of state functions, maintained annual budgets which are often proposed by the Executive Branch, and ratified by the National Legislature. Additionally, at the close (or beginning) of each year, it has been a tradition since the formation of the colonial Legislature in 1830s, for the Chief Executive to present an *Annual Message* detailing development in politics, society, the economy and the fiscal state of affairs. These annual messages say a lot about the prevailing state of affairs. By 2011, some 146 *Annual Messages* have been delivered by all Liberian presidents (Dunn 2011). Together, these will constitute the key sources of quantitative data for the periods 1822 – 1944.

A cogent question arises about the treatment of rent revenue during the period when the American Colonization Society (ACS) governed the Liberian Colony and Commonwealth between 1822-1847. These periods preceded political independence in 1847 when the Liberia Commonwealth did not yet enjoy the international status as a sovereign state, although empirical facts of statehood were overwhelming (Huberich 1947). During the periods of the Colony (1822-1839) and Commonwealth (1839-1847), the evidence shows that settler society relied significantly upon largesse from he U.S. Government, the ACS and other U.S. philanthropies, for governments operations, even as revenue from customs rose significantly (Roberts 1843-1846; ACS *Report* 1867; Johnston 1906). Yet, one cannot truly speak of 'sovereign rent' and 'rentier state' within the context of the international discourse. Despite not being recognized as a 'sovereign' state, rent accruing to Liberian authorities fit within the broad characteristics of sovereign rent – as externally generated proceeds. For this period, I focus simply upon revenue and external assistance as reported by the Commonwealth Authority and ACS. These statistics have been drawn from archives of the ACS, various GoL Annual Reports, informational and news bulletins, correspondences and dispatches between authorities in the United States and Liberia. The U.S. Library of Congress also hosts a dedicated repository of ACS records (Nolan 2009; Library of Congress 1979). Other smaller holdings are scattered across various U.S. universities, religious organizations and philanthropic orders.

The period 1944 – 1971 suffers from a similar (though partial) problem of limited systematic data, especially for the period prior to 1955 when more rigorous economic analysis, measurement and forecasts were lacking. A large segment of data for this period was excavated from published and unpublished records of GoL *Annual Reports* and statistics.[54] These include economic and fiscal reports, quarterly and annual statistical bulletins published by the Ministry of Finance & Development Planning (formerly Ministries of Finance, and of Planning and Economic Affairs), the Bureau of the Budget, and the Central Bank of Liberia.[55] Additional data have been sourced from the Liberian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Legislative and National Archives located in Monrovia. Also consulted are World Bank, IMF, OECD, and United Nations databases, as well as relevant secondary independent studies and surveys of the period. The archive of the *Liberian Collection* held at the Indiana University, Bloomington, represents another invaluable source in this regards. The *Liberian Collection* contains amongst the largest independent assemblage of official GoL records outside of Liberia, including official GoL reports, correspondences, minutes of Cabinet Meetings, presidential correspondences, photos, and newspapers clippings dating back to the mid-1800s.[56]

Of the independent economic studies on Liberia, a few influential works stand out. In 1962, the GoL and USAID commissioned an economic survey of Liberia undertaken by a team of economists and sociologists from the Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill. The result was a confidential *Survery Report* released in September 1962, and a highly influential subsequent book entitled *Growth without Development* (1966). A number of important but less influential studies also exists, including by Russell McLaughlin, *Foreign Investment and Development in Liberia* (1966), and Jerker Carlsson's comparative study of economic development in Liberia and Ghana, entitled *The Limits of Structural Change, 1950 – 1971* (1981). The Northwestern University's study, *Growth without Development,* has, despite its narrow 10-years focus (1950-1960) of President Tubman's 27-year rule, has acquired the influence of a divine edict, defining popular understanding of the immediate post-WWII Liberian economy. This and other reports constitute important secondary sources of economic, trade and fiscal data for this period. It bears restating here that my research transcends the very narrow economistic and quantitative focus of these studies. I explore much wider social, political and historical issues which these studies neglect. Nevertheless, the research draws

[54] The existence and practice of off-budget transactions (for both revenue and expenditures) are real. To the extent possible, and given the sensitivity and 'need-to-know' designation often associated with such transactions, I have endeavoured to corroborate and supplement official figures with secondary and unofficial sources.

[55] A Central Bank of Liberia was not established until 1974. Prior to this time, a Firestone subsidiary, the Bank of Monrovia, performed Central banking functions for the GoL.

[56] For a history and breath of these materials, see http://www.onliberia.org, http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?docId=VAD1316.xml and http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/search?repository=lcp.

upon their rich data and summaries for some primary statistics, especially where such primary data have been either limited, unavailable, or unverifiable.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis of data has been undertaken using mainly descriptive statistics, that is to say, utilizing basic statistical tendencies of mean, median, average, frequencies, standard deviation, etc. These statistical tendencies are used to establish and describe the essential elements and magnitude of sovereign rent, and its pattern across the Liberian state process (i.e. 1822 – 1944, and 1945 - 1971). As I have already stated, the quantitative component of this research focuses primarily upon trade and revenue statistics, consistent with the assessment of sovereign rent within the major scholarships (Blebawi and Luciani 1987; Deacon & Rode 2015), although I've already demonstrated and justified the study's more expanded approach to sovereign rent. The imperative here (and for the first time in Liberianist scholarship) is not only to construct through tabulations and chats, the overall trends in external rent in Liberia across this vast historical sweep (1822 - 1971). Instead, it is to identify significant trends, patterns and key turning points in the practice, which may be coterminous to significant social, political and historical developments across Liberia's state process. How sovereign rent impacts, or is impacted by shifting socio-political and historical dynamics at both domestic and international levels, sits at the heart of the qualitative analyses. The statistics and figures provided are not intended to establish precise values of revenues and state rent. Instead, the goal is to create a clear enough picture of revenue patterns across the various forms of state rents, over various historical periods.

PHASE II: QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Although empirical work for this quant-QUAL research commences in Phase I with a review of quantitative data, it would be misleading to suggest that such data are limited only to Phase I. The main qualitative segment (Phase II) also involves archival sources. Its goal, unlike the quantitative segment (although it builds upon it), is to uncover larger socio-political themes across Liberia's state process, which bear upon the form and character of rent. This fact reflects the mutually reinforcing relationship between the two phases of this research, and highlights Stake's (1995) point about the inextricable linkages between the processes of data collection and analysis in qualitative research.

Qualitative Data and Data Collection

In so far as specific archival data represents the primary ingredient for one or more aspects of qualitative analysis, they constitute the core repository of primary data. Here, I have in mind the words and statements of political leaders contained in official speeches, official and private government correspondences, executive proclamations and pronouncements, as well as laws, legislations and opinions of Courts and Supreme Court justices. These official and personal statements and statutes reflect ideas, attitudes and thinking of national leaders, and say a lot about prevailing circumstances and state of affairs in the country. At this juncture, I now elaborate upon the overall archival materials involved in the qualitative analysis.

Evidence used in this study include materials accessed through the Seeley G. Mudd Manuscript Library, Princeton University, NJ, the *Endangered Archives Program* and other segments of the British Library,[57] the Oxford University *Bodleian Library*,[58] *The Liberian Collection* at the Indiana University's Harmon Wells Library.[59] The *Endangered Archives Program* and *The Liberian Collection,* together, contain amongst the most comprehensive and robust collection of specialized historical records on Liberia. Both collections were the result of individual and institutionalized efforts by scholars to recover official GoL archival records made vulnerable in the course of civil war (1990-2003). The collection comprises government and personal documents of Liberian presidents from the period of Americo-Liberian rule, such as official government correspondences, private communications of presidents, minutes of cabinet meetings, diplomatic correspondences, reports from the war department, treasury account books, presidential diaries, personal letters, and Liberian newspapers dating back to 1850s. The Executive correspondences and minutes of cabinet meetings are especially revealing in what they say about official GoL thinking on rent revenue, its management, deployment and distribution across government and society. Similarly, official correspondences between GoL and leaders of foreign corporations and governments, including U.S. and European governments, provide useful insight into the Americo-Liberian understanding about the role sovereign rent played in domestic politics and Liberia's international relations. Through this variety of sources, utilizing 'thematic analysis' Braun & Clark's (2006, 2013), I examined an array of hitherto quieted voices and key themes during these periods.

A significant sub-category of the *Liberian Collection* is the Svend E. Holsoe Collection of Liberian Historical Documents. The Holsoe's Collection, as it is commonly known, constitutes a

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[57] Accessed at https://eap.bl.uk/project/EAP139/search?fbclid=IwAR3rFtSJlKvES7lRfGxjc8_LDHTY84iLQsx77LO9s_JF6sPsPopEPoNcmE0

[58] https://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/

[59] Accessed at http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/search?repository=lcp&sort=title.

particularly rich trove of GoL records and Holsoe's own published and published scholarship. As an American anthropologist who for many years lived and studied Liberian sociology, Holsoe's Collection spans the administration of President William V.S. Tubman (1944-1971), Liberia's longest serving president.[60] President Tubman presided over a period in Liberia's history when the most industrialized exploitation of natural resources occurred, including the establishment of Liberia's 'flag of convenience' maritime program, organized jointly by the GoL and former U.S. Secretary of State, Edward B. Stettinus (1944-1945).[61] Of all the archival materials on Liberia, it is those held at Liberia's National Archive in Monrovia (now the Centre for National Documents and Records (CNDR), that constitute the largest available repository of contemporary records. Small segments of public records are held separately between the Executive Mansion, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Legislature, various Ministries of government, and of the Central Bank of Liberia library. [62] These GoL records afford important analyses and the generation of interesting perspectives and conclusions.

Data analysis

I've already specified the study's mode of qualitative data analysis and the purposes it serves. Drawing upon textual historical records and archival materials, I utilized Braun & Clark (2006, 2013) six stages of 'thematic analysis' to uncover and examine minor and major themes associated with sovereign rents across various periods and state processes. This process of thematic analysis involves systematic micro-coding of key words and phrases, which build up into ideas and concepts, and subsequently into minor and major themes. The goal here is to uncover, analyze and understand hidden themes and meanings, hitherto unexplored. Braun & Clark (2006) have suggested the following stages of 'thematic analyses' which I borrow.

1. *Familiarization with the data* – this stage of analysis involves a deep familiarization with the entire dataset (i.e. data corpus). That is to say, the researcher must read and re-read all documents and materials in a way that facilitates the uncovering of commonalities, patterns, interpretations and meanings. Careful and detailed notes are taken of key words and

[60] See the Holsoe Collection, Indiana University online: https://libraries.indiana.edu/liberian-collections (accessed April 12, 2016)

[61] A number of scholars have reported that the partnership also involved US Department of Defence, Department of State, and the CIA. Today, Liberia's maritime program remains the largest in terms of volume of ship registry, though this has not always translated into a corresponding magnitude of revenue. See for example, Carlisle, R. (1981).

[62] Of these, the author also successfully accessed materials at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Central Bank of Liberia.

phrases that suggest important ideas and commonalities. No thematic coding is done at this stage of analysis.

2. *Generating initial coding* – this stage of analysis involves the production of initial codes from the dataset, which may be a single word(s) or phrases, and may be expressed as acronyms. Each code represents an idea, a pattern or commonality under which textual data (words, phrases, passages) can be organized into meaningful groups. Coding of the data is done manually with the use of highlighter, special colour inks, stickers, etc. Here, an MS Word file was created wherein data or information belonging to similar codes are collated and grouped together. An MS Word file makes possible easy search of large sets of information and data using key words and phrases.

3. *Searching for themes* – This stage of analysis focuses on the higher level of themes, understood as larger ideas or narratives under which multiple similar codes can be grouped together. All codes developed in the previous phases of the analysis do not always fit neatly under a specific theme. In each case where this occurred, they are considered outliers – and either discarded, subordinated in significance, or separately reserved for alternative interpretations of anomalies during or at a later stage in the analysis process. The result of this stage is the creation of a schema or set of themes and sub-themes.

4. *Reviewing themes* – this stage involves two levels of analysis. The first is a review of coded data for purpose of ensuring that all data fit under specific themes. Data which do not are discarded, subordinated as outliers, or formed the basis for rearrangement of the data or codes. When all (or much) of the data are sensibly and coherently fitted into themes, the analysis then moves to the second phase, that is, reviewing themes and relationships between them, and whether or not they cohere with the overall meaning (s) of the data as a whole. When themes do not reflect an overall meaning of the data, the analysis may return to steps 3 (Searching for Themes) and 4 (Reviewing Themes) in order to re-evaluate, redefine and/or re-adjust themes. Once all themes reflect an overall understanding and meaning of the data, analysis then moves on to the next phase of defining and naming themes.

5. *Defining and naming themes* – this stage of analysis involves the essence and meaning of each theme, and the segments of the data to which they relate, in order to form one or several narratives connecting or contrasting them. Themes are identified, which together formed a single narrative, and then named consistent with the data and the study's overall arguments. Continuous revisions and refocusing of themes in relations to the data

eventually produces a final thematic map which provide a clear overarching narrative, consistent with the study's findings.

6. *Writing up the analysis* – this stage involve final analyses and write-up of the story told by the data through the various narratives each theme elucidates. At the end of the day, new meanings and insights are generated that are sufficiently grounded in specific evidence and examples from the data. This study's key findings, conclusions and main arguments have been developed based upon analyses from this and the foregoing stages of analysis.

Research Limitations and Challenges

It is also important to say a word or two about the more contemporary challenge of conducting historical research in a post-war context like Liberia. Fourteen (14) years of various episodes of civil wars (1989-2003) resulted in enormous damage of Liberia's infrastructure, including government buildings and public facilities. Liberia's archives – one of the oldest in Africa – together with historical repositories, were not immune. Consequently, a significant amount of historical records was either destroyed, partially or permanently damaged. During and after-war efforts to recover these materials resulted, most notably, in the establishment of the Liberian Collection at the Indiana University, USA. This Collection's scope is limited, as it comprised the result of independent ad hoc efforts between 1991 and 2006.[63] In my opinion, the full scope of damages and losses to Liberia's historical and archival documents remains impossible to assess for the simple reason that these documents, as are currently housed at the National Archives in Monrovia, remain in disarray and unsystematically organized. For five months between July and October 2017, I laboriously ploughed through these materials. I can now attest that any attempt at archival research in Monrovia must be conceived as a 'from scratch' endeavour, involving intense searches of several hundred boxes, containing many thousands of documents, most only minimally differentiated. The only observable distinction between boxes regards the branch of government from which they originated. There is not a hardcopy or digital bibliographical index of its contents. Neither is there any systematic ordering of them within the three major 'storerooms' in which they are kept.

To overcome these challenges, the decision was made to focus on Legislative and Executive Branch records, which disproportionally contained most, if not all, quantitative and qualitative materials of interest. Second, and in light of the limited time available for fieldwork, I assembled a small team of two National Archive staff who assisted me in sorting through boxes of Legislative and

[63] See the Collection's website for an idea of its full scope: https://libraries.indiana.edu/liberian-collections (accessed April 12, 2016).

Executive Branch records, based upon a list of interested topics and records I provided them. Third and finally, materials from the National Archives are complemented with records from the the British Library's *Endangered Archives Program, The Liberian Collection*, and other independent sources. Although limited in scope, *The Liberian Collection* is both systematically accessible. A significant amount of its content are available and accessible online. As *The Liberian Collection* and National Archive constitute the two most significant data repositories, materials retrieved therefrom represent the main sources of primary and secondary evidence. A full list of individual sources is provided in Bibliography under "Primary Sources."

Conclusion

The *longue durée historical approach* which this study adopts, has been deployed together with a mixed-methods approach to data collection and data analysis, in a pragmatic and pluralistic way. Both quantitative and qualitative data are envisaged as evidence used in response to the question of how the political configuration of sovereign rent and the rentier state developed within the context of Liberia, especially the immediate post-WWII milieu. The goal is to shed new light on the disparate forms, sources and uses of state rent, and dynamic relationships between sovereign rent and state development itself. Utilizing Braun & Clark (2006, 2013) 'thematic analysis', substantive analyses and key insights from this empirical study will now be presented in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER 4: Sovereign Rent and State Development, 1822–1944

"The revenue of the state is the state."
– Edmund Blake, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790).

"The history of state revenue production is the history of the evolution of the state." – Margaret Levi (1988, 1).

"Of all the demands made upon the admirable if limited leadership of the new [Liberian] Republic, none was more incessant than that for continuous revenue with which to meet the inescapable responsibilities of Statehood." – George Brown (1941, 54)

Introduction

The *longue durée* politico-historical approach to the African rentier state which I advocate in this thesis implies a careful reading of history. Such a historical lens is important to understanding not only state transformation in Liberia, but also its inherent relationships to rent and revenue extraction. There is already ample scholarly work on the early formation of Liberia - Africa's oldest independent republic – and its Afro-American founders. But very little in-depth analyses exist regarding the linkages between state formation and rent extraction. This dissertation tackles this limitation.

This chapter does not attempt to detail or re-historicize approximately two centuries of the Liberian experience. That task has already been undertaken elsewhere (e.g. McPherson [1891]2009; Huberich 1947; Karnga 1909, 1923; Sawyer 1992; Gerdes 2013; Kieh 2015; 2015; Johnston 1906; Guannu 2010a, 2010b, 2010c; Shick 1976, 1977; Staudenraus 1961; Brown 1941).[64] Instead, my main aim is to extract from this *longue durée* history important developments and critical junctures which shed light on a central theme in Liberia's formation as a 'modern' state throughout the 19th and mid-

[64] Burrowes (2016) recent indigenous-centric work deviates from the popular settler-centric narrative. In this regard, it is a notable exception.

20th Centuries. *That is the pursuit of rent revenue as an indispensable element of state-making and state sustenance*.

The view of Liberia as an exceptional African state which was never colonized by a foreign power, but founded on principles of human freedom and justice through American philanthropy, has remained an enduring assumption in African and Liberian studies (Huberich 1947; Sawyer 1992; Guannu 1977, 1985, 2010). But does Liberia not fit into the continental colonial mould in more ways than typically meets the eye? Within the scholarship, Liberia is labelled both as a republican state and a prototypical 'rentier state'. The latter characterization emerges out of more recent scholarship, especially in the aftermath of protracted civil wars in which natural resource rent played a central role (e.g. Kieh 2015; Jackson 2019; Said 2017, 9-31). But is Liberia a 'rentier state'? Does Liberia's republican beginnings alter its progression as a colonial state as the rest of Africa? And how does its colonial character connect to the universal 'revenue imperative' associated with statehood?

While Chapter 5 addresses post-WWII nation-building and state-making processes and their relationships to sovereign rent under President William V. S. Tubman (1944-1972), this chapter examines early state-building efforts in order to discern the various forms and sources of state rent, and to account for the impact such rents asserted on 'modern' state-making in Liberia, a relationship which all nations must wrestle with. Through this unique politico-historical approach, the chapter reveals rent extraction to be an inherent state practice in the case of Liberia. This process of rent extraction, I argue, constituted a central and important state feature from the very inception.

I have already noted in Chapter 2 (Literature Review) how 'sovereign rent' and the concept of the 'rentier' are historically linked to the formation of the 'modern' state in Western Europe and America (e.g. North & Thomas 1973; North 1981; Tilly 1975; 1985; Weber [1922] 1978); and how the very notion of a 'rentier state' is therefore a misleading oxymoron. Sovereignty – as a juridical asset monopolized by states – constitutes a central element of the notion of sovereign rent, defined as the gains accruing to a state pure and primarily on account of its monopoly over sovereignty as a property right. I the case of Liberia, I argue in the following sections that contrary to claims of rentierism as an aberrant state practice, the political and economic history of early Liberia reveals the multiple ways in which extracting rent and raising revenue constituted crucial imperatives in state formation. This observation does not mean that the strategies of rent and revenue extraction always occurred in benign ways, or through morally unquestionable practices. Nor am I implying that revenue so extracted profited all members of society alike. Rather, I make the point *that the methods and strategies employed by the Liberian state reflected the imperatives of state-making and state-building within prevailing domestic and international pressures and constraints.* These international and domestic forces both enabled and constricted the practice, and therefore the processes of state-building itself. I develop this argument using primary and secondary archival data (both qualitative and quantitative) retrieved over the course of the study.

In order to paint a more lucid picture of state rentierism, the chapter is organized chronologically around four key historical events or episodes, across Liberia's state development. This chronological approach to events does not mean that their relationships necessarily follow in a linear crescendo; nor do they necessarily amplify one another in this sequential order. The relationships which exist between them, while influenced by time, are not entirely dictated by it; but are subject to a range of evidence one fines linking them together. These episodes are, namely, (a) the Little Ben Affair of 1845, (b) the Debt Crisis of 1870 after, (c) the Barclay Plan of 1904, and (d) the Fernando Po Labour Crisis of 1930. Each episode occurs over several years, and illustrates an aspect of the central theme with which we are concerned here, that is, the inherent state-making/rent-extraction nexus, the different forms of rent, and their effects upon the *nature*, *rapidity* and *vector* of early state development. But before undertaking this task, it is important to address a persistent assumption in Liberian and African studies: that Liberia was never colonized by a foreign power. In other words, that that differs completely from the rest of colonial Africa in terms of the absence of alien rule.

Colonial Liberia and Americo-Liberian Rule

Although Afro-American rule over indigenous Africans is rarely perceived as classic colonialism as those enacted by Europe, evidence from early state development reveals the unambiguous presence of a colonial state system.[65] Beyond ancestral and perceived racial affinities (i.e. being 'black'), hardly did Afro-Americans share anything in common with indigenous Africans. For all intent and purposes, Afro-Americans were *alien* to the political, economic, cultural, and religious environment into which they were thrust in early 1800s. For they were from and of the Euro-American world, having been born into and endured slavery in America and elsewhere for centuries, their ancestors with them. Americo-Liberian 'civilizing' and 'Christianizing' ideologies engendered the same effects as those of European colonizers elsewhere on the continent – to dehumanize and subjugate African natives. Perceptions of race also played an important part in settles/native relationship, with Americo-Liberians viewing themselves as a distinct, distinguishable and superior race.

Notions of racial distinctions between Europeans and Africans constitutes a central dichotomy between 'colonizers' and the 'colonized' within classic colonialism. But questions about race and racial distinctions between Americo-Liberians and indigenous Africans have been largely

[65] Here, my use of the term 'colonial' differs sharply from the use of the term in reference to the pre-independence Liberia Colony when American colonialists, under the aegis of the American Colonization Society (ACS), governed it between settlement in 1822 to the start of the Commonwealth in 1839 (Huberich 1947; Sawyer 1992). See Toe (2020).

ignored in Liberian and African studies, based partly upon perceived singularity of 'Blackness', and perception of racial affinity between the two groups as 'black' people. There is evidence, however, that Americo-Liberians harboured views of (sub) racial categorizations, and may have perceived themselves as a distinct and superior racial category. For example, in letter from ACS executive Latrobe, to President Hilary Johnson on Oct. 26, 1883, when requesting urgent action along Liberia's border with British Sierra Leone, Latrobe decried "the probability that the native races may be induced to combine and deny the authority of the Republic" (Latrobe to Johnson, 1883). In his *Annual Message* of January 3, 1944, President Tubman also emphasized the "need [for] vigorous new blood of our own race from without to assist in the Herculean task set before [us] as the bearers of the torch of Christianity and civilization to [our] uncivilized brethren" (Tubman *AM* 1944, in Guannu 1980, 319). Tubman again reiterated this point in 1956 while highlighting new reforms in Liberia's immigration laws, voicing optimism in "the very high standards of education, thrift, initiative and wealth of a large portion of our racial group in the United States [i.e. African American]", emphasizing the need for encourage these "relatives of ours" to come to Liberia (Tubman *IA*, Jan. 2, 1956 in Guannu 1980, 337-38). Colonialist writers such as Buell (1947, v) have also purveyed narratives of "racial anthropology" in the case of Americo-Liberians. Buell argued that not only had "the white man awakened to progress five or ten centuries earlier than the black man", but that "the institution of Negro slavery brought the transplanted African into intimate touch with a higher level of civilization. As a result, the American Negro today [in 1947] is centuries ahead of the African proper…in Liberia."

There is ample reason to believe, however, that this new racial categorization was not based entirely upon any biological or phenotypical characteristics, or differences in skin colour. And neither was it anchored entirely upon class distinctions, or the master/slave relationship. While these differences did exist at one time or another, they were, to a large extent, captured in non-racial terms. But like race of a phenotypical kind, this new racial category (i.e. Americo-Liberians – if one can call it that) was an invention designed to function as an apparatus of social distinction and differentiation, designating one group superior, and the other inferior. In the case of Americo-Liberians, race functioned, therefore, as a signifier of difference based primarily upon notions of 'civilization' their received from their experiences in the United States freemen, slaves or mixed-race. Thus, Liberia emerges as a unique space in which 'race' and 'civilization' did not always serve the interest of Europe, the West, or the 'white man'. As recently as the 1950s and 60s, even as the terms 'civilized' and 'civilization' began to lose appeal in the West, with pejorative implications elsewhere, they still retained their potency in Liberia, deeply anchoring notions of race and social hierarchy.

It is important to note, however, that Americo-Liberians' views of race, and their relationships with African 'Natives' was not entirely of their own invention. They drew powerful inspirations and imageries from European construction of the 'Native', as they also did from ideologies of racial hierarchy bequeathed them in 18th and 19th Century America (e.g. Roberts 1845, Said 1974, Mbembe 2001). And although they vehemently refuted the degrading notions of the Negro as a bestial sub-human entity whose humanity (if one existed) was perpetually imprisoned in his black sinister body (Mbembe 2018), they did, however, harbour the view that indigenous African humanity could be awakened and revealed, but only through the 'civilizing' and 'Christianizing' influences which they, as educated 'Negros', possessed as an outcome of their experiences of slavery in the United States (Roberts 1845, 1854; Roye 1869, 1870; Blyden 1857; Crummell 1862).[66]

Akpan (1973) and Gershoni (1985) are among the earliest Liberianist scholars to conceptualize Americo-Liberian rule over indigenous Africans as colonialism. Having examined governance up until 1970, Akpan insisted "[Liberia] must be numbered along with ex-colonial powers in Africa like Great Britain, France and Belgium" (p. 236). He locates the start of colonialism in the early phases of settlers' territorial expansion following settlement along the Grain Coast in 1822. In these early moments, the goal of building a sustainable settler society and economy preoccupied Afro-Americans settlers. In this project, they received vital U.S. Government assistance and larger American philanthropy (ACS 1867, cited in Huberich, p. 40; Shick 1977; Staunderous 1980). This preoccupation did not, however, prevent the expansion of settlers' 'sphere of influence' beyond the constitutionally prescribed '40-miles Constitutional Zone' of coastal enclaves, and into the African interior. By the late 1800s, and as a result of a combination of land 'purchases', political alliances and conquests, Americo-Liberians began to lay claims to territories extending far into the Sudan and up to the banks of River Niger, claims which did not remain uncontested (Akpan 1973, 223).

Having located its inception in early settlement, Akpan locates the terminal point of Americo-Liberian colonialism in 1964 when President Tubman abolished all 'County' and 'Hinterland' distinctions, arguing that "the African masses were raised from an essentially colonial [subjects], to a citizen status" (p. 236). It was Gershoni's more explicit description of Americo-Liberian rule as *Black Colonialism* (the title of his book), however, which introduced the debate more forcefully into mainstream Liberian studies. Oblivious of the ideological foundations of Americo-Liberian rule, however, Gershoni rejects any notion of colonial practice prior to 1904 – the start of 'indirect rule' under President Arthur Barclay (1904-1912) – arguing instead that Americo-Liberians adopted colonialism out of necessity, and as a strategy of state survival.[67] Thus, Gershoni demarcates Americo-Liberian colonialism from the start of 'indirect rule' in 1904 up to 1980 when a military

[66] See also *Inaugural Addresses* and *Annual Messages* of Liberian Presidents, Dunn (2011, ed.) and Guannu (1980, ed.); and Akpan (1976).

[67] I have argued elsewhere that the so-called 'Divine Plan' prevalent among white colonialists, missionaries and black settlers was the ideology of rule underpinning Americo-Liberian colonialism. I trace its roots back to the black colonization movements of late 18th and early 19th Century America, and the formation of the American Colonization Society (ACS). In these movements, the Presbyterian Reverend Robert Finley of New Jersey and his Christian compatriots, played a pivotal role in infusing or seeking to align Christian theologies with the purely political agenda of colonization and rule of African peoples.

coup led by indigenous members of the armed forces overthrew President William R. Tolbert, the last Americo-Liberian leader. Only then, Gershoni argues, did colonial rule truly end – when "indigenous Africans who represented a majority of Liberia's population finally took power" (p. 105).

Akpan and Gershoni clearly acknowledge the existence of the practice in Liberia, and have specified separate demarcations. In other words, they agree upon a start and end points, but differ about the historical specificities. Yet, quite surprisingly, hardly is there any discussion in the relevant historical and post-colonial literatures regarding what lies beyond this colonial posterior the writers identify – a sort of a post-colonial era – its nature, and the precise manner of its unfolding. I will address these questions in Chapter 5. What is of importance at the moment is the new state features which accompanied 'indirect rule' under the Barclay Plan is an examination of colonial relationships which emerged out of Americo-Liberian encounter with indigenous Africans.

The Settler/Native Divide

Mamdani (2006) introduces the concept of the 'bifurcated state' in his book, *Citizens and Subjects: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. In this work, he attempts to unearth the origins of Africa's contemporary legal and political dualism between European common and civil law norms associated with governmentality on one hand, and 'customary' legal norms associated with indigenous societies and institutions on the other. Mamdani also examines the system of white minority rule over majority Africans within the context of 'late colonialism', what was considered the 'Native Question'.[68] Following his examination, Mamdani concludes that the roots of Africa's bifurcated state lie in the colonial strategies of 'direct' and 'indirect' rules. The strategy of 'direct rule' involved the imposition of European modes of power, legality and governance over African populations in what the author terms 'unmediated – centralized - despotism'. The challenges and undesirability associated with this direct approach to governance gave way in some places to the adaptation of another 'indirect' strategy to rule. Within this 'indirect' approach, the legitimacy of indigenous institutions and leaders began to be recognized and upheld as subsidiaries of governance under a central hegemonic authority, the sole purpose being to enforce tradition as a means of separation and exclusion. Mamdani terms this 'indirect' approach to rule as 'mediated-decentralized-despotism'.

The effect of this colonial delimitation of African states into separate spheres of life was the creation of two separate and distinct societies within the single political space of the state. One sphere,

[68] The 'Native Question' was first posed by Buell (1928) in his book *The Native Problem in Africa*. Herein, Buell explored the challenges of minority colonial rule over majority African populations. His juxtaposition of Americo-Liberian rule alongside Britain, France, and Portugal is telling with regards to Liberia's place as a colonial power.

a so-called 'civil society', comprised largely Europeans, settler society and 'civilized natives' as 'citizens' under Constitutional and civil law norms. The another, an 'uncivilized' population of African 'Natives' as 'subjects' under a coterie of Tribal Authorities and Chieftaincy Councils within a system of paramountcy. So-called 'civil society' inhabited mainly urban coastal centres or inland 'civilized settlements' and plantations, while containing African 'Natives' in rural hinterlands from which migration was tightly controlled, except for purposes of labour utilization (Buell 1928, Barclay 1905, 1906, 1910). Mamdani argues that such a state – both its colonial and post-colonial variants – was bifurcated and 'Janus-faced' – possessing two forms of power under a single hegemonic authority. One power was "civil and spoke the language of [Constitutionality and] civil rights'. The other was customary and rural, and "spoke the language of community and culture" (ibid.). As will be shown, the Liberian experience bears striking similarities to Mamdani's colonial schema.

Despite its elegance and appear, Mamdani's conceptualization of Africa's state bifurcation was not new. Ekeh (1975) had earlier described a similar state of bifurcation in political but also sociological terms, in his seminal article "The Two Publics". In this article, Ekeh engages with a similar language of duality, separation, and differentiations; but also with ideas of 'morality', colonial and anti-colonial 'ideologies', 'citizenship', 'direct' and 'indirect' rules. Like Mamdani, Ekeh adopts the category of difference as his framing mechanism, preferring to conceptualize both colonial and post-colonial Africa from the perspective of separation and duality. Differences between European and African societies, therefore, formed the basis for a set of binaries meant as markers for enforced separation: 'European' v. 'Native', 'black' v. 'white', 'civil' v. 'customary', 'modern' v. 'traditional', 'civilized' v. 'uncivilized', educated v. uneducated, so on and so forth. Thus, Ekeh argues that the legal, political and social separations between the 'civilized' and 'native' spheres sat at the root of Africa's state bifurcation, what he terms the 'Two Publics'. Many Africans, as simultaneous occupants of both 'publics', faced a unique social conundrum regarding the appropriate response to, and engagement with each public, which many perceived as inhabiting distinct moral planes. This conundrum was also true of Liberian settlers and natives regarding the different moral order they assigned to each sphere, and the rules governing mobility between the two.

The sociological complexity of Africans' relationships to each sphere of colonial (and indeed post-colonial) life is not the focus here.[69] Nor is explicating the nature of a post-colonial configuration in Liberia of primary concern at the moment.[70] Instead, what is important to underscore regarding colonial Liberia, is the essential feature of difference, duality, and separation which characterized

[69] Both Ekeh (1975) and Mbembe (2001) offer deeper reflections in their writings.

[70] Many writers allude to the 'colonial', neo-colonial, and quasi-colonial character of post-independence Liberia. And yet surprisingly, rarely is there any discussion in the relevant historical and post-colonial literature as to what, when and how has Liberia's post-coloniality evolved, or if it even exists. I address these questions in Chapter 5.

settlers/native relationships. This feature is crucial to understanding the unfolding context of state-building, and how such differences influenced the strategies adopted by Americo-Liberian state managers as they sought to fulfil state and nation-building imperatives through rent and revenue extractions.

In Liberia, the formalization of 'state bifurcation' is traceable to the administration of President Arthur Barclay (1904-1912) and the so-called Barclay Plan of 1904. Although sharp constitutional distinctions existed between settler enclaves and indigenous territories, official state bifurcation did not manifest itself until during President Barclay's administration when the administrative remit of the state began to be extended into the hinterland areas. The distinctions between counties and hinterland jurisdictions functioned through clearly defined legal, political, administrative, and spatial delimitations between 'civilized' coastal enclaves inhabited mainly by settler societies, and 'uncivilized' hinterland areas inhabited by indigenous populations (*Act of Legislature* 1869, *Acts* 1804-1895, *Acts* 1917-1918, p. 38; *Act* 1914, p. 16; *Act*, Dec. 19, 1936)[71]. Under the Barclay Plan, the hinterland was originally demarcated into eight Districts along ethno-linguistic and cultural patterns, often of the dominant ethnic communities. Each district was administered by a District Commissioner appointed by the President, and guided by a set of *Hinterland Regulations* periodically promulgated by the Departments of Justice and Interior (Barclay, *IM and AM* 1904, 1905, in Guannu 1980; RL, *Act of the Legislature* 1904).[72] At the same time that this bifurcated system was being fastened upon the country, African institutions and norms were dramatic and radically assimilation into state system with intensity and unparalleled momentum. We witnessed the recognition of tribal legitimacy, and the establishment of various *Tribal Authorities, Chieftaincy Councils*, and the *Paramountcy System.* Equally significant was the creation and incorporation of *Native Courts* and indigenous institutions within district governance, each operating upon the unique customs and traditions of the ethnic communities concerned, and presided over by a Paramount Chief.

This new approach to indigenous autonomy and African traditional norms also came to be reflected in how the Liberian government began, for example, to regard such matters of "witchcraft", "bad-medicine", 'sassywood', and polygamy – four previously abhorrent indigenous practices in the minds of settlers.[73] 'Sassywood' was form judicial sanction and punishment under customary law

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[71] Reproduced in Huberich 1945, 1233-37.

[72] For details of the legal perspective of this dualism elsewhere in colonial Africa, see the excellent discussions by Allott (1965;1968).

[73] This form of adjudication, despite being ruled unconstitutional in 1916 (*Jedah, Boyah et al v. Jeffrey B. Horace*, decided May 6, 1916) and declared "illegal and prohibited" in 1931 (*Administrative Regulations* 1931, 16; and reaffirmed in *Posum v. Pardee*, 2 New Ann. Ser. 139 (1935) to be illegal in civil cases) it continued to be practiced among indigenous societies until the 1970s. Its official outlaw has, however, not halted the practice in remote parts in Liberia. See for example, Harley (1941), Wreh (1975), *The Carter Center Report*, 2007, accessed at

widely practiced by indigenous societies. Also known as 'trial by ordeal', it was a means of adjudicating civil and criminal disputes among indigenous peoples which relied upon powers evoked from the 'spirit' realm, or the potency of special forest herbs, ornaments, or plants believed to possess sacred powers (Harley 1941, Wreh 1975, Barclay *IA*, Jan. 4, 1904).[74] Another set of more controvertial indigenious practices embraced by Americo-Liberian state leaders were those of slavery, forced labor and pawning in humans. Under the Barclay Plan of 1904, President Barclay offered the following compromised:

> Domestic slavery, we stand pledged to abolish. [B]ut we must remove this evil in a just and equitable manner. I think that the government should act as the intermediary between master and slave. The master must receive compensation for the loss of service, and for this compensation, the Government would be responsible to him. – It [GoL] should take the freedom [i.e. the 'freeman'] and his family, if any, under its protection, and hire out for a limited period, receiving a certain portion of his wages against the expenditure incurred, until the debt is paid. – Many of these people may be settled by Government on plots of public land, and their labour advantageously utilized. – *Inaugural Address*, Jan. 4, 1904.

No longer were these practices targets of Americo-Liberian state sanction and abolition. Instead, they emerged under the Barclay Plan more deserving of state approbation. Some of these practices were left squarely within the remit of *Native Authorities* and *Native Courts*. Others, like the practice of forced labor would witnessed the direct participation of the GoL, particularly because they involved the prospects of raising fresh labor rent (e.g. RL, *Regulation*, Jan. 21, 1921; *Supplemental to Regulation & Circular* No. 1 & 2, Aug. 1923). I shall discuss this aspect of labor rent in greater detail subsequently.

Far from being primarily a phenomenon of duality and bifurcation, as both Mamdani and Ekeh have argued, the case of Liberia suggests that the establishment of 'indirect rule' can be equally regarded as a process of *incorporation* – a sort of fusion between Western and African norms and traditions. For it represented the bringing together of two distinct and perhaps irreconcilable systems of governance. This dialectic – of simultaneous bifurcation and fusion – produces a new state configuration which, while unique in and of itself, manifests the features of its constituent parts. It is 'modern' and 'traditional' at the same time, bringing into question a key assumption of modernization theory which rests upon the notion of this particular dichotomy. It is this coming together of disparate cultural, legal, political and religious ingredients and norms that Mbembe (2001, 14-17) captures most eloquently in his concept of *entanglement*. Here Mbembe argues that various temporalities,

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https://www.cartercenter.org/resources/pdfs/news/peace_publications/conflict_resolution/carter_harvard_intl_review_fall08.pdf.

[74] In his assessment of British colonial administrations, Buell (1928, 744) reports a slightly different arrangement. Cases involving so-called "witchcraft and bad-medicine" were the preserve of British judges because chiefs themselves were believed to be subjects to the spell of witchcraft.

cultures, traditions, and heritages "interpenetrate" and "interlock" each other over time, infusing and sharing multifarious social, political, ideological, and spiritual ingredients in such a manner as to invent a new entity whose defining characteristics reflect those of its constituent elements. This new entity, Mbembe argues, "has the look of 'custom [and tradition]' without being reducible to it, and partakes of 'modernity' without being wholly included in it" (p. 24, 25). The result of this entanglement, Mbembe has described as a new *colonial rationality* (Ibid, 25). By early 1900s, this new *colonial rationality* was everywhere apparent, and would be reflected in a set of new government policies promulgated under the Barclay Plan of 1904.

Prior to 1904, Americo-Liberian leaders vigorously pursued a policy of assimilation of indigenous Africans. They sought to bring Africans directly under Constitutional and civil order of a Westphalian republican state. Assimilation was carried out through policies anchored firmly upon principles of 'civilization and Christianizing'. Key aspects of this policy included various Ward and apprenticeship programs, carried out first by Christian missionaries and later by the state itself, meant to culturally cleanse hundreds of African children by "subject[ing] them immediately and entirely to the habits and customs of civilized society" as a form of cultural rebirth from 'superstitious', 'backward', and 'primitive' living (*AR,* XXVIII, 1853, 202, in Martin 1968). Through these processes, African boys and girls were exposed to Protestant Christianity and western education.[75] Various 'civilized' settlements and Christian missionary activities also sprung up within African societies meant to assert 'civilizing' and 'Christianizing' influences upon them (Ibid.).

But there was more to this cultural agenda. Americo-Liberians also sought the wholesale rearrangement of African economies after Liberia's capitalist model. As far back as 1858, Americo-Liberian leaders, including first President Roberts, had stressed the need to remake the African into a "more productive" member of the state by "instilling in him habits of industry, teaching him how to work, how to farm, how to labour profitably in the mechanics" (Roberts to Gurley, Sept. 15, 1858, VIII, 2, ACS). Later in 1860, within the context of economic decline, another prominent Americo-Liberian leader, James Springs Payne (who later become president, 1868-70 and 1976-78) sought to link the goal of civilizing indigenous people to the inevitable increase in national commerce and industry. In his acclaimed work *A Prize Essay on Political Economy as adopted in the Republic of Liberia,* the first work to be published by a Liberian which won him a national prize, Payne argued in favour of a great agricultural revival by which the bedrock of Liberia's capitalist economy could be sustained (Payne, 1860, 12-13, in Martin 1968, 302). But even more importantly, Payne noted the strong and direct link between territorial expansion and government's fiscal augmentation, auguring

[75] "The Plan for Educating and Civilizing Native Children in Liberia," *African Repository*, XXVIII, 1853, 202; Roberts 1872; Payne 1860, 12-13, in Martin (1968, 302); Roberts to Gurley, Sept. 15, 1858, VIII, 2, *ACS*.

that 'the extension of the jurisdiction [sic] of the government and the fair acquisition of territory are much dependent [sic] upon the state of economy within' (p. 14-15).

Later in 1881, another prominent leader, G.W. Gibson, then Secretary of State (and later president) published a circular titled "The Great Problem Solved" in which he advanced the idea of encouraging the cultivation of coffee among tribal people as a means of teaching them the value of 'private property', and cultivating habits of capitalist industry.[76] In other instances, assimilation of individual or entire ethnic communities into 'citizenship' were tied to stringent standards requiring the African to cultivate up to "two-hundred and fifty coffee trees" (RL, *Acts* 1875-6, 10-13).[77] In these colonial objectives, however, the results were mixed. Until the turn of the century, the evidence suggests a very small number of Africans were successfully incorporated into settler society. This was also the case with economic and cultural reorganization of indigenous societies (Brown 1941; Martin 1968). The question which arises then is, what explains the sudden shift in relationship and approach to governance from one of assimilation, to one of separation and 'indirect rule' which occurred under the Barclay Plan of 1904?

The reasons for the shift are multifaceted. As in European colonial holdings elsewhere in Africa, Americo-Liberians' shift from 'direct rule' (i.e. assimilation) to 'indirect rule' (i.e. bifurcation) was triggered by a confluence of domestic and international developments. *First*, there was the collapse of Liberia's international trade owing to dramatic falls in prices of key export commodities; discovery of substitutes and alternative sources to these commodities; and rapid and fundamental transformations in international commerce (Brown 1941, Syfert 1975). *Second* was the waning of Afro-American emigration to Liberia following the end of the U.S. Civil War in 1865, and the onset of heightened opposition from within U.S. black communities to the idea of colonization. The strident voices of men such as Robert Purvis, Frederick Douglas, and Booker T. Washington could be heard protesting. These and other anti-colonization forces pressured the U.S. government to abandon any official policy on black colonization to Africa (Blight 1989, 140-42; McPherson 1965, 91-97; Foner 2010; Masur 2010, 135). This opposition in turn caused a shift in the ACS's recruitment efforts away from the U.S., and towards other destinations in the West Indies, Barbados, and elsewhere. Success in recruiting new emigrants was also very limited (Shick 1977; Staunderous 1980).[78] The slowdown in emigration led to considerable inertia in the augmentation of settler population, and to a decrease in the growth of 'civilized' settlements in the interior by the late 1800s. *Third*, incessant conflicts between settlers and surrounding indigenous polities between the 1860s

[76] Enclosed with Smyth to Blaine, Apr. 28, 1881, USM, NA, T-8, in Martin 1968, 309.

[77] Enclosed with Turner to Fish, June 1, 1876, USM, NA, T-5, in Martin 1968, 299.

[78] The last significant voyage to Liberia of 633 blacks from the U.S. occurred in 1867. Thereafter, annual repatriation by the ACS declined steadily and significantly. Following this 1867 U.S. voyage, some 346 emigrants voyaged to Liberia form Barbados, among them young Arthur Barclay. See *ACS Semi-Centennial Anniversary Report* 1867, 182-190; ACS 1869; Brown 1941, 136.

and 1900s inflicted considerable human and financial cost upon the GoL (Sawyer 1992; Levitt 2005). Coupled with mounting international debt and fiscal exhaustion, both sides (but especially GoL) yearned for respite from political turbulence by the turn of the century (Buell 1928; Kraaij 1980). *Fourth*, intensification in imperial activities in West Africa, mainly by Britain and France, significantly eroded Liberia's territorial holding, eclipsed its trade advantages in the region, and seriously threatened its sovereignty over contiguous territories (e.g. Akpan 1973. See Map 2, Appendix B). This more immediate threat has been widely viewed in Liberian studies as the preeminent cause for the Barclay Plan and start of 'indirect rule', to the neglect of other salient factors (e.g. Sawyer 1992; Kieh 2006, 2015).

When viewed within the immediacy of imperial threats, this assertion is not entirely inaccurate. However, only when perceived within Americo-Liberia's long-term colonial state-building agenda does the significance of revenue extraction becomes more apparent. It is this focus which has suffered much neglect within the literature, but that represents an important avenue for understanding the crucial relationships between rent and revenue extractions on one hand, and the intensification of state consolidation represented by the Barclay Plan*,* on the other.

Having clarified the colonial character of the Liberian state, I shall now examine the first of four historical episodes demonstrating important aspects of the sovereign rent and start-building nexus.

Episode I: The Little Ben Affairs of 1845

The episode of the *Little Ben Affair* narrates the climax of political and commercial standoff between authorities of the Liberian Commonwealth and agents of the British Crown in April 1845. The standoff centred around the seizure by Liberian authorities of cargoes on-board a British trading vessel, the *Little Ben,* on charges of failure to pay 6% ad velorem customs duties at the Port of Bassa Cove, a coastal seaport under Commonwealth's jurisdiction (Roberts, *8th Session of the Council*, Jan. 5, 1846, in Huberich, 788; Walker 1921, 89-19; Brown 1941, 129). Britain and France, two of the most decisive imperial powers in West Africa at the time, frequently contested setters' authority on a range of matters, including over territories, during both official 'Colony' and 'Commonwealth' periods (1822-1847). However, it was Britain's stance in the 'Little Ben Affair' that engendered the greatest consternation within settlers' society, because it shot at the heart of a cardinal right of settler statehood: the right to extract rent and revenue within its territories. The standoff represented the culmination of many years of British and French protests beginning in 1841 (Roberts *Message* 1941). Emerging first as a contestation over the coastal territory of Bassa Cove, Britain based its objection to customs payments upon both legal and political grounds in 1945. First, Britain claimed that the

Liberian Commonwealth[79] lacked the status of a sovereign state within international law, and thus the right to extract revenue from foreign traders within its borders. Britain's view was expressed in a letter to the Commonwealth Governor Joseph J. Roberts in which it was asserted that

> For the rights in question, those of imposing customs duties, and limiting the trade of foreigners by restrictions, are sovereign rights, which can only be lawfully exercised by sovereign and independent states, within their own recognized borders and dominions. I need not remind your Excellency that this description does not yet apply to "Liberia" which is not recognized as a subsisting state, even by the Government of the country from which its settlers have emigrated. – Jones to Roberts, Sept. 9, 1844, in Roberts *Message*, Jan. 24, 1845, reproduced in Huberich, 774-775).

This British position, therefore, reflected prevailing international norms regarding the inextricable relationship between sovereignty, statehood, and revenue extraction within 18th Century international relations (Levi 1988; O'Connor 1973; Weber 1978; Huberich 1947). In pre-independence Liberia, rent from trade and commodity exports, particularly customs duties, represented a substantial component of state revenue. To forego customs duties, which at the time constituted the lion's share of the Commonwealth's revenue base, would have amounted to sovereign capitulation from the perspective of the state's revenue imperative. At the time, British and French vessels together constituted approximately 70% of all foreign vessels trading in Liberian ports between Sept. 1842 and Sept. 1844; a trend which continued to be reflected in later periods (Huberich 1947,768; Brown 1941, 118). In his *Message* of January 6, 1845, Robert's described this British challenge as "involving a question of the greatest importance, in respect to the future hope and welfare of the people of these colonies" (Roberts, *Message* 1945, Huberich, 774). The significance of customs duties in pre-independence Liberia is reflected in Table 1 (in Appendix A). Between 1841 and 1845, customs duties averaged approximately 73% of total receipt. If one accounts for all other import and customs-related receipts such as import licenses, tonnage duties, vessels fees, harbour storage, etc., the figure is likely to exceed 80% annually, reflecting the import of customs and GoL's near-total reliance upon international trade.[80]

As Liberia's historic partner, the United States' reluctance to protect and explicitly guarantee Commonwealth's independence against British threats, troubled Americo-Liberian leaders very deeply (Dunn 2009; Webster to Everett, March 24, 1843, 28th Cong. 1st Sess. Ho. Exec. Doc. 162, p. 2; Everett to Lord Aberdeen, Dec. 30, 1943, Ibid., 4-6).[81] Coupled with the need for international

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[79] Formed in 1839, the Liberian Commonwealth was an amalgamation of three semiautonomous coastal settlers' societies and colonies, including Bassa Cove, under a single political authority.

[80] Buell (1928, 768) suggests that "port and harbour dues of $35 were imposed upon vessels at the leading ports" only in 1922 (*Acts*, 1922-1923, p. 6). As I've shown in Table 1 (Appendix A), the evidence from earlier periods confirm this category of tax was in place even prior to independence in 1847.

[81] Cited in Huberich, p. 267-268

recognition in order to hold and maintain the right to impose customs duties, the Commonwealth had little choice but to declare itself independent and a sovereign state in 1847, only three years following the *Little Ben* incident. Thus, Liberia circumvented imperial attempts to deprive its lawful claims to customs rents as a sovereign state. By this triumph, the *Little Ben Affairs* and its place in Liberia's state-making reveal customs duties to be a form of revenue clearly tied to a state's exclusivity over sovereignty, and its rights to regulate trade within its borders. In other words, customs duties were derived not upon any productive activity of the Commonwealth, but instead mere based upon its legitimate prerogative as a sovereign state. This strong relationship between customs revenue and state-building, therefore, illustrates rent extraction it as a central principle of 19th Century statehood over which Britain's main claims rested. Over time, new forms of state rent would emerge.

Episode II: The Loan of 1870 and Subsequent Debt Crises

The second notable episode illustrating the rent extraction/state-building nexus relates to Liberia's debt crises emanating from the British loan of 1870. Contracted by the Administration of President Edward J. Roye (1869-1871), the loan of 1870 occupies a central place in Liberia's political and economic histories. Its significance bears saliently upon Liberia's development as a state, and the prevailing domestic politics at the time. Its violent and disruptive consequences (i.e. the overthrow and murder of President Roye) were the first of their kinds, with impacts stretching far into the first quarter of the 20th Century.

In the first two and half decades following independence in 1847, customs receipts remained the largest and most significant component of GoL revenue base. This was the summit of Liberia's economic and trade prosperities. Brown (1941) has detailed this period in his important work *The Economic History of Liberia*. By the middle of the 1860s, however, negative trends began to appear. The effects of these trends were not confined only to the economy. They extended far into the realm of politics. Political order gradually suffered as economic decline precipitated more boisterous citizens' agitations for effective governance and government actions to reverse negative trends. Sawyer (1992) has argued that the formation and landmark victory of the opposition True Whig Party (TWP) in 1869 presidential elections, for example, represented one of the most dramatic political consequences of the decline.[82] More disastrous results were to follow.

The causes of economic decline were multifarious, as were their consequences. Historians attribute the decline to a combination of domestic and international factors, not least were the precipitous fall in prices of key Liberian exports (e.g. coffee, camwood, palm kernel, palm oil, and

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[82] For details of the founding of the TWP in 1864 by "men of ebony complexion", see Smith (1970), Holsoe (2006, unpublished manuscript).

ivory); and settlers' utter reliance upon international trade over which they asserted little control and were ill-equipped to predict (Brown 1941). Sawyer (1992, 160-170) has cited the lack of effective linkages and integration between 'interior' and coastal economies; settlers 'outward-looking orientation' reflected in the skewed import patterns and persistent trade deficits; as well as a tendency towards profligacy and 'conspicuous consumption'. Also significant were the large fiscal outlays due to incessant wars with surrounding indigenous polities; a lag in technological development, as well as the development of substitutes and alternative sources to Liberia's key export commodities. Equally significant was the growing intensity of European imperial activities in West Africa following the *Berlin* and *Belgium* conferences, two developments which diverted trade away from Liberia, effectively eclipsing its export economy by the late 19th Century (Syfert 1977; McPhee 1926[1970]; Brown 1941; Buell 1928). Brown has also criticized Americo-Liberians for a "lack of intimate government or financial connection with any great urbanized or manufacturing country" (1941, 139). But this critique must be read as a subtext to perceived advantages associated with European colonial administrations elsewhere in Africa.[83]

To their credit, and as could be expected, Americo-Liberians confronted these early signs of economic and fiscal distress with a sense of urgency. Frantic efforts were undertaken in search of relief. By then, much of Liberia's domestic trade and commerce had fallen in the hands of European firms (particularly German firms), with the effect of diminishing the commercial influence of its political merchant class (Brown 1941; Buell 1928). The results of trade decline were soon reflected in dwindling revenue, enormous budget deficits, and bourgeoning indebtedness to powerful European firms operating in Liberia (Brown 19(41; Buell 1928; Sawyer, p. 172). Consistent with the 'accumulation imperative' of Liberia's capitalist model – that insatiable quest for new investments as a means of economic expansion and augmentation in state revenue (Young 1994) – Liberian leaders soon set their eyes on foreign investments into the economy. But the ensuring frantic efforts to attract European and American investments yielded very limited success. Fearing imminent bankruptcy, President Roye, upon his ascendency in 1870, sought to convince his compatriots regarding the urgency "to regulate our finances" and prune excesses in public expenditure and debt (*Annual Message*, Jan. 3, 1870). Notwithstanding these fervent entreaties, both expenditure and domestic debt continued to expand unabated (Roye *IA* 1870, *AM* 1870, 1872).

Anxious to reverse further decline, and buoyed by initial positive reports from a government-sponsored interior expedition which assessed the riches of Liberia's interior (Anderson 1868-69, 1874), President Roye began to contemplate the possibility of an international loan. In his *Annual Message* of Jan. 3, 1870, he announced his Administration's intention to "penetrate the interior, where

[83] Johnson (1987, 85) has noted that settlers lacked the backing of the "inflexible arm of a determined and secure mother country", suggesting this to be a key distinction between Americo-Liberian and European colonialism in Africa.

indigenous and spontaneous wealth covered the ground," for which critical infrastructures would be needed. In order to finance his infrastructural projects, particularly a railroad, Roye urged legislative action on a plan that could win the "interest of foreign capitalists to furnish the money" (Roye, *Inaugural Address*, Jan. 3, 1870 in Guannu, 81-82). He envisioned "the erection of railroad…after [whose] completion… the native will become the best of customers, to bring the camwood, palm oil, ivory, Mandingo gold, cotton, country cloths, peanuts, iron ore, hides, bullocks, sheep, goats, rice, and other things too numerous to mention, to the Liberian markets on the seaboards; and thus multiply indefinitely the exportable products of the country" (Ibid.).

The British loan of 1870 therefore held the stated purpose of facilitating access to the hinterland through the "construction of infrastructure essential for the expansion of trade in the interior" (Roye, *IA*, Jan. 3, 1870; Roberts, *AM*, 1871). At 7% interest and 2½% sinking fund to aid repayment, GoL initially agreed to obtain £100,000 (US$500,000) in principal, payable over a 21-year period (Roberts, *Annual Message,* 1871). However, unable to obtain these terms while in negotiation in London, the Roye administration settled for less favourable and arguably usurious terms: £100,000 (US$500,000) discounted at 30%, at an interest rate of 7%, payable in 15 years. Under these terms, the GoL received only £70,000 in cash, for a debt of £100,000. Furthermore, the 7% interest was paid three years in advance, leaving Roye and his team with less then £50,000 in cash (Brown 1941; Roberts 1871). Opposition to these terms sprung up in Monrovia, with further allegations that President Roye had mortgaged Liberia's interest and embezzled part of the funds. Coupled with a failed attempt to extend his presidential term from two to four years, Roye was deposed by a mob, overthrown, tried, convicted and imprisoned. He died in 1871 under controversial circumstances (Johnson 1906, 259-63). By 1895, the loan principal and interest had ballooned into £254,000 (an estimated US$1.27 million) (Corporation of Foreign Bondholders, *Annual General Report* (1895), pp. 197–8, in Gardner 2014, 1096).

By mid-to-late 1800s, Britain had emerged as an important and influential actor in Liberian affairs. Thus, it should surprise no one that Liberian authorities sought and received a British loan instead of from the United States, Liberia's 'historic partner' (Dunn 2009). This British/Liberian relationship commenced in earnest following Britain's overtake of the United States as Liberia's biggest trading partner in 1840 (Roberts, Jan. 5, 1846, in Huberich, 788; Brown 1941, 129), a trend which expanded into the spheres of diplomacy, banking, finance and security, as British imperialism in West Africa intensified. By 1870, the establishment of British colonies in the region, and increased monetary and trading activities all but ensured the inundation of West Africa with the British pound sterling. In Liberia, sterling came to be routinely used (mainly by private merchants, but later by GoL) as a medium of exchange and a store of value, as well as for payments of government taxes, alongside government-issued currency (Gardner 2014, 1096-1101; Brown 1941). Of course, these close trading and diplomatic engagements also facilitated the cultivation of valuation relationships between

Liberian authorities and financiers, bankers, speculators and middlemen in London. This was, after all, the height of Britain's leadership in international finance, money and banking (Jones 1995; Skidelsky 1976; Cleveland 1976).

Between 1870 and 1925, at least five other attempts at international loan contraction were made, mainly from British sources. Only three of these attempts bore any fruits (See Table 6 in Appendix A). For more than half a century following 1870, GoL remained deeply indebted to European financial interests, particularly British.[84] Beyond its novelty, the loan of 1870 inaugurated a new and precarious trend in GoL fiscal life. As part of continuous pursuit for investment and expanded revenue (i.e. the 'accumulation' and 'revenue imperatives'), foreign debt emerged as an important recourse to various national crises. But the practice of external recourse was itself not new, and seemed consistent with Americo-Liberians' tendency of 'extraversion', what Brown (1941) has also described as their disposition of "constantly pursuing support outside of themselves."[85] Settler society's historic reliance upon the ACS and U.S. government largesse during the Colony and Commonwealth periods can be viewed, rightly, as part of overall cost to the U.S. colonization project of early 1800s. International private debt, on the other hand, represented a new and distinct dimension of external reliance upon financial markets hitherto unknown in Liberia. As will be revealed, this reliance came at a great cost to sovereignty (or key aspects thereof) as a tradable right.

As part of an overall strategy to blunt European takeover of Liberia following the *Brussel* and *Berlin Conferences*, some form of direct U.S. Government involvement began to be discussed between Monrovia and Washington. Under threats from British and French encroachments, President Arthur Barclay requested and received U.S. assistance in persuading both Britain and France to settle boarder disputes with Liberia, and further repudiating any new attempts by these European Powers at sovereign usurpation (Buell 1928, 782-794). By the start of the 1920s, a clear U.S. policy regarding Liberia had already taken shape. At its core was an explicit U.S. government commitment to the preservation of Liberia's political and sovereignty. The U.S. declared it a matter of its national interest "not to permit the State of Liberia to be forced into the position where she will be dominated or controlled by any European Government or its agents" (Act. Sec. of State Polk, *Foreign Relations of the U.S.*, 1918, p. 534 in Buell 1947, 26-27). Thus, a direct U.S. government loan was envisaged to replace all European financial interests in the country.

[84] The Loan of 1912 was contracted through an International Consortium led by the United States, which also included Britain. It was the first loan denominated in U.S. dollar instead of sterling.

[85] In the case of Americo-Liberians, a key difference exists between their 'extraversion' and that of other societies south of the Sahara (Bayart 2006). Their form of 'extraversion' arguably transcended politics, economics, and finance, and went deep into historical, cultural, ideological, religious, and ancestral entanglements with the West which have their roots in slavery in Europe and America. 'Extraversion' was for Afro-Americans settlers and their descendants, a dramatization of their dual identity as Americans and Africans. For they "resided inside and outside" of both worlds. In Afro-Americans, Du Bois terms this phenomenon 'Double Consciousness' (Du Bois 1969, 45).

Between 1910 and 1925, at least three reciprocal Liberian and U.S. Government Missions visited Washington and Monrovia, respectively. These visits had the purpose of arranging a bilateral U.S. assistance, as the subsequent European loan of 1906 had proven 'expensive and cumbersome' for Liberia, with little tangible results to show (*Foreign Relations of the U.S.*, 1918, II, p. 534-545, in Buell 1947, 26-27; Dunn 2009). It was the conclusions of the Congressional Committee's visit to Liberia in May 1909 which sharpened the stakes for Washington. The Committee concluded that unless the U.S. Government extended to Liberia financial and political aid against its European creditors, including assistance in border disputes, it was almost certain the country would succumb to British, French, or German pressures, and be wholly or partly dismembered (Barclay, Dec. 13, 1910, in Dunn ed., 492; "Affairs of Liberia", *Senate Document* 1910, No. 457, p. 29, in Buell, 802). Thus was launched a frantic US–led effort that resulted into an international loan in 1912 in the tone of US$1.7 million. At 5% interest payable in 40 years, the loan was intended for "the adjustment of Liberia's indebtedness and settlement of claims", as well as for "use for productive purposes" (*Loan Prospectus*, in Buell, 805; Brown 1941). The loan, however, failed to address the underlying economic and fiscal crises.

Following Liberia's entry in WWI in 1917 on the side of the U.S. and Allies, a direct U.S. Government loan commitment was made to Liberia on the following terms: $5 million line of credit at 5% percent interest, to be guaranteed by the country's customs revenue. To be facilitated under Congress's *Second Liberty Loan Act* of 1917, the arrangement had envisaged a U.S. Government Receivership to replace the international one, with some 13 American officials to collect and manage Liberia's revenue and expenditure as 'Financial Commissioners', and to administer Native and military affairs (Buell 1947, 28). Through the flurry of diplomatic exchanges, one gets a sense of a precarious state of fiscal and political affairs of the Liberian government. President King acknowledged this much in a letter to the President Harding:

> We [Liberia] shall have to give to America a free hand in our affairs and be prepared to make some sacrifice of what we call our 'sovereign rights'…We shall have to put up with some of the bitter drugs which may be found necessary to put us on our feet in a sound and healthy [fiscal] condition. – King to Harding, 1920, in Buell (1928, 812).

Despite its eventual failure, however, the agreement was a clear manifestation of Liberia's willingness to cede key aspects of its sovereignty to the U.S. government as a means of securing urgent fiscal relief.[86] In its place, however, a private U.S. investment and loan were arranged by which the American industrialist Harvey Firestone, owner of the Firestone Rubber & Tyre Company of Akron, Ohio, would acquire a million acres of land, at 5 cents an acre ($2,000 the first year, and

[86] This dire fiscal situation also led GoL to entertain a loan from the Pan-Africanist Marcus Garvey's *Back to Africa* scheme, but with little success. See Akpan (1973b, 114), Buell (1928, 1947).

$6,000 annually thereafter) for 99 years to develop natural rubber in Liberia (*Acts*, 1924-1925, 1926; Kraaij 1980, 206; 1983).[87] As final negotiations for the Firestone Loan were being concluded in 1925, then Secretary of State Edwin Barclay again asserted GoL's "willing[ness] to accord the U.S. Government certain rights of the Liberian Government", however expressing strong preference for a bilateral arrangement instead of a private debt from Firestone (Barclay to American Minister, April 28, 1925, in Buell 1947, 30-31). The failed U.S. Government loan, as well as the successful Firestone one, highlights a unique aspect of sovereignty then and now – as a prized and tradable asset in Liberia's historic relations with the international environment – surrendering key sovereign prerogatives while asserting claims to rent, debt relief, and various forms of U.S. largesse. Within this new era, private international debt assumed greater significance in constraining the sovereignty of indebted nations.

Except for the loan of 1870, all other debts, including Firestone's, imposed significant constraints upon the GoL and Liberia's sovereignty. While aiding state consolidation, these debts also had the effect of eroding sovereignty in significant ways. It can be recalled that the terms of the British Loan of 1906 resulted into the seizure of GoL's customs revenue collection and trade regulation by the Receivership. British Receivers could veto fiscal and economic policies of the Executive (Buell 1928; Brown 1941, 164-167). Two Englishmen assumed control of government customs revenue as Chief Custom Inspector and Financial Adviser to the Government.[88] Furthermore, the British loan of 1907 under which funding was secured to finance the establishment of Liberia Frontier Force (LFF) and a police force, also resulted into British military takeover of command and control of both forces. British control of the forces would have persisted much longer had not a botched mutiny by Commander Major Markay Cadell wrecked the arrangement, eventually pushing the LFF permanently into U.S. command and control (*Report of American Commission*, p. 18, cited in Starr 1913, 122; Jones 1962). For its part, the Firestone Loan granted to the Financial Corporation of America (a Firestone's subsidiary) veto powers over GoL's national budget, in addition to control over the collection and expenditure of customs revenue for purposes of debt repayment. Without Firestone's consent, the Liberian government could not contract new debt, even if such a debt was meant to retire Firestone's own debt. Furthermore, the GoL was required to deposit all its taxes into a Firestone-owned bank, (i.e. the United States Trading Company's Banking Department, later the Bank of Monrovia) both wholly owned by Firestone (*Planting and Loan Agreement* 1926). It was

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[87] Firestone enjoyed exemptions to most, if not all of Liberian taxes, duties, excises, licenses or fees, harbour dues; and Firestone held exclusive rights to land areas of its choosing, as well as the construction of any infrastructural facilities deemed necessary for its operations, including electric power dams, railways, water systems, telegraph lines, etc.

[88] Though restrictive, the 1906 Loan and Receivership introduced for the first time a systematic organization and reporting of GoL fiscal activities, including revenue and tax collection; budget planning, reporting, and performance monitoring.

therefore not an exaggeration during the 1930s and 40s to speak of Liberia as a United States Protectorate or a Firestone Colony.

Despite constraints on sovereignty, however, the Loan of 1912 and Firestone's, both with significant direct U.S. government involvement, were instrumental in preserving Liberia's sovereignty by shifting the country's reliance away from Europe (i.e. Britain, France and Germany), and once again towards the United States. As the onset of WWII approached, the loans helped to more permanently centre Liberia within U.S. diplomatic, military, and commercial orbit. Buell (1928, 851) has remarked that "By accepting the Firestone concession and loan, the Liberian Government has accomplished its diplomatic aim; it has anchored American interests in the country and thus forestalled the real or imaginary aggressions of England and France" (see also Dunn 2009; Sawyer 1992; Kieh 2006). In this respect, the effects of the Firestone loan were double-edged – serving both to constrain and enable Liberia's sovereignty.

It was within the shadows of this direct U.S. involvement and immense Firestone financial and commercial interests and control over the GoL, that Liberia advanced through the second quarter of the 20th Century. U.S. influence would remain decisive throughout the inter-war and World War Two period.

<u>Episode III</u>: The Barclay Plan of 1904

By the turn of the 20th Century and the start of Arthur Barclay's presidency in 1904, Liberia faced renewed threats from European imperial activities in West Africa. This time, these threats emerged within the context of Europe's *Scramble for Africa* in the late 19th Century. European powers, mainly Britain and France, had already seized significant African territories, "hastening its partition, and placing their governments therein," according to President Barclay (*IA*, Jan. 4, 1904). This historic European push was a direct outcome of the *Berlin* and *Brussel Conferences* of 1884/85 and 1989, respectively, where Europeans powers agreed upon the ways and means of carving out African territories. The *Berlin Conference of 1885* introduced the principle of 'effective occupation' whereby claims of political and territorial sovereignty between European powers in West Africa would be negotiated, established, and recognized based upon 'occupation in fact'. That is to say, a clear demonstrations of effective administrative and police presence by a 'civilized' power (Young 1994, 96; Gavin & Bently 1973). But it was the *Brussels Conference* of 1889 which provided the most decisive pretext for European colonial conquest, by establishing legal justifications, and by mobilizing the political and commercial motor forces necessary for the grand usurpation of African territories (*General Act of the Brussel Conference*, Articles I & II, p. 37, 38; Gifford & Louis 1971).

Faced with these immediate threats and imperial demands for 'effective occupation', Americo-Liberian leaders concluded that a more effective policy of hinterland administration was needed if Liberia stood any chance of averting further territorial encroachments. By this time, the republic had already suffered significant territorial losses to France and Britain, with more areas being contested (Barclay, *IA*, Jan. 1904; Buell 1928; Akpan 1973). President Barclay reasoned that unless powerful African Chiefs and their societies were granted greater stakes in the emerging Liberian state through limited self-government; and unless they were convinced of government's good intentions towards them, it was impossible to guarantee their allegiance in the face of heightened imperial encroachments. Nor could their persistent hostilities toward Americo-Liberian rule be effectively curtailed without such conciliatory gestures. Thus, over a period of two years, and through at least two key legislations, the Barclay administration swiftly codified a framework of cooperation with indigenous societies through which 'indirect rule' and *Hinterland Administration* would be established, and greater state control of the interior would be asserted (Barclay, *IA and AM,* 1904, 1905; *Act* 1904, 1905). This new administrative arrangement would come to define the new bifurcated settlers/native relationship which would prevail until the mid-20th Century.

The Barclay Plan demarcated the hinterland into eight districts made up of smaller townships each headed by a Chief who was commissioned by the President. The Chief, as head of his people (typically a member of a "leading native family", or one elected by his people), stood within a subsidiary relationship with the state. He or she was charged with:

> the maintenance of peace and order in his district and…*entrusted with the collection of taxes* for which he would receive the remuneration already fixed by laws. He should be allowed as far as practicable to govern the people in accordance with their immemorial customs, except where such customs are, for good reasons, forbidden by law. – Barclay *IA,* 1904; *italic mine*.

When it came to security and public safety, President Barclay proposed that the "native population be divided into two classes – the more spirited tribes will furnish fighters, and the tribes who are unwarlike, military labourers and carriers" (Ibid). In subsequent *Annual Messages* between December 1904 and January 1905, Barclay reiterated his call for swift passage of legislation "to regulate the government of native communities," elaborating further principles of his Plan. In the final analysis, the Barclay Plan of 1904 came to rest upon the following key pillars:

1. The creation of local self-governments (i.e. Tribal Authorities) within each District, headed by Chiefs and supervised by a District Commissioners, both commissioned by the President.
2. Government tax collection and a 10% withholding for chiefs to incentivize scrupulous collected in their districts.[89]

[89] Jones (1962) reports this 10% distribution. Nut President Barclay suggests that prior to his Plan, a form of distribution already existed by law.

3. The establishment of *Native Courts* (Courts of Chiefs and Paramount Chiefs for indigenes) and a Court of the District Commissioner which would "hear appeals of the Native Chiefs, settle disputes between members of different sections of the same tribe; or persons of different tribes within his jurisdiction" (*Annual Message* 1904)
4. Recognition and administration of *Customary Native Law*s, both locally and by Courts across the Republic.
5. A provision for periodic promulgation of *Hinterland Regulations* by the Secretary of the Interior which would "have the force of law until expressly disallowed by the Legislature" (Ibid).
6. The introduction of compulsory labour requirements related to the maintenance and safety of roads and public projects, porterage, and services in the police and military.
7. A provision for the establishment of a police force "for the preservation of public order and for guarding and keeping open the principle roads, and for the protection of industry and peaceful trade," and
8. A provision for the selection and training of a "suitable body of public servants possessing ability, courage, tact, resources, patience and perseverance, for service in the Interior Department"(*Annual Message* 1904).[90]

With these key elements of the Plan in place, and the *Interior Department* reactivated, the framework for hinterland administration was firmly and permanently fastened upon the interior and indigenous societies therein, to varying degrees of penetration, political acceptance and effectiveness (Barclay, *AM*, Dec. 15, 1904; Dec. 14, 1905).[91] By and large, the Barclay Plan seemed fairly successful in winning the cooperation of indigenous societies. Unlike his predecessors, Barclay carefully cultivated positive relationships with powerful African chiefs, employing both political dexterity and friendly outreach, while making clear his desire to "effect his aim without bloodshed, and with the least possible friction" (Ibid.).

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[90] A number of respected indigenous sons rose to prominence through this program, including such men Momo Massaquor and Didho Tweh (Massaquoi 1914 *Report*; Sawyer 1992, 201-202). Tweh would go on to pose a formidable challenge to the presidency of William V.S. Tubman in 1951.

[91] Key differences have been observed in the extent to which various African societies embraced Americo-Liberians indirect rule. According to Gershoni (1985, 67), the coastal Vai and hinterland Gio societies, for example, were among the first to embraced Americo-Liberian authority. However, other groups such as the Kpelle, Grebo and Kru, opposed it from time to time (Fraenkel 1966; Levitt 2005). The differences in ethnic reactions to settlers' rule may be accounted for through the various histories of interaction, proximity of settlements, and degree of social amalgamation between the two social stocks (Sawyer 1992, 208). Fraenkel (1966) also suggests that similarities in socio-political stratification and systems of hierarchy between settlers and indigenous polities, may account, for example, for why the Mel and Mende ethno linguistic-cluster were more more acceptable of 'indirect rule' (See also d'Azevedo 1969-1971; McEvoy 1971).

As a system of simultaneous bifurcation and incorporation, the *Barclay Plan* and hinterland delimitation served two important functions. As President Barclay himself declared, the system first successfully "arrange[d] for the government and control of our [interior] territories as to make our occupation of same clearly effective" (*AM*, Dec. 14, 1905). This first goal – a direct response to the more urgent imperial demand for 'effective occupation' – has been viewed by many writers as the primary and most salient aim of the Barclay Plan (e.g. Gershoni 1985, 1997; Sawyer 1992). But far from being a framework of 'indirect rule' and 'effective occupation' alone, the Barclay Plan had another function – to enforce cultural separation between settler societies and African natives – a sort of cultural containment of the different populations. But by incorporating indigenous societies and institutions as subsidiary and subordinated state appendages, the Plan also amalgamated two separate and distinct systems of rule into one, the effects of which will be highlighted subsequently. But first, it is important to reflect upon prior developments, and their role in constricting this particular outcome. As I explore these developments, special attention will be given to Americo-Liberian's state-building agenda and the role rent revenue played in its consolidation.

The 'Revenue Imperative' of the Barclay Plan

Beyond the immediacy of establishing 'effective control' and averting territorial encroachments, laid a greater government concern of insolvency, and deeper quest for fiscal relief and expansion. Thus, the 'revenue imperative' represented an integral part of the forces animating government's accelerated push into the hinterland at the start of the 20th Century. Amidst a declining economy, bourgeoning international debt and interest payments, and imperial territorial encroachment, the stakes could not have been higher.

The launch of the Barclay Plan in 1904 coincided with an important development in colonial Africa. It was the emergence of a new form of sovereign rent associated with forced, conscripted and 'contract labour' of African subjects, meant primarily to address fiscal needs. By the first decade of the new century, monetization of African labour was already a central element of the 'revenue imperative' across Europe's African colonial states. In his wide-ranging study of the evolution and decline of the African colonial state, Young (1994) assesses the enactment of this imperative in colonial administrations, arguing that the development coincided with a shift in colonial policy away from fiscal dependence upon European metropoles, towards one of greater administrative 'self-sufficiency' by the African colonies (See also Crowder 1968, 206-210, 348-351). Young argues that at "the heart of the revenue dilemma [was the] conversion of labour – the sole extractable resource – of state subject into the ways and means of meeting state subsistence needs" (Young, p. 126). This labour conversion – a sort of 'labour capitalization' – took on two major forms. First was the imposition of taxes upon African subjects where feasible, whose payments coerced labour into channels of capitalist production and monetized wage economies. Taxes such as the ‘Hut Tax’ and Poll Tax emerged as important vehicles for wringing revenue out of African subjects. Among the main monetary activities at the time were cultivations and sales of important cash crops, such as cocoa, coffee, cotton, ground nuts, rubber, etc., often destined for foreign markets (Ihonvbere & Falola 1987, 19-21; Crowder 1968, 206-110, 348-351; Young 1994).

The *second* means of labour conversion occurred through compulsory, often uncompensated, labour (*corvée* labour) for public works and infrastructural developments, such as roads clearing and construction, felling trees, railways, bridges, porterage services (assisting military cavalries, interior expeditions, etc.), military services, and other labour intensive activities from which African subjects had little or no recourse (Young, 130; Buell 1928; Cooper 1996). In Liberia, *corvée* labour and conscription of indigenous Africans (as official state practices) were introduced relatively later in the first quarter of the 20th Century, compared to colonial administrations elsewhere on the continent (Young 1994; Sundiatta 1974, 1980; Buell 1928, 1947). Americo-Liberians experience with slavery in the United States engendered their firm opposition to the practice, until they were persuaded by circumstances of fiscal exhaustion and state preservation to officially embrace the practice under the *Barclay Plan of 1904*. Waijenburg (2018) explores the importance of force labour in the case of French colonial administrations. However, the qualitative and quantitative scale of in-kind labour tax (represented by forced labour) in Liberia is yet to be integrated in the study of Liberia’s fiscal development. Nor has the magnitude of this form of labour rent been fully documented or assessed.[92] Questions of in-kind labour rent, however, lie beyond the boundaries of this dissertation, and therefore do not feature prominently. Instead, I focus on the monetized aspect of labour rent, that is, cash payments and taxes to GoL in Head Money, generated primarily from shipments of native men and boys to overseas plantations and on international marine vessels as ‘contract labourers’.

European Powers had long viewed Liberia as a source of crucial labour supply. This kind of labour rent was captured in GoL fiscal records as ‘Head Money’, together with related ‘recruitment’ licenses, and is therefore assessable from available fiscal records. In this regard, my dissertation makes an important contribution to this under-researched aspect of state development and fiscal history in Liberia. It is this form of labour rent which constituted the *third* and more controversial strategy of labour capitalization. Although prevalent elsewhere in colonial Africa, it existed in Liberia on a far larger scale, with great intensity and consequence. Together, the Hut Tax, Head Money and related ‘recruitment’ licenses comprised the most significant avenue of sovereign rent extraction from African subjects between 1900s and 1940s. These rents came second in magnitude to customs and commodity exports. I shall now elaborate upon each category.

[92] Waijenburg (2018) recent work on in-kind labour tax in French colonial Africa is among the first notable exceptions.

Labour Rent in GoL Fiscality: Head Money, Recruitment Licences and Other Fees

To be clear, the practice of 'contract labour' predates the *Barclay Plan.* The practice was widespread among coastal African communities such as the Kru and Bassa who had, long before Afro-American settlement and independence, traded with European merchants in both material and human commodities (Buell 1928, 37; Brooks 1972, 3; d'Azevedo 1969-1971). Thus, the transition from slave trade to 'contract' or 'wage labour' along the coast appears to have occurred rather seamlessly. Many of the Africans exported under 'contract' were often domestic slaves, indentured labourers, prisoners of war, or members of lower castes or slave classes in these societies (e.g. d'Azevedo 1969-1971). European presumption of obtaining "hired labourers" (contracted upon their own 'free will') was belied by the longstanding reality of domestic slavery and indentured servitude within these African societies, and the very organized mechanisms of forced recruitments left behind by the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade itself, of which there labour merchants were well aware. Many slave trading African Chiefs and middlemen found themselves unable to differentiate between the two systems of labour utilization (slave v. contract), except perhaps when labourers were successfully returned to their homes following long periods of overseas work. As the evidence shows, the practice of labour export did not end with independence in 1847, nor at the close of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. Meanwhile, GoL contented itself in simply regulating these shipments through its ports and customs, and extracting labour rent via Head Money tax, passport and consular fees (Roberts, *Proclamation* of Feb. 26, 1853, in the *Report of Commander Lynch*, cited on p. 61; Sundiata, 1980, 15; Huberich 1947). [93]

By mid-to-late 1800s, these 'contract labourers' were shipped for jobs on plantations, civil work projects across the continent, and as stevedores on international trading vessels (Buell 1928; Brown 1941; Huberich, 909-915). Relatively minuscule then, Head Money eventually rose in significance following the Barclay Plan of 1904 as labour export acquired new fiscal productivity. The British Loan of 1906 would impact how Head Money was collected, and the incentives for its intensification. Under the loan agreement, GoL's ceded collection of all customs receipts to the British Receivership as 'encumbered' revenue (i.e. General Customs). What remained of general taxation [including land sales, taxes on land, property and estates within the Counties, Education Tax, Patient Tax, Judicial Fines, Military Fines, Poll Tax, Trade Licenses, Navy Tax, Tax on Distilleries and other products, and Head Money ('Tax on Kru Boys')], constituted 'unencumbered' revenue, and were collected as Internal Revenue by the Liberian Treasury (Barclay 1906 in Dunn, 447). As the

[93] Namely, the Robertsports (Cape Mount), Monrovia, Marshall, Buchanan, Greenville (Sinoe), and Harper (Cape Palmas, Maryland). See Sundiata (1950, 15) and Brown (1941).

labour trade intensified, GoL began to assume a more decisive role in it following the establishment of the Liberian military in 1907. Until 1912, Head Money represented the largest and most significant source of Internal Revenue, thus incentivizing its more vigorous collection by GoL (See Table 2 in Appendix A).

The Barclay Plan of 1904 also coincided with a particularly acute labour crisis on the Spanish Island of Fernando Po (now Equatorial Guinea), thus opening up new opportunities for fresh revenue. On Fernando Po, a combination of economic neglect and massive depopulation of the island's indigenous Bubi community "due to venereal diseases and social dislocations," resulted into the decimation of its once flourishing cocoa economy (Sundiata 1974; Berg 1964-65, 394-412). These adversities occurred at the same time that Britain and France moved to curtail labour export from their West African colonies, leaving Spain (and to a limited extent, Portugal) utterly reliant upon the only remaining source of indigenous labour supply in the region – Liberia. Against this backdrop, and barely a month following Barclay's enunciation of his Plan for Hinterland Administration, a new labour law was enacted by the legislature imposing bond fee of up to US$150 for each labourer recruited in Liberia, ostensibly as a measure to ensure his (as all labourers were men) return to Liberia. Additionally, a US$5 Head Money was levied for each labourer, and would flow directly into GoL's coffers (*British Foreign Office*, Feb. 14, 1904, in Sundiata 1974a, 105). The new legislation iterated upon a previous Act of the Legislature of January 16, 1897 that imposed US$150 bond fee per labourer, and a $100 fine upon failure to return or death of a labourer; and another in 1903, where fees were increased to US$250 per license, and US$150 fine upon death or failure to return, both amounts paid at the time of recruitment. The US$5 labour rent remained as a government tax (*Act of the Legislature*, 1903, 41, in Sundiata 1974a, 103).[94]

In 1905, the Barclay administration entered its first direct labour treaty with the Spanish government for labour shipments to Fernando Po's vast cocoa plantations. Prior to this time, influential German firms monopolized recruitment under various concession agreements with GoL, only remitting Head Money into its coffers, and fees for passports and other consular activities (Sundiata 1974, 1980; Buell 1928).[95] Each firm independently recruited labourers, managed Head Money intake, and remitted same to GoL. Except for the Woermann Agreement, all shipments from Liberia under the Spanish agreements were destined for plantations on Fernando Po (F.O. 47/36, John Holt to F. H. Villiers, 27 Aug. 1903, in Suandaia, 104). The Spanish Agreement of 1905 was therefore the first, according to Sundiata (1974a, 105) to provide for direct payment to GoL of 50 to 100 Spanish Pesos in gold, significantly boosting government revenue. Huberich's assertion that "labour

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[94] In 1908-09, the levy was reduced from $5 - $4 upon the agitation of Kru and Grebo communities who at the time engaged most in the trade (Sundiata 1980, 16).

[95] They included August Humplmayr (January 16, 1897); Wiechers and Helm (March 14, 1903), and the Woermann & Company (June 18, 1903). See Sundiata (1974, 1980) and Buell (1928)

supply [to Fernando Po] was cut off" between 1921 and 1928 due to a GoL ban (1947, 912-913), does not appear to be borne out by the historical facts. Giver GoL's prevailing fiscal difficulties, such a ban appears highly unlikely. Furthermore, it is neither corroborated by other writers on the subject (Sundiata 1980; 1983, 26; Buell 1928; Brown 1941). My own research has uncovered no evidence in support of Huberich's assertion. Instead, aside from a handful of moratoriums periodically imposed due to occasional outbreaks of diseases, disagreement over contract terms, and tighter restrictions of the trade, only a brief termination of the 1914 Agreement was observed in between 1927 and 1928. This ban was soon followed few months later by a renegotiated Spanish agreement (Barclay to Sevillano, Mar. 30, 1928; Barclay to Sivillano, Mar. 31, 1928, in Dept. of State *Dispatches*, p. 239-241, 243).[96] Spain appeared unable to sustain any further losses in its labour supply. Neither GoL to labour rent, despite signs of improved customs and other tax collections.

Averaging 600 labourers a year, the League's *Report* (1930, 36) has estimated that at least 7,268 indigenous men and boys were shipped to plantations on Fernando Po between 1914 to 1927.[97] Between 1919 and 1926, Sundiata reports "a known 4,268 [men] were recruited and employed on the island" (p. 25). Between 1924 and 1925, some 700 men from the Wedabo ethnic community, Maryland County, alone were shipped under the auspices of Superintendent Allen Yancy (Sundiata 1980, 22; *League of Nations Report*, 1930). Under the renegotiated agreement of April 1928, upwards of 1,500 labourers would be furnished annually. Recruiting agents, which now included key Liberian government officials, received between £5 - £9 in bonus, while labourers received on US$6.00 monthly in wages. GoL continued to receive Head Money, in addition to indemnity payments for each man in the event of death (in Yancy 1934, as quoted in Huberich, 913; Dept, of State, *Dispatches*, p. 239-241, 243). These numbers do not include shipments by other independent firms and private Liberians, for example, by the German firm Woermann & Company which shipped to other destinations aside from Fernando Po (RL, *Woermann Agreement*, June 18, 1903; Sundiata 1974, 1980; Buell 1928).

All efforts (including by British officials) to curtail forced labour on humanitarian and other political grounds proved futile (*AM*, Dec. 14, 1905; Buell 1928, 11, 777; Sundiata 1974, 105). GoL's response to curtailment of the trade remained tepid, influenced largely by the desire for revenue, then by any British opposition or concerns for labourers' welfare. Secretary of State Joseph J. Sharp responded to British pressures in 1913 by noting that the GoL "contemplated no restrictions on labour shipment to Fernando Po at this time" (F.O. 367/1960, Sharp to Parks, Mar. 29, 1914, in Sundiata,

[96] A 1925 disagreement over the arrest and detention of Liberia's Consul General on Fernando Po resulted in a a dramatic halt of shipments. Sundiata (1980, 26) reports that no labourer was shipped to Fernando Po in 1925; and only 40 in 1926.

[97] It must be pointed out that this figure falls below what can be expected (600 X 13 yrs. = 7,800 natives). See Sundiata, 25.

105). Liberian officials seemed more apprehensive of the potential fiscal adversities associated with any disruptions in shipments. As much as "$10,000 per year" in labour rent could be lost if a single agreement was terminated (Bundy to Barclay, Feb. 9, 1919, *USNA, RG59, 882.504/6*, in Sundiata, p. 25), a figure which did not include other fees such as customs on items brought by returning labourers, recruitment fees, travel documents, and consular fees. So profitable was the trade in native labour that by 1925, Liberia's General Receiver of Customs and Financial Advisor, an American appointed by the U.S. President, made the following revealing comments:

> The invisible export represented by labour has been one of the determining factors in the prosperity that has come to Liberia, and regardless of an apparent adverse balance of trade which has been shown from time to time by the import and export statistics, the steadily improving financial condition of the Republic has evidence the important part labour has played in Liberian affairs. – S. De La Rue (1925, 15-16), *Annual Report of the General Customs Receiver, 1924-25*.

In the preceding two years, GoL revenue under *General Customs* reflected the trend shown in Table 2 (in Appendix A). Between 1924 and 1925, total revenue from Head Honey averaged approximately $22,000 annually (ibid, 2). More significantly, ongoing negotiations for a loan to GoL (US$ 5 million) and a multimillion dollar investment (estimated $25 million) by the Firestone Rubber Company of Akron, OH (in which Mr. de la Rue was also actively involved), was in part premised upon an assessment of the 'inexhaustible' labour supply believed to be available in Liberia. With the entry of Firestone and its own labour needs, a collision between GoL's Spanish commitments and Firestone's interest appeared inevitable. By 1925, the American Financial Advisor and General Receive of Customs, De la Rue, had given indication of the need to keep Liberian labour at home, as it was "because of Liberia's labour, [that] one of the largest plantations [Firestone] has sought Liberia as the base of its operations" (De la Rue, 1924-25, 16). Disagreement over the continued efficacy of labour export, coupled with inhumanity and abuse associated with the practice in Liberia and abroad, eventually erupted into a full-scale scandal with enormous consequences. There was to be a radical shift in the prevailing mode of labour rent extraction, exemplified by the Fernando Po forced labour crisis of 1930 addressed in a subsequent section. As I will show, and as a direct consequence of Barclay Plan, the Fernando Po labour crisis brings into sharper perspective President Barclay's policy towards African labour.

Land Rent in GoL Fiscality: The Hut Tax

Taxes from land and other forms of property rights are another important aspect of sovereign rent which require due recognition. Central among this land and indigenous property tax was the imposition of the Hut Tax throughout the hinterlands and in indigenous societies within 'County' jurisdictions. Introduced in 1910, the Hut Tax emerged as a crucial revenue source at a time when the Liberian state was saddled by large international debt.[98] The difficulties associated with the introduction of any monetized tax system within largely non-monetised African societies made the extraction of such taxes as land, property and estate tax in the hinterland extremely challenging, if not impossible. Furthermore, the communal nature of property ownership (of villages, farm lands and real estates) amongst indigenous Liberians also differed sharply from western notions of personal property rights, and therefore undermined any credible land and estate tax system envisaged by the Liberian government.[99] Its attractiveness as a revenue source rested, therefore, to a very large extent upon its capacity to generate revenue in the absence of an individualized system of taxation on land and personal property in the Hinterlands (see also van Waijenburg 2018; Ford 1992, 47; Konneh 1996).[100] The status of land ownership by indigenous inhabitants is important to understand here within the changing context of Hinterland Administration and taxation introduced in 1910.

Under the Barclay Plan, the Americo-Liberian state established itself as sovereign authority and owner of all indigenous territories which it claimed through acts of 'purchases', alliances, forceful acquisitions, and voluntary annexation by smaller polities under threats from stronger rivals (Gibson, *Inaugural Message* Jan. 6, 1902; Gerdes 2013; Levitt 2005; Sawyer 1992). These methods of acquiring sovereignty over African peoples and territories was therefore no different from European colonial strategies adopted under the terms of the *Berlin and Brussel's Conferences,* 1885 and 1889, respectively. After all, if Britain, France, Germany and other European Powers could acquire and rule over African territories in such manner, why not the 'civilized' Negro, they reasoned. Barclay would concede it in 1906 to be "a fact that the Great Powers really settle the principles of International law. Small states must conform" (*Annual Message,* Dec. 11, 1906, in Dunn, 445). Chief Justice Dossen would later reason in 1916 in a decisive and landmark ruling in which the Court affirmed that "our sovereignty over what is called the Hinterland of Liberia is perfect, complete, and absolute" for the purpose of bringing civilization and Christianity to the native tribes (*Supreme Court Ruling*, reproduced in Huberich 1947, 1210-1215). This was despite the clear legal and administrative distinctions which existed between 'County' jurisdictions under Constitutional order, and the

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[98] Charles D.B. King, then Secretary of State, noted that "the Revenue received through taxation would be the major part of [loan] repayment" (quoted in Ford 1992, 47).

[99] Traveling among the Kru people of south-eastern Liberia in early 1800s, the American Reverend J. Leighton Wilson observed this reality first-hand. He reported that "The property of all the members of the family, with the exception of a few articles of comparatively little value, is held as a common stock, and cannot be disposed of without the concurrence of its leading members…The Kru people have no idea of appropriation of land by individuals except for temporary purposes. It [land] is regarded as common property, and any man may use as much of it as he chooses, but he cannot sell any. The only exclusive right which anyone has is that of occupancy" (1856, 128-139, in Huberich, 242)

[100] Although Hut Tax legislation was passed in 1910, Ford (1992, 48) suggests its collection commenced only in 1915 among the Lormas ethnic community of northern Liberia. Hut Tax payments certainly intensified against the backdrop of WWI, but the evidence from both GoL Treasury Report and independent investigators confirm that collection started as early as 1911.

'Hinterlands' governed through *Interior Regulations* and an array of customary laws of each native community. Like Barclay, Chief Justice Dossen also sought reliance upon 'International Canon' (The *Berlin Agreement*) and the famous ruling by U.S. Chief Justice Marshall in 1823 by which the United Sates wrestled large swaths of lands from American Indian to make way for European settlement n the New World.

As sovereign possessors of all indigenous lands, the government could therefore declare these lands to be public lands, which it often did. In 1904 pursuant to this view, President Barclay had proposed under his Plan that "each native township be assigned a body of land equal to about 25 acres for each man. This land should be deeded to said township and held in common and ought not to be sold unless by consent of the Executive Government given in writing" (*Inaugural Message*, Jan. 3, 1904, in Guannu 1980, 192-3). Barclay specified that townships which failed to comply with government regulations "could lose their territory" (ibid, 193). Native populations and communities occupying these land could hold rights only to occupancy and use as squatters, and for as much acreage as was needed for farming, habitation and general livelihood; and for as long as necessary.[101] Against this backdrop, therefore, the introduction of the Hut Tax by which US$1.00 was levied upon all owners of habitable 'huts' in the hinterlands, was by definition land rent akin to feudal rent extracted during the height of European Feudalism between 9th and 15th centuries.

The relative success of the Hut Tax went hand-in-hand with other important developments, and was accomplished as GoL overcame other challenges. By early 1900s, settlers' capitalist and colonial intrusion into the interior had attained sufficient levels of prevalence, mainly through trade, alliances, and the implantation of important interior 'civilized' settlements. But GoL still lacked 'effective control' over these areas. Coupled with the absence of any form of land-based taxation on personal property, these conditions significantly impeded the development of fiscal capacity in these areas. Added to these was the absence of a credible coercive military or police apparatus to enforce compliance with government policies and tax collection. Once the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) was established in 1907 and sufficiently deployed across Liberia, collection and enforcement of the Hut Tax proceeded with new vigour and relative ease. The Hut Tax was in effect a form of feudal land rent since in fact GoL (not tribal people) owned all lands. The very idea of individual private ownership remained an alien concept among many African societies. Soon, the success of this form of rent would be reflected in GoL's revenue, as shown in Table 4 (in Appendix A) for selected years.

By the early decades of the 1900s, Hut Tax which emerged as the "backbone of annual state revenue" according to Brown (1941, 184) accounted for a far greater fraction of overall revenue by the 1920 and 30s. In 1911, Hut Tax accounted for more than $50,000 of total revenue, although only

[101] Under new rules promulgated later, hinterland inhabitants could individually and collectively acquire through purchase or grant lands from the Liberian Government as private property (RL, *Aborigines Laws* 1956).

some $10,000 actually reached the Treasury (ibid., 184-85). In one of the only years which it appears disaggregated within the presidential *Annual Messages* (Fiscal Year Oct. 1, 1921-Sept. 30, 1922) net Hut Tax stood at $89,053, an estimated 39% of Internal Revenue, and about 18% of Total Revenue for the year (King, *AM*, Dec. 19, 1922 in Dunn, 602, 603). Despite the political fallout in connection with the end of the Fernando Po and other labour shipments in 1930, Hut Tax remained an impressive 30% of Internal Revenue (approximately US$57,905) in 1933 (Brown 1941, 184). In the following 1933/34 Fiscal Year, however, a growth of $20,000 was recorded. In 1940, it rose again to an impressive US$268,000 out of total revenue of US$749,583 (Steadman 1952, 83-84).[102] The revenue agenda associated with GoL new stance on domestic slavery coupled with expanded hinterland access led to this rapid augmentation in GoL revenue across the board.

This crucial fiscal agenda underpinning the Barclay Plan – of advancing state revenue and expanding GoL's fiscal base deep within the hinterlands – continues to be underappreciated within the relevant Liberianist and African studies scholarships. For example, Sawyer has argued

> That although declining economic conditions were a compelling reason for attempting the reorganization of control over the interior, the real incentive that drove the Liberian government interior policy was the expansionist pressures of European imperial powers. The establishment of 'effective control' over the interior was the only means of repulsing the encroachments of British and French as the scramble for territory intensified. – Sawyer (1992, 197).

Once again, such as assessment does not accurately describe the nature and scope of the *Barclay Plan*, and goes only so far as to capture the immediacy of the policy, while ignoring it as a product of longstanding Americo-Liberian economic and fiscal agenda dating back to the nation's founding (RL *Acts*, 1868-9, 12, *Harvard Law Library*, in Martin, p. 306; *Annual Message*, Dec. 14, 1896; Roye, *Annual Message*, Jan. 3, 1870, in Guannu, ed. 1980, p. 80, 81; *Liberian Herald*, Mar. 16, 1853, as cited in Sawyer, 1992, p. 166; Coleman, *Annual Message*, Dec. 1896, in Dunn 2011, 394). President Edwin J. Roye planned of 1870, for example, "to penetrate the interior, where indigenous and spontaneous wealth covered the ground", was premised upon fears of government insolvency and domestic indebtedness. Roye cautioned the legislature that unless the "[debt] increase will cease, there can be no security against ultimate, perhaps early national bankruptcy" (Roye *IA* Jan. 3, 1870, in Guannu 1980, 79). Roye also noted the direct relationship between customs revenue and access to the interior, arguing that "advance[s] in this branch of revenue will depend upon the improvement of the people, native and Liberian" (ibid). Enthralled by deep commitments to mercantilism and the capitalist logic of 'accumulation', and enlivened by fanciful prospects of infinite interior wealth underneath a veiled froth of a 'civilizing mission', Roye embarked upon some

[102] See also Brown (1941) and McLaughlin (1966, 180-190)]

concrete, though unsuccessful, steps to reach the interior (ibid., Guannu, 80-81; Anderson 1868-69, 1874) Far from being the catalyst of Americo-Liberian expansionist policies outward as Sawyer suggests, I argue that imperial pressures were only the immediate triggers, and simply added a new layer of urgency. At its very base, the *Barclay Consensus* fulfilled a longstanding and fundamental state-building agenda of economic and fiscal expansions.

Gershoni (1985, 37-38) has also argued more pointedly that President Barclay harboured no fiscal ambitions under the *Consensus* of 1904*,* evidence by his decision to delay imposition of new taxes, especially the Hut Tax; and to more slowly and deliberately introduce coercive methods of rule in the hinterland. The delay, Gershoni argues, was intended primarily to avert a potential native revolt, similar to that witnessed in Sierra Leone when Britain attempted to impose the Hut Tax there in 1898. Like Sawyer, Gershoni argues that 'indirect rule' – what I term the *Barclay Consensus* – was merely a 'cost effective' strategy of rule whose main aim it was to satisfy imperial demand for 'effective occupation.' Once again, such assessment fails to accurately capture the range of underlying motivations propelling the *Consensus*, nor its real effects on colonial governance. Of course, President Barclay could be expected to draw lessons from history. By offering indigenous people greater political stakes in the evolving state – a goal he initially sought to achieve "without bloodshed, and with the least possible friction" – he was attempting to avert the conflicts of the past. And although the Hut Tax – a crucial revenue source – was not introduced until 1910, nor a militia and police force established until 1907, by acquiring greater access to the hinterlands, GoL extracted revenue through other tax categories, including through customs, 'poll tax', an 'education tax' ($1.00 by 1925), court and administrative fees and fines. More organized and systematic labour recruitment and Head Money collection were also to be extended further afield.[103]

A more pointed refutation of Gershoni's claim are to be found in Barclay's own words. As early as 1904*,* Barclay made clear his intention to "entrust [native chiefs] with the collection of taxes for which [they] will receive the remuneration already fixed by law" (*1st Inaugural Address*, Jan. 4, 1905). It can be recall that as early as 1874, upward of US$100 annual stipend was paid as incentives to chiefs who cooperated with Monrovia and collected government taxes amongst their peoples (*Government Resolution*, Feb. 4, 1874, No. 12, XVII, ACS; RL, *Acts of the Legislature,* 1874-75). Jones (1962) reports that under this arrangement, the amount was augmented to 10% of all taxes collected within hinterland territories.[104] What President Barclay did not stress enough, and what Gershoni also fails to appreciate, is that at the very moment of Barclay's ascendency in 1904 the Liberian government stood at the precipice of bankruptcy, a crisis whose roots lay in the failed loan

[103] See *Laws and Regulations Governing the Treasury, 1873-1924*, p. 25, in Buell, p. 724. See also (Crowder 1968; Konneh 1996)

[104] See also Sawyer 1992, 199. In 1952, Steadmann associated the Chiefs' 10% withholding specifically with the collection of Hut Tax (C-29), but it most likely extended beyond the Hut Tax.

of 1870. Americo-Liberian state leaders were riveted by the demands for adequate border security, strengthening and financing state bureaucracy, and safeguarding its coveted interior holdings.

In the period between 1870 (the year of GoL's first international loan) and 1904 when Barclay came to power, total national debt had increased by over 800% from approximately US$100,000 in 1870 to US$800,000, of which the English debt (US$500,000) of 1870 was the largest.[105] Barclay perceived little or no immediate prospects of retiring the debt, nor any real measure in place to curtail further expansion via domestic deficit financing through bonds issuance. The budget deficit in 1909, for example, stood at approximately US$80,000. Barclay lamented increases in legislative salaries of $40,000 in that same year, despite the "body [making] no suggestion as to how to meet this increase in expenditure" (*AM*, Dec. 13, 1909).

The story told by revenue figures neither inspires hope. In his *Annual Message* of 1904, Barclay informed the Legislature of steep declines in revenue from the previous years. Over the previous 10 years (1893-1993), GoL took in a mere US$2,243,149, with total expenditure approximating US$2,117,556, representing a minuscule surplus of $125,593 for the entire decade, compared to previous periods. At this level, Barclay noted, it would take approximately three years' worth of revenue to repay Liberia's total debt. Legislative reticence towards budget cuts, especially salaries, meant that far greater effort would be directed toward raising new revenue, instead of pruning expenditure. With this revenue agenda, the Barclay Plan was met with little or no opposition, quickly garnering widespread support and endorsement within Americo-Liberian leadership. By establishing Hinterland Administration, therefore, President Barclay hoped to radically expand GoL's fiscal base into heartland territories through the collection of Head Money and Hut Tax. General improvements in GoL's fiscal position following the Plan are reflected in Tables 2, 3 and 4 in Appendix A. This positive trend was only briefly interrupted by the political fallout from the Fernando Po Labour Crisis when revenue from Hut Tax and Head Money suffered considerable depression.

<u>Episode IV</u>: *The Fernando Po Labour Crisis of 1930*

The entry into Liberia of Firestone in 1926 introduced a new dynamic into the labour trade. Firestone's US$25 million investment in rubber cultivation represented the biggest U.S. private commercial interest in Liberia to date; and was based partly upon the view of a bountiful supply of labour. Firestone's peak labour requirement was projected to be 350,000 labourers, who would

[105] Before the loan of 1870, Liberia's total floating debt hovered around US$100,000. The loan of was US$500,000 (100,000 Pound Sterling). It carried an annual interest of 7% interest at 30% below par value, and three-years interest deducted up front. See Roberts, *Annual Message*, Dec. 1872, in Dunn 2011, 239-241; Barclay *AM*, Dec. 15, 1904.

produce approximately 200,000 tons of rubber, at the time representing about half of global production (*Firestone Non-Skid*, Dec. 1925, in Buell, 823). With a total estimated population of between 1.5 to 2 million people, this demand translated into about one-fifth of the total population, and more than 100% of the adult male population (estimated between 300,000 and 400,000) upon whom Firestone would come to depend for rubber cultivation (Buell 1928, 833; *Firestone Non-Skid*, 1925).[106] Soon, Firestone's labour requirements and GoL's fiscal imperatives related to labour exports began to collide.

Buell (1928, 1947), Kraaij (1980), and Dunn (2011) have detailed the extraordinary coordination between the U.S. Government and Mr. Harvey Firestone's financial interests in Liberia. It is important to note that the Firestone loan of US$5 million (extended via the Firestone subsidiary, the Finance Corporation of America), in part, fulfilled expressed U.S. Government commitment to aid Liberia's fiscal distress. The Agreement provided for the appointment of a Customs Receiver and Financial Advisor by the U.S. President. Many of these Advisors were recruited from U.S. Departments of State and Defence (Buell 1928, 1947; Beecher, *undated*). Following the 1909 Congressional Commission's visit to Monrovia, and the botched U.S. loan, the government's fiscal position remained precarious. It was against GoL's will that Mr. Firestone successfully convinced U.S. authorities in favour of a private loan instead of a direct bilateral U.S. assistance. Mr. Firestone came to rely upon not only official U.S. government backing in the final phase of the Firestone loan negotiation, but also upon U.S. military presence and command of the LFF for the security of his investments and assets (Barclay to American Minister, *Foreign Relations of the U.S.*, 1925, II, p. 381, 385, 425, in Buell 1947, 30-31).

It will come as no surprise that as Firestone's concerns over labour shipments abroad intensified, so too did U.S. Government's consternation about the practice. On June 8, 1929, three years following the signing of the Firestone Agreement, the U.S. government formally expressed this concern to the GoL through a Diplomatic Note in which it was asserted that a labour system existed in Liberia which "seems hardly distinguishable from organized slave trade, and that in the enforcement of this system the services of the LFF [Liberian Frontier Force] …and influences of certain high government officials are constantly and systematically used" (Dunn et al. 2001, 210; Sundiata, p. 97). Unsurprisingly, the allegations contained in the U.S. Diplomatic Note were eventually born out by the results of an *International Commission of Inquiry* set up by the League of Nations to investigate them (Commission's *Report* 1930). What was surprising, and indeed highly suspect about this new U.S. stance, however, was the timing, and the sharp departure from previous U.S. attitude of indifference and tacit acceptance.

[106] These population estimates turned out to be erroneous once a full census was conducted in 1962, which showed population was only 1 million (RL, *Census of 1962*; Kraaij 1980, 237).

Given the extent of U.S. involvement in Liberian affairs (directly appointing the Financial Advisers, with various diplomatic and financial reporting channels dating back to the Loan of 1912) the centrality of labour export within GoL fiscal arrangement was clearly well known and appreciated by the U.S. government. In fact, in 1925, the last year of International Receivership under the 1812 loan, the U.S.-appointed General Receiver of Customs & Financial Advisor, Mr. Sidney De la Rue, offered a glowing assessment of the import and promise labour rent represented economically and fiscally, describing it as "one of the determining factors in the prosperity that has come to Liberia,… regardless of an apparent adverse balance of trade which has been shown from time to time by the import and export statistics" (De la Rue, *Receiver's Report*, 1924/25, 15-16).

Britain's long-standing desire to curtail labour shipments to Fernando Po (until then kept in abeyance by Liberian authorities) all but guaranteed its support of this U.S. stance. President King eventually succumbed to diplomatic pressures and requested a formal investigation into U.S. allegation of slavery. Following five months of travels throughout Liberia, public and in-camera interviews with indigenous communities, chiefs, and victims of the labour scheme, the committee set up by the League of Nations (*The International Commission of Inquiry Report*, 1930) did in fact uncovered wide-spread GoL complicity (League of Nations' *Report* 1930).[107] The Commission's *Report* stopped short of indicting GoL of official 'slavery' as defined by the *Slave Convention of 1926*. However, it accused the Republic, among other things, of employing forced labour for public and private uses; linked recruitment methods under the Fernando Po scheme to slavery because of the presence of 'compulsion'; and implicated President King, key government officials and their families in the use of compulsory labour on their private farms, and for overseas duties (League's *Report* 1930).[108] The Commission also revealed Firestone to be a beneficiary of forced labour, although it stopped short of indicting the company, stating it "consciously employed any but voluntary labour on its leased rubber plantation" (*Report* 1930, 83). Nether was any attention paid to

[107] Some authors, for example, Huberich (1947, 898, 899) and Gershoni (1985) have emphasized the role of Thomas J.R. Faulkner who, following his contested electoral loss to President King in 1927, embarked upon a wide-spread campaign (domestic and international) exposing slavery in Liberia, including a formal complaint to the *League of Nations*. I note however the wide-spread awareness of the scheme by European Powers and the United States far before this time. As a matter of fact, France, Britain, Germany, Belgium, Spain and Portugal all extracted labor from Liberia under similar circumstances (Huberich 1947); aside from the prevalence of *covée* and forced conscriptions within their own colonial territories. The *British Bank of West Africa* also managed most payments of Head Money tax, 'recruitment licenses', Consular and other GoL fees associated with the scheme beginning in late 1910s. All foreign diplomatic Missions in Monrovia similarly transmitted to their capitals reports of these developments, as evidence of widespread international knowledge. See also Azikiwe (1932; 1935).

[108] For example, Mr. Yancy was formerly Superintendent of Maryland Co. (1920-28), and in 1927, a Liberian 'recruiting agent' in Cape Palmas. Also implicated were Liberia's Postmaster General Samuel A. Ross (an influential leader from Sinoe County), Vice-President Allen Yancy (Jan. 1928 – 19300; E.G.W. King (brother of President King), and Clarence L. Simpson, who later served as first Vice President under President William V. S. Tubman (*League of Nation's Report*, 1930, p. 83-84; Buell 1947, 8; Parker to Barclay, Feb. 2, 1927, in DoS *Dispatches*, p. 214-215).

the role of Spanish and other colonial powers generating the demand to which Liberia responded. A consequence of the League's findings was the resignation of President King and Vice President Allen Yancy in 1930, the banning of pawning and other forms of indenture servitude, termination of the Fernando Po scheme, and a handful of other perfunctory reforms of hinterland administration, including the reorganization of previous five districts into three larger provinces – Western, Central and Eastern (King, *Proclamation*, Sept. 29, 1930 and RL *Act*, Dec. 19, 1930, in Brown 1941, 277-78; Barclay, *Annual Message*, 1931, 1832; Buell 1947, 12. See also Map 4, Appendix B).

The termination of labour export to Fernando Po in 1930 and elsewhere did not, however, end government-influenced labour recruitment and rent extraction. Its abolition, together with practices of pawning and domestic servitude, simply ensured that GoL would no longer directly extract labour rent through export. With GoL's exit occurred the effective migration of the practice from the public sphere permanently into the realm of markets where Firestone stood as the most decisive monopolistic consumer of 'waged labour'. Even so, GoL's labour policies mediated labour supply in Firestone's favour, subverting 'free' market equilibrium of demand and supply.[109] By 1935, only few hundred civil servants existed in government employ, along with a handful of employees of merchant firms (hired largely from the Americo-Liberian stock). Firestone along employed an estimated 19,000 in 1935 (Kraaij 1980, 221, 239). Clearly, U.S. insistence upon the end of labour shipments and pawning, while just and humane, served Firestone's utmost interest, thus making any claim of an uncoordinated action somewhat unconvincing. The end of labour export ensured Firestone would singularly profit from cheap labour now confined in Liberia. This fact is easily apparent upon a close examination of Firestone labour and recruitment policies. Kraaij (1980, 237-242) reports that under a system of GoL-facilitated recruitment involving *Interior Department* and Tribal Chiefs, Firestone paid its labourers only 1 shilling (US$ 0.24 daily, excluding food rations) between late 1920s and 1962 (p. 240). In comparison, this was 800 times less than the 'wages' paid to labourers previously shipped to Fernando Po at US$6 monthly (US$1.93 daily, excluding food ration) in previous Spanish agreements. By 1956, 75% of Firestone's 20,000 labour force was recruited and compensated under these conditions. In 1961, over 50% of rubber tappers, similarly (Kraaij 1980, 241, 242).[110] By 1975, Firestone's daily wage for unskilled rubber tapper did not exceed US$0.75

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[109] Compulsory labour duties related to public road works, porterage, and security services in the police and military, however, continued beyond 1930 (*Hinterland Regulation* 1936). A new arrangement emerged whereby, according to Kraaij (1980, 239-40), GoL facilitated recruitment of labourers for Firestone via the *Interior Department* and was compensated 1 US cent per a day per worker.

[110] Firestone also came to rely upon purchases from local rubber planters, most of whom were prominent Americo-Liberians and government officials. For example, an estimated 72.9% of Firestone's rubber purchases at its main Harbel plantation came from only 45 independent Liberian growers, most government officials. Only upon threats of the imminent publication of the report of an International Labour Organization (ILO) investigation in 1963 that GoL revised its recruitment practices benefiting Firestone and other private plantation owners (RL, *Act of the Legislature* 1963; Kraaij 1980, 241, 242).

(World Bank *Report* 1975), still far below compensations to labourers previously shipped to Fernando Po. Private Liberian planters, primarily influential Americo-Liberian society or government, fell far below Firestone's daily pay standards (Kraaij 1980, 1983).

More precise estimates of GoL revenue from labour shipments under the Fernando Po and other schemes are difficult to ascertain. This is partly due to patchy and insufficient surviving records. But it is also the product of the complexity of the scheme, 'clandestine methods of recruitment', and the involvement of multifarious formal and informal actors. There was also an element of dubious comingling between GoL finances and private operations involving members of various administrations and other influential Americo-Liberian families (Sundiata 1974, 1980). In 1914, a Spanish official averred that as much as $10,000 per year at the rate of $25 a head in labour rent could flow into GoL coffers under a single agreement (Bundy to Sec. of State, Feb. 9, 1919, *USNA, RG59, 882.504/6;* Salvador de Madariage, *Americans* 1930, in Sundiata 1980, 11, 25). The historical facts of the scheme suggest, however, far larger returns to GoL. Evidence retrieved from State Department records reveals, for example, that in March 1928, Secretary of State Edwin Barclay (nephew of Former President Arthur Barclay) on behalf of GoL, briefly terminated the GoL/Spanish Labour Agreement in an apparent effort to compel a renegotiated agreement in which the prospects of higher contract fees was all but certain. Under the renegotiated agreement, unexpired potions of all labour contracts would revert directly into the Dept. of State's coffers upon the death of a labourer (Barclay to Sevillano, Mar. 30, 1928; Barclay to Sivillano, Mar. 31, 1928, in DoS *Dispatches*, p. 239-241, 243). There is no clear evidence that these unexpired contract payments ultimately reached the families of the deceased for whom they were expressly intended.

One of the best indications of the significance and magnitude of labour and land rents is discernible in the general augmentation in GoL's Internal Revenues between the years 1904 and 1912. During this period, Head Honey', 'recruitment licenses', labour indemnities, and Hut Tax constituted important sources of both 'encumbered' and 'unencumbered' revenue under the Loan Agreement of 1906. Prior to 1906, poll tax, tax on land within 'civilized' county jurisdiction, a patent tax, education tax, and excessive fines upon indigenous inhabitants comprised the key items of Internal Revenue, aside from traditional custom duties (Brown 1941, 146). Payments of Head Money and related fees were captured under Internal Revenue up until the 1912. Augmentation in this revenue category is reflected in the relative growth of Internal Revenue shown in Table 2 (in Appendix A). These tabulations are the result of careful analyses of primary records, and corroboration with secondary data. They are intended as a general portrait of revenue trend, and therefore do not represent fiscal exactitude precisely because data are extremely difficult to compute, owing not only to scanty available records, but also discrepancies in fiscal and budgetary reporting periods, repeated reconciliation/adjustments to figures many years' after.

Fiscal records show an increase in Internal Revenue from an estimated US$12,000 in 1906 to US$43,000 in 1911, the last year of its collection by the Treasury. Thereafter in 1912, Internal Revenue fell to an estimated US$18,000, a decline which may be explained by the new terms of the 1912 Loan and Receivership agreement which placed Head Honey under the broad category of 'General Customs' to be collected by the Receivership, demonstrating its significance as a credible revenue source. Fiscal records also confirm significant increase in total revenue from US$295,647 in 1905, the first year of the Fernando Po Agreement, to over a million in 1929, the last year of the labour export scheme (See Table 2 in Appendix A).[111] In 1930, the year following official termination of labour export, GoL revenue plummeted dramatically by almost 20% to an estimated US$840,473. The depression in revenue observed between 1914 and 1918 can be explained by the start of World War I and Liberia's decision to declare war against Germany, its biggest trading partner at the time.[112] On the overall, revenue continued on an upward path, until the start of the Second World War in 1939, with only brief interruption due to the global recessions of the 1930s.

Conclusion

I have demonstrated through analysis of primary records, the inextricable link between sovereign rent and statehood. The historical evidence supports the view of sovereign rent as an integral element of state-making, state-building and survival, subject to specific historical domestic and international dynamics. The period between 1822 to 1945 was one in which rent extraction went from being an indispensable manifestation of statehood (via customs duties), to a necessity for state survival and the elaboration of institutional bureaucracy (via the imposition of land and labour rents, i.e. Hut Tax and Head Money), and the forced conscription and export of African labour abroad. But this was the same period that Liberia's statehood, born out of an American colonial project, came under immense imperial pressures from European interests such that a clear articulation of sovereign rent in Liberia is rendered inexplicable without a full understanding of changing international political economy. If the dynamic practice of rent extraction served the purposes of state-making, state-building and survival, as I argue in this thesis, it was indeed partly in reaction to the changing nature of the prevailing international system. In this sense, the history of state rentierism in Liberia can also

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[111] Despite formal termination of labour shipments in 1930, there is evidence that Head Money survived the scandal, and remained a source of revenue until late 1960s, albeit marginal (Planning & Econ. Affairs, 1968, 7-GoL Public Sector Accounts; Steadman, 1952, p. C-17, C-18; Clower et al., 79). By the 50s and 60s, it more likely resulted from marine labour services provided on international vessels and in mines across British West African colonies. This colonial tax was finally repealed in 1971 (*Act of the Legislature*, Aug. 1971)

[112] In 1906, for example, German firms and merchants in Liberia held $132,728.57 of a total domestic debt of US$263,687.87 (Barclay *AM*, Dec. 11, 1906 in Dunn 2011, 446). Liberian/German trade was also significant. In 1908, out of the reported total of 347 foreign vessels docking in Liberian ports, 233 were German. Only 89 were British (Barclay, *AM*, Dec. 15, 1908, in Dunn, 470).

be read as the history of rentierism in Africa, viz-a-vis the changing international political economy, with only slight variations.

With the end of World War II in 1945 and the start of an embedded liberal order (Ruggie 1982), new opportunities for sovereign rent extraction emerged domestically and internationally. Liberia would exploit its close ties with the United States and its newfound status as a resource-endowed nation, to extract new forms of rents. The period between 1945 and 1971 is particularly relevant in this respect. While old methods of rent extraction such as Hut Tax and Head Money continued into the late 60s and 70s, rent revenue related to the export of natural rubber and iron ore, as well as generous U.S. and European military and economic largesse, began to assume far greater significance.[113] Despite their sources, these rents, as in times past, were linked closely to the new post-war imperatives of state-building and nation-building, a fact which continues to be underappreciated in the discourse of the Rentier State in Africa. With the emergence of post-WWII state rentierism, did Liberia succumb to the maladies popularly ascribed to the so-called African Rentier State, that of (a) developmental impairments; (b) social waste, prebendalism, corruption and fiscal profligacy; (c) stifling of democratic institutions and civil society; and finally, (d) conflicts and civil wars. The chapter that follows also retrieves primary data from this period to assess the above four key postulates of the Rentier State theory in the immediate post-WWII period – the Tubman Era, 1944 – 1971.

[113] Once the Hut Tax began to be collected with other taxes (e.g. Dev. Tax and Education Tax), its share gradually decreased. For example, in 1972, Hut Tax was only $2.00, while Development Tax and Education Tax stood at $4.00 and $10.00 respectively (Massaquoi 1972).

Chapter 5: The Tubman Era – A New Phase of Sovereign Rent

> "Our raw material and resources require exploitation, advertisement and large-scale exchange. The way is open to us to take our legitimate place and play an important part in the industrialization of West Africa on the basis of maximum development and exploitation of our agricultural [and mineral] resources." – William V. S. Tubman, *First Inaugural Address* Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu (1980, 319).

> "In three of my previous *Annual Messages* to you, I employed the rhetorical figure of Daniel Webster when he said 'Smite the rock of the natural resources so that abundant streams of revenue will gush forth', and I repeat the same now with emphasis." – William V. S. Tubman, *Annual Message* Nov. 26, 1952, in Dunn 2011, 1154.

Introduction

Through analyses of four historical episodes, I have shown in the preceding chapter the diverse forms, uses and functions of state rent, how its extraction was inextricably linked to the processes of state formation and sustenance throughout the 19th and early 20th Centuries. These episodes were the *Little Ben Affairs of 1845*, the *Foreign Debt Crisis of 1870, The Barclay Plan of 1904,* and the *Fernando Po Labour Crisis of 1930*. Of the four episodes, the *Barclay Plan of 1904* represents the most lucid illustration of how the pursuit of state rent impacted the very *nature, rapidity and trajectory* of state transformation in the early 1900s.

The goal of this chapter is to advance the analysis of sovereign rent and state transformation into the period immediately following World War II, when new opportunities of sovereign rent emerged. I argue that these new forms and sources of rent offered the Administration of President William V.S. Tubman a rare and unparalleled opportunity for more effective nation-building and state-building unseen in Liberia's evolution. The objects of nation-building and state-building in Liberia attained great urgency within the of context of anti-colonial agitations sweeping across the Africa. Nation-building and state-building, therefore, emerge as the central themes of this period with which President Tubman remained seized throughout his administration.

But the opportunities and pitfalls of these post-war postcolonial imperatives did not rest entirely with unfolding socio-political and economic dynamics within Liberia. They owed their structuring also to more decisive political and economic forces playing out within the international system in terms of global polarization (i.e. East vs West), U.S. military and economic dominance, the new embedded liberal order, and the new regime for trade and money which served it. Rutazibwa and Shilliam (2018, 1) have argued that given the mutually reinforcing impacts of colonialism, its legacies, and global politics, global politics can be critically appraised as postcolonial politics", and vice versa. Thus, in order to understand and more sensibly grasp the central question of sovereign rent and state-transformation in the post-WWII era, it will be important first to clearly comprehend global level dynamics and their impacts on state-rentierism at the domestic level.

Accordingly, the chapter is organized in three (3) main sections. *First*, a *macro-level* analysis is undertaken of the global and continental contexts, as well as the central issues of state rentierism raised within the framework of post-war embedded liberalism, and the question of where and how postcolonial African states fit within it. *Second*, at the domestic level, the key forms and operationalization of sovereign rent are examined in terms of their sources and trends. In this regard, I draw extensively upon primary archival records of the Government of Liberia. *Third*, and finally, an analysis is undertaken of the centrality of sovereign rent within dynamic post-colonial processes of nation-building and state-building. The chapter concludes with important implications for the discourse of the rentier state in Africa in the immediate aftermath of WWII.

SECTION ONE: GLOBAL CONTEXT

Post-WWII and the Rise of 'Embedded Liberalism'

In a highly influential article, Ruggie (1982) describes the emergence of a new international liberal order following the end of the Second World War (WWII). This new international order was not radically unlike its pre-war counterpart, but it differed significantly in the underlying logic of political and economic order, and the various regimes which serve them. One of Ruggie's main arguments was that unlike the pre-WWI, Inter-War and WWII liberal orthodox periods which had their roots in *laissez faire* economics and the pre-eminence of "market rationality", the new post-WWII liberal economic order was essentially a return to Polanyi's (1944) pre-19th Century world in which markets were "embedded" within societies, and thus were more accommodating to deliberate state actions in the interest of the larger community. Ruggie termed this new world order "embedded liberalism", to be led primarily by the United States, the new global hegemon. Liberalism would be viewed as 'embedded' because economic activities, and indeed markets, would once again be brought within the assertive ambit of the state "in an attempt to re-impose broader and more direct social controls over market forces" for the good of society (1982, 387).

At the international level, Ruggie was concerned primarily with "international economic regimes, and by extension, the formation and transformation of international regimes in general" (1982, 381-82). How did regimes for money and trade come to reflect and impact the evolution of the international economic order following World War II, he asked (p. 379). The dominant liberal order and its regimes for money and trade which were previously thought to owe their strength and persistence to the capacities (both militarily and economic) of the dominant hegemon (Keohane 1980), were in fact being transformed. This transformation was not merely as a consequence of declining hegemonic power whose expected result was the rise of mercantilist arrangements (Ruggie 1982, 381); but instead as a result of shifting state-society relations (especially in Europe) and the rise of various international actors whose commitment to order and persistence could be assured "as long as the purpose is held constant" (ibid, p. 384). In contrast to orthodox liberalism whose order was perceived as having its base within ideas of "hegemonic stability" (Keohane 1980), Ruggie contended that embedded liberalism would be "rules-based" and "norms-based" instead (ibid., 384).

The implications for the international regimes for trade and money were that orthodox principles of "market rationality", exchange international automaticity, and free movement of capital were to be rejected partially or totally in favour of greater state control and multilateral decision-making. This would take place through mechanisms such as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and other international legal frameworks. Furthermore, free exchange was to be achieved through the abolition of all forms of exchange controls and restrictions on current transactions. Stable monetary exchanges would attain their security through the maintenance of official par values, expressed in terms of gold (Ruggie 1982, 395). The availability of short term assistance to financial payments deficits on current accounts would also be assured through multilateralism (i.e. IBRD, IMF), as well as the ability to change exchange rates with Funds concurrence, and governments' ability to impose capital controls through Central Banks (p. 395).

It was at the domestic level that the fusion of power and "legitimate social purpose" held its greatest meaning and, according to Ruggie, could be expected to first manifest itself. In arguing this point, Ruggie had in mind Polanyi's (1944) seminal discussion in *The Great Transformation.* In this work, Polanyi drew careful distinctions between "embedded" and "dis-embedded", arguing that "embedded" economic orders were "merely a function of the society in which [they] were contained." Thus, Polanyi concluded quite strikingly that "Nineteenth century society, in which economic activity was isolated and imputed to a distinctive economic motive, was, indeed, a singular departure" of our time (p. 71). This departure was accompanied by fundamental rearrangements in the relationships between domestic political authority and economic processes, and real shifts in state-society relations, "by redefining the legitimate social purposes in pursuit of which state power could be expected to be employed in the domestic economy" (Ruggie 1982, 386). In the devastating aftermath of WWII in Europe, and crippling recessions in the United States, these shifting state-society relations and state actions for "legitimate social purposes" came to be reflected in the desire by many western nations for full employment, increased domestic production, economic growth and stability (e.g. Maier 1977, Cox 1977). The emergence of the welfare state in Europe and in the U.S., the launch of the *New Deal* by President F.D. Roosevelt and 'full employment' laws which sought to guarantee for all Americans basic welfare and social security, were only examples of this massive state intrusion into markets for "just social causes" (Krauss 1978).

Ruggie's exclusive focus on the West, however, left unanswered important questions about precisely how embedded liberalism would unfold within the world beyond Europe and America – i.e. the Global South, particularly Africa. In this regard, Helleiner's (2005) work offers an important corrective to Ruggie's discussion, and thus a valuable prism through which we may perceive the unfolding post-WWII embedded liberalism in the South and how this shaped political economic processes unfolding in Liberia.

"The Southern Side of Embedded Liberalism"

The post-1945 colonial character of much of the Global South implied that significant differences would exist between embedded liberalism's unfolding between the two global spheres. By 1945, the defining character of the Global South, particularly Africa, was that of European colonialism. Europe (and to a large extent the U.S. in Liberia)[114] had already partitioned the continent into colonial spaces, mandated territories, and protectorates, placing their governments in them. The most significant factor influencing post-WWII transformations on the continent, therefore, was to be found in African societies' response to colonialism, and the attending transitions to postcolonial milieus.[115] Whereas in the West emphasis continued to be placed upon reconstruction and the reorganization of the global political and economic orders, in Africa, the crucial task of re-configuring state-society relations had only just begun. And it would prove more daunting precisely because it involved the unpalatable act of unshackling Europe's colonial strangleholds from African societies.

Despite divergent national agendas, the central goals of embedded liberalism in the Global South unfolded not unlike those of the West. The presence of the state in postcolonial African economies and markets was everywhere apparent – nationalized mines, government agricultural

[114] In 1910, U.S. Secretary of State, Elihu Roots, was convinced and expressed emphatically that Liberia was indeed 'an American colony'. See *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1910, 700, cited in Buell (1928, 7884).

[115] By 1945, only Liberia and Abyssinia (i.e. Ethiopia) were independent states. Haiti was the only other independent 'Black republic' in the world. In 1960 alone, some 15 African nations gained independence from European colonial administrations.

cooperatives, state-run airlines, public utilities, free education, transportation, etc. (Mbembe 2001; Young 1994). Upon independence, many African states also rejected orthodox liberal approach to trade and monetary policies. In place of currency boards and the gold standard, they introduced capital controls, more flexible exchange rates, and politically controlled national or central banks designed to serve "nationalist" goals (Triffin 1946, 25; 1947, 16, 112-4; Helleiner 2005, 0). Regarding international trade, especially in crucial primary commodities, many resorted to multilateral negotiations and decision-making through UNCTAD and GATT as a means of ensuring greater shares of proceeds from commodity rents. An environment of permissive state presence in economies and markets occurred, in part, as a display of sovereignty and nationalist fervour, free of colonial influences. But also as a consequence of significant U.S. government support. In furthering embedded liberal policies, U.S. economic advisers acknowledged the geopolitical wisdom of tacit U.S. alignment with the growing power of Southern economic nationalism within the post-war context (Helleiner 2005).

Not unlike the West, postcolonial African states also desired and sought full employment, increased domestic production, economic stability and growth. It may be argued that many advocated for these even more so then in the West, within the context of socialist influences. Many also launched various forms of social security and welfare programs (Mbembe 2001, Young 1994). But most importantly, they sought first and foremost to transform state-society relations instituted under colonialism, with varying success. But such a task was not an easy one. But perhaps the greatest obstacle standing in the way of this renegotiated state-society relations was not only in Europe's reticence for total colonial exit, but also the diverse heterogeneity of African societies themselves – the intense ethnic, tribal, and religious pluralities which were deliberately held apart under colonialism. Thus, in postcolonial Africa, 'legitimate social purpose' would include not only economic goals, but also objects of inter-ethnic, inter-tribal, and inter-religious consensus-making and social cohesion, which are designed to overcome intense ethnic heterogeneities, and to advanced the imperatives of nation-building and state-building. Also crucial were important social programs meant to combat poverty and improve standards of living for the African citizens. Despite Liberia's long political existence, the processes of nation-building (i.e. the fusing together of its diverse peoples and polities into a cohesive whole) and state-building (i.e. the firm consolidation and crystallization of the elements of statehood, domestically and internationally) had not fully evolved by the end of WWII. For many African societies, including Liberia, these processes were, therefore, only just beginning.

In Liberia, President Tubman reiterated this overarching national agenda when following the war, he admonished his compatriots to evolve "a new point of view and a new outlook" (*AM*, Jan. 3, 1944) in which must be pursued "a policy of unification and agglutination, so that the whole body of the people of the nation may be integrated and fused together in the common patriotic endeavour of preserving, developing and defending the sacred heritage of all, vouchsafed into us by God" (*IA*, Jan. 7, 1945, in Guannu 1980, 331-32). In this endeavour, Tubman insisted that government must play a pivotal role in helping "to evolve a better standard of living and to ensure the happiness, peace, and security of the people in whatever political or economic system obtains in the nation" (*IA* Jan. 6, 1964, in Guannu 1980, 364). While offering assurances for the protection of private property and free enterprise, he declared his unequivocal commitment to embedded liberal principles in which the state held an important stake:

> [T]he socialist governments, reserving for themselves the factor of production, provide all trainings and other facilities for their people, assuming the dual responsibility of of government and management of labor. To attain this end in a free enterprise system such as ours, where the overwhelming portion of the ownership of the factors of production is in private hands, it is the obligation of private enterprise and business to assume this responsibility and Government will require management to provide the facilities implied with such ownership to supplement and complement those provided by Government. – Tubman, *Annual Message*, Jan. 6, 1964, in Guannu (1980, 364)

In very credible ways, President Tubman made real these expectations by requiring concessionaires and major private firms, including Firestone and mining concessionaires, to finance or directly provide free or subsidized health services, housing and basic education to workers and their families. In some instances, food supplements were also required for workers (e.g. RL *Acts* and *Concession Agreements,* Sept. 28, 1954, May. 4, 1960, Dec. 5, 1947, Mar. 30, 1953). In pursuit of these "just social causes", therefore, economic things would, as Mbembe (2001) argues, "become social and political things."

The broad consensus regarding the underlying ideals of embedded liberalism on the 'Southern side' did not mean that all post-colonial African states pursued the same path. When it came to the regimes for money and trade, they diverged on the course to take. Their various courses of action were determined, to a certain extent, by the lingering residues of ex-colonial influences. Some states, such as Ghana (an ex-British colony) and Guinea (ex-French), initially pursued radical paths of total and permanent break with their ex-colonial masters. Many former British colonies including Ghana, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Gambia, pursued "embedded liberal" and "nationalist" monetary ideas which saw the replacement of colonial currency boards with new national central banks and currencies, although many functioned initially in much the same orthodox ways (Helleiner, 11). The experience of ex-French colonies, including many in West Africa, was, however, markedly different. These countries, including Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad and Congo, rejected the idea of creating national currencies and central banks following independence, and instead maintained regional colonial currency boards which precluded national discretionary monetary management almost entirely (Helleiner 2005, 0, 15).[116]

In Liberia, a different scenario of a more historical origin unfolded. Similarities existed between Liberia's approach and those of ex-French colonies. And it is more likely the Liberian experience offered 'lessons' from which ex-French colonies drew, given Liberia's more historic experience in independent governance. We recall that following the entry into Liberia of Firestone in 1926, and U.S. wartime engagements, the GoL was persuaded to adopted the U.S. dollar as its national currency in 1943 (Barclay *AM,* Dec. 28, 1943; Gardner 2014). The American "money doctor" Edwin Kemmerer, known most famously for promoting monetary reforms along classical liberal economic lines across Latin America and other parts of the Global South (Rosenberg 1985, Drake 1989), was dispatched to Liberia in 1939 or immediately prior, on a mission to help finalize Liberia's transition from the British sterling to the U.S. dollar; and in so doing integrate Liberia within U.S. monetary orbit (Kemmerer 1939). Since its official introduction in 1943, and until the 1970s, the U.S. dollar remained Liberia's national currency. Liberia established no Central Bank. Upon Tubman's ascendency in 1944, he solidified this policy of dollarization under his "Open Door Policy" out of concerns for currency and exchange rate stability, as well as inflation (*AM*, Dec. 23, 1963, In Dunn 2011, 1329). In other words, when it came to the particular issue of monetary policy, Liberia went against the grains of embedded liberal principles, choosing to reject the establishment of a Central Bank and associated capital controls. The evidence from the period suggests, however, that President Tubman eventually questioned the efficacy and continued wisdom of the policy, as he began to consider more seriously the idea of a Central Bank later in the administration (*AM* Nov. 30, 1969, in Dunn, 1388). The regime for trade, on the other hand, continued to be driven by broad tendencies of embedded liberalism (Tubman *AM*, Nov. 16, 1965 in Dunn 2011, 1346).

In addition to, or as a corollary to embedded liberalism, U.S. political, economic and financial interests in post-WWII Liberia came to be guided by a peculiar strand of American social liberalism. It was the ideology of "The New American Century" first articulated by Henry Luce in the 1941 *Life* magazine (Carlisle 1980). Not unlike its 19th Century vision of commercial expansion articulated in language of 1930s social liberalism, the "New American Century" as an ideology, emphasized the need for American financing of social and economic advances in developing nations. The purposes of the ideology were (a) to generate markets for American products and preserve a world in which the American free enterprise system would flourish; (b) encourage an American-business-led attack on poverty, while championing social causes in developing nations; and (c) to prevent world-domination by Fascist- or Soviet-planned economies through consciously exporting technology, capital, food, and know-how abroad (p. 175-76).

[116] The central African CFA franc zone included Cameroons, Central African Republic, Chad, Congo and Gabon, while the members of the west African CFA franc zone in the early years after independence were Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, and Upper Volta (as well as Togo after 1963).

Many corporate advocates of the 'New American Century' were themselves veterans of U.S. wartime economies and governments, coming particularly from the Military, Defence, and State Departments. These officials therefore perceived an opportunity to continue the fight against Fascist- or Soviet-planned economies, and thus safeguard the world for corporate capitalism (Carlisle 1980; Bleecher 'undated'). Essentially, these ex-government and corporate leaders sought to channel U.S. financial capital, business resources, and government aid towards economic development in former colonial regimes, including Liberia (Ibid). The establishment of Liberia's Merchant Marine Program in 1949 by former U.S. Secretary of State Edward Stettinus, and the formation of the Liberian Mining Company in iron ore mining by Col. Landsdell Christie (1903-1965), are only two notable examples of this peculiar post-WWII dynamic. I shall elaborate subsequently.

There is another important aspect of post-WWII embedded liberalism and ideas of 'legitimate social purpose' which requires further attention. It was the meaning and purpose of 'economic development' in the Global South. What did development mean? We recall that this moment represented the birth of 'economic development' as a distinct academic and professional discipline. President Tubman would himself pondered this very question when it came to Liberia. In 1963 he asked: "What is the purpose of this great effort to develop our country" (*AM* Dec. 23, 1963, in Dunn, 1329-30). Loaded with notions of progress, advancement and 'modernization', the term 'economic development' came to define and specify the demarcating lines between so-called "advanced" and 'developed' nations, from those who were "backward", "traditional" and "underdeveloped". By the 1950s and 60s, the term had come under immense liberal influence by scholars such as Rostow (1960) and Galbraith (1958, 1962). Both men held senior advisory positions in various U.S. war-time governments. By early 1960, Rostow had already advanced his "Five Stages of Growth" model in which he argued that societies moved along a linear growth and development path. According to Rostow, the path began with "traditional society", and progresses to pre-conditions to "take-off", to a phase of take-off, then towards a drive to "maturity", and into an age of high mass consumption. Two years later, Galbraith (1962) built upon Rostow's (1960) teleological approach to economic development, writing that countries "move along the line representing various stages of development" (Galbraith 1962, 15). Galbraith (1962) was especially pedantic about the idea of "sequencing" in development, vehemently arguing that introducing capital, technology or certain western organizations in "backward" societies at the wrong time and position within the development teleology, could be even more harmful to such societies.

It turned out that both Rostow (1960) and Galbraith (1962) belonged to the "modernization" school of thought, a perspective of socio-political and economic development which viewed economic development as a corollary of so-called 'modernity'. In Europe and the West, it was believed that economic development as an element of national progress, had already, in large part, been achieved. All that was needed for so-called "underdeveloped" and "Third World" societies of the world, was to model themselves after the West, aspiring to a 'modern' state of Western capitalism and liberal ideals. The West, the story went, stood poised at eradicating poverty and achieving great heights in social security through various welfare programs. It was 'The Rest' of the world, therefore, which needed to 'catch up', and thus would benefit immensely from the transfer of crucial elements of development from the West, namely, capital (and resources), technology and organization (Galbraith 1962, 15). This was, in fact, the moment when 'international development' was launched both as an academic field and an international agenda for so-called 'advanced' nations of the West. Thus, development in "backward" or "underdeveloped" regions of the world, including in Liberia, came to be defined by the extent to which African and non-Western societies could approximate western capitalist and liberal accomplishments. The element of "civilization" – that peculiarly colonial ideology which in Liberia carried deep sociocultural and political designations despite lacking substance elsewhere (Brown 1982) – formed a key feature of the idea of 'development'. Thus, 'modernization theory', a shared intellectual cradle for both Rostow (1960) and Galbraith (1962), would greatly influence the thinking of the Northwestern University team of economists contracted to survey Liberia's economy in 1962.[117] Though deeply flawed, their highly influential "growth without development" thesis became rooted in Modernization Theory (Clower et. al 1966).

Within the context of embedded liberalism and 'the New American Century', "just social causes" were therefore simultaneously objects and justifications for development in Liberia. President Tubman gave a sense of such objectives in his response to the question regarding the purpose of development in Liberia. He responded:

> The answer to this is simple. By developing our country, we shall provide the resources to enable us to abolish poverty and illiteracy wherever they exist, to eliminate ill health and malnutrition, to provide shelter for all, and to ensure that our children shall go forward into a new world with equal opportunities available for them all. – *AM*, Dec. 23, 1963, in Dunn 2011, 1329-30.

Whatever its meaning, it was clear that in so far as economic, financial and capital advancement comprised important facets of development in Liberia, these were to be bound together with major social and political projects as President Tubman thrived to strike a balance. With this postwar embedded liberal context in mind, and its 'Southern side' clearly elaborated, especially in Africa, I wish to now turn attention to the empirical scenario in Liberia. The focus here is to discern evidence regarding the forms, sources, and operationalization of rent throughout this post-war era (i.e. Tubman Era); as well as their relationships to the dynamic processes of postcolonial nation-building and state-building. But first, it is important to say something about arguably the most

[117] In both the Northwestern Team's *Summary Report* (1963) and book (1966), it cites Galbraith at least trice as the intellectual guide on its thinking about development in 'backward' societies.

influential, decisive, and indeed controversial political actor of the period - William V. S. Tubman himself.

William Vacanarat Shadrach Tubman – A Man and an Era

The immediate post-WWII period (1944/5-1971) is well known in Liberia as the Tubman Era for two main reasons. First, President William V.S. Tubman enjoyed the longest marriage with the Office of Chief Executive, having served 27 years as president until his death on June 23, 1971 in a London clinic. Second and more important, President Tubman emerges as arguably the greatest and most decisive political actor of his time, having etched most permanently his personal and peculiar imprimatur on the Liberian state, society, politics, and economy in ways which have survived till today. It is not an overstatement to describe him as the most consequential president of 'modern' Liberia.

Born on November 29, 1895 in Harper City, south-eastern Maryland County to Afro-American immigrant parents from Georgia,[118] the young William was raised under firm parental guidance within conservative Methodist code of morality and personal conduct. As was common among settler families, Christianity and faith functioned as cornerstones of Tubman's household, and later his worldview. Typical of most Americo-Liberian professionals, young William was formally educated in a Methodist school, acquiring an equivalent high school level education 1913. He subsequently studied law through apprenticeship, and was later admitted to the Maryland County Bar Association. Tubman entered public service (i.e. government) early in his life, and rose rapidly through its ranks. This was first as a soldier (in 1915), later a recorder in the Monthly and Probate Court of Harper City (in 1916); an Internal Revenue Collector and later County Attorney General (in 1919). At the young of age 28 years, he was elected Senator of Maryland County (in 1923), a seat he resigned later in 1931due to controversies regarding his relationship with the discredited former Vice President, Allen Yancy, over the Fernando Po labour crisis. Determined to return to county and national politics, Tubman re-contested and won back his senate seat in 1934. About three years later, he was appointed Associate Justices of the Supreme Court (in 1937).

By the early 1940s, as President Edwin Barclay and the leadership of the True Whig Party (TWP) pondered over Barclay's successor in light of constitutional term limits on the presidency, Justice Tubman emerged as a serious contender and Barclay's preferred successor. This was despite strong opposition from the Monrovia-based TWP's hierarchy who viewed Tubman as 'an outsider', having hailed from Maryland, a deep south-eastern county, and being untethered to any powerful

[118] Tubman's mother, Elizabeth Barnes, was an emigrant to Liberia from the U.S. State of Georgia in 1871. His father, Alexander Tubman, was born to emigrant parents in Harper, Maryland Co. See Branks-Henries (1963, 1967) and Smith (1967, 1971).

Americo-Liberian family networks in Monrovia. Tubman struggled to overcome this burden of being 'an outsider'. However, he soon found ways to convert it into political capital for himself, as he and his supporters began to strongly advocate that the time had come for a geo-political balance in national leadership, and a move away from the country's century-old Monrovia-centric governance. Historians believe that without Barclay's pivotal support, Tubman was unlikely to win TWP's Standard Bearership, or prevail in the General Elections of 1943 as President (Dunn 1992; Wreh 1976; Smith 1967, 1971; Banks-Henries 1963, 1967).

The legacy of President William V. S. Tubman appears to hinge upon two influential policies of his administration, and the rapid social, political and economic transformations each policy engendered. They were the *Open Door Policy* and the *National Unification and Integration Policy*. Promulgated in 1945, the Open Door policy encapsulated Tubman's liberal approach to economic development. By metaphorically 'opening the doors' of the economy to foreign direct capital investment, technology and expatriate knowledge, Tubman hoped to make permanent and sustainable Liberia's partnership with Western financial capital in the development of commercial agriculture and Liberia natural resources, mainly iron ore, timber, gold and diamonds. He declared in his first *Inaugural Address* in 1944,

> We shall encourage the investment of foreign capital in the development of the resources of our country, preferably on a partnership basis, and we shall accord to investors the necessary protection and fairness of treatment. – *Inaugural Address*, Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu (1980, 321).

He repeatedly invoked the words of former U.S. Secretary of State Daniel Webster who remarked, "Smite the rock of the natural resources so that abundant streams of revenue will gush forth" (*AM,* Nov. 26, 1952, Dunn 2011, 1154). By inviting foreign capital, the Open Door Policy represented amongst the most generous tax waivers and import exemptions incentives to be found anywhere in the region.[119] President Tubman insisted "capital [must] not be shackled with too many restrictions or with the danger or fear of nationalization"(ibid). Thus, his administration formulated policies that sought to ensure the freedom of "private business and private property,"[120] and a "firm commitment to the maintenance of a sound currency and freedom from currency restrictions (*5th IA*, Jan. 6, 1964, in Guannu, 1980, 364). Such assurances were clearly designed to incentivize foreign investment, while assuaging fears among foreign private interests that Liberia could follow the path of some of its neighbours in nationalizing key national assets and industries. He insisted, Liberia must

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[119] Tubman's critics have accused his liberal incentives under the Open Door Policy as a giveaway of Liberia's wealth. There is some truth to this clear in terms of how most such exemptions, tax breaks and waivers represented in lost revenue to GoL.

[120] Clearly to assuage fears of among foreign interest regarding ongoing nationalizations in other newly independent African states.

"encourage foreign investment without fear of confiscation, arbitrary and harsh laws or regulations that tend to deprive the investor of just and fair share of profit derived from his investment" (*IA* 1969, in Guannu 1980, 376). These views, and the legislative and fiscal foundations of the Open Door Policy itself, seemed consistent with the liberal orthodox view advocated by U.S. 'money doctors', including Kemmerer (Rosenberg 1985; Drake 1989; Kemmerer 1943).[121]

As with Firestone in 1926, the tax and profit-sharing incentives under Tubman's Open Door Policy proved extremely generous. Many years of zero tax rates on both profits, dividends, and employee incomes, went hand in hand with import and export exemptions. However, unlike the Firestone's deal in which fear of annexation played a pivotal role in GoL's concessions to Mr. Harvey Firestone and the U.S. Government, the GoL under Tubman enjoyed far greater leverage in concession negotiations. Under Tubman, Liberia maintained no central bank and no national currency other than the U.S. dollar. There is some evidence of a plan by the Administration to purchase the Bank of Monrovia (a subsidiary of Firestone Company which functioned as government's bank) and "convert it into the National Bank of Liberia", to be activated January 1, 1945 (*AM*, 1945, in Dunn 2011, 1078). Exactly why this plan failed to materialized remains a mystery. But whatever the underlying cause, it is reasonable to suggest that Tubman's final course of action received the endorsement, if not having been advocated by, U.S. economic advisors.

There is little difficulty discerning the underlying considerations of Tubman's Open Door Policy. As a matter of fact, the administration's desire for foreign capital investments, as well as Tubman's liberal tax policies, tied in neatly with Western capitalist interests in strategic commodities and associated profits (e.g. McLaughlin 1966). Furthermore, GoL's fiscal conundrum and its indebtedness to Firestone precluded any other alternative short of a large foreign capital investment once Firestone's debt was retired. Thus, Tubman's Open Door Policy appeared consistent with Liberia's capitalist economy and its longstanding 'Open Door' approach to development, albeit at different levels and historical moment. It is, however, the underlying motives of Tubman's Unification and Integration Policy that has generated more controversies.

At least two motivating factors are provided in the literature. The *first* has been proffered mainly by critics of President Tubman and Americo-Liberian rule. For example, Sawyer (1992, 283), Liebenow (1962, 1969, 1987), and Dalton (1965) criticize the Unification Policy as a powerful, yet symbolic, element of Tubman's Machiavellian politics. Sawyer (1992, 283) argues that its purpose was merely "to mollify expectations [of "liberation and self-determination"] without unduly unsettling the structure of social relations" in Liberia. He continued,

[121] The concept of an 'Open Door' was itself not new, and trace its roots to the rounding of Liberia in early 19 Century. Liberian leaders including Joseph J. Roberts, Edwin J. Roye, and Arthur Barclay.

> Thus by promoting unification through policies of limited inclusion and symbolic gestures, Tubman reduced suspicion, created a new atmosphere in the hinterland and, at the same time created a system of control based on personal loyalty, graft, threats, and use of force…Thus the unification policy was at once a domestic response to African nationalism and international criticism as well as an instrument of personal control. – Sawyer (1992, 283).

Dalton (1965, 585) also writes that "in so far as there can be said to exist any unification or assimilation policy at all, it consists of transmogrifying tribal people into Americo-Liberians, one at a time, so to speak. There is no person in high office whose actions can be judged as representing the special interests of the tribes." Liebenow (1987), after been criticized in some quarters for a less than circumspect critique of governance in Liberia in his work 1969 book *Liberia: The Evolution of Privilege*,[122] is more cautious than Sawyer (1992) and Dalton (1965). Liebenow (1987) later writes:

> The roots of Tubman's unification program were various, and it would be unfair to attribute the change solely to a desire on the part of the Americo-Liberian elite to insolate itself from the wave of nationalism undermining alien rule in parts of Africa. – Liebenow (1987, 67-68).

Liebenow identifies other important factors, including transformations in education, increased familial ties between settlers' descendants and tribal people. There was also increased economic opportunities which exposed many Liberians to developments beyond their borders; the presence in Liberia of large numbers of African American soldiers, and improved connectivity between counties and hinterland inhabitants. He concluded, however, that these changes "were too little too late" to have averted the violent overthrow of Americo-Liberian rule in 1980 (p. 68-70).[123]

Banks-Henries (1963, 1967, 1969) and Roberts Smith (1967, 1969, 1971) offer a *second* possible motive undergirding Tubman's Unification & Integration Policies, adopting a biographical approach. Banks-Henries emphasizes Tubman's early life and up-bringing, having lived in close social proximity with Liberia's south-eastern Grebos and Krus of Maryland County. And there is some evidence that unification weighed on his mind prior to his ascendency as president.[124] She reports that in a bloody conflict between the Liberian state and ethnic Grebos and Krus in which Tubman's beloved uncle was killed, and in his father almost murdered had not a local Kruman saved his life, the young William was admonished by his father "to seek peace with the natives" who at the

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[122] For some critical reviews of Liebenow (1969) work, see Martin (1970, 240-43), Kurtz (1970, 1488-89),

[123] This critique is also made Marxian scholars such as Kieh (2008) and Mayson & Sawyer (1979). These scholars emphasize the co-optation and transformation of tribal leaders as elements of a new comprador class (through government salaries, access to vast public lands, and the power to recommend persons into the Hinterland Administrators) in the grand exploitation of Liberia's wealth by Western capital married to Americo-Liberian political leadership.

[124] As a candidate for the presidency, Tubman stressed the need for "oneness" as a people, and committed that when elected, "to strive with all our might to agglutinate and unify our populations…in devotion to one authority, to their only native land, Liberia" (Tubman, *Outline of Policies*, 1943, Sec. 3 and 4)

time numbered "some twenty of more indigenous tribes" (Banks-Henries 1967).[125] Smith (1971, 1) also emphasizes Tubman's personal characteristics in an attempt to pry open a window into his worldview, and to suggest a key determinant of his approach to political leadership in general, and the Unification Policy, in particular. Having worked in GoL and personally interviewed Tubman on numerous occations,[126] Smith writes that "Tubman was not a myth, only a man". He uses such language such as "passionate", "extraordinary", visionary", "courageous", "soundness of judgment", "kind", "a man of the people", having "almost a diabolical sense of timing" as a leader (Smith 1971, 22-23). In so doing, Smith seeks to emphasize Tubman's humanity and the reality of his agency as a social actor, an obvious repudiation of the anthropomorphism prevalent in discourses of the state and political power.[127] But far more illuminating then any other characterization of Tubman is Smith's description of the man as a consummate pragmatist. Drawing upon Tubman's own utterances, Smith writes:

> His thoughts were always running in terms of situation rather then principles. When man moves from the area of aspirations and principles into the realm of action, he must be prepared to give grounds to other men and accept something less then he started out to seek. Whether it be a matter of conflicting principles, [or] a claim to a share of the good things in life, if men are to live together in a reasonable state of harmony, there must be a good deal of give-and-take in their daily relations with one another…Indeed, his idea of government was that a leader must demonstrate courage through his acceptance of compromise, through his advocacy of reconciliation, through his willingness to replace conflict with cooperation. That a leader who goes down to defeat in vain defence of a simple principle will not be on hand to fight for that or any other principle in the future… On great occasions, he was always prepared to meet a challenge [with] courage, whatever may be the sacrifices he faced if he followed his conscience. All this explains the interior strain between Tubman's sense of human limitation and his sense of hope; between scepticism about men and his readiness to say: "Problems can be as big as they want, no problem of human destiny is beyond the human being". – Smith (1971, 23-24).

Here, Smith reveals the pragmatic – and in a sense, transactional – character of Tubman which may help us discern his willingness to reconcile with ethnic polities and societies through his Unification Policy. Tubman had on many occasions called for the "agglutination of all Liberians into one unified body polity", that "All classes of people must be made to fuse and coalesce into a solid whole" (p. 313); insisting his administration will be guided by a policy of "*No Reprisals; No Pay-backs; No Get-Even-With; but let the dead past bury the dead.*" (*IA*, Jan. 3, 1945 in Guannu 1980, 306, 311). It will surprise many that Tubman's Unification Policy did not receive the unqualified

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[125] It is interesting to note that there are far fewer 'tribes' in Liberia today then were officially recognized prior to 1970. For example, Banks-Henries (1967, 6) asserts there were "twenty or more tribes in Liberia". They question that arises is: How did Liberian tribes finally become 15?

[126] Smith worked as a staff in GoL's Bureau of Public Information.

[127] Such a biological approach to political leadership places emphasis to individual agency in ways often overlooked in discourses of the state and governance. In this regard, Public Choice scholars have distinguished themselves.

embraced many expected from TWP leadership and Americo-Liberians. Had it been a ploy to perpetuate Americo-Liberian's dominance as Sawyer (1992), Kieh (2008), Dalton (1965) and others claim, it must have come at a great surprise. Some TWP and Americo-Liberian leadership went so far as to accuse Tubman of attempting to reform too much too soon, and therefore resisted his efforts initially (e.g *AM* 1945, 1952). Tubman's pragmatism, therefore, appears a genuine feature of his political leadership. And yet, it may give credence to claims of his Machiavellian and self-conceited politics. Such claims would appear more credible were they not a refutation of a fundamental and accepted feature of politics and political intrigues generally.

There is one other discernable motive to Tubman's Unification Policy which has escaped notice, but requires some attention. It was Tubman's desire to respond, to or perhaps appease U.S. demand for improvements in the welfare of indigenous people. This particular U.S. demand was a longstanding one, dating back to various 19th Century moments of settler-native conflicts.[128] This call, however, attained a more strident pitch as the U.S.-Liberia relations solidified following Firestone's in 1926. The evidence point to growing U.S. frustration over GoL's lip service to 'native uplift' during the Barclay Administration. In a "Confidential" document prepared by U.S. State Department in 1943 as President Barclay and President-Elect Tubman prepared to be received in Washington D.C. by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, one gets a sense of this longstanding U.S. frustration:

> Liberia's adherence to the 'Four Freedoms' and the *Atlantic Charter* require[d] radical and far-reaching changes in the present Liberian administration of the native population. In post-war adjustment, great attention will be paid to the whole continent of Africa and Liberia cannot escape. The United States will be held morally responsible for the pitiable condition of the native population. It therefore seems incumbent upon us forcefully to remind President Barclay and his successor, Mr. Tubman, of the promises of reform made to us in Barclay's "three plans, none of which has been effectively put through, not from lack of means, but lack of volition." It was on the basis of this plan that we resumed diplomatic relations with Liberia in 1935 and urged other nations to do likewise. In the eight years since that time, there has been no appreciable change in the conditions of the native, either from the point of view of political rights, economics, education or sanitation even though funds have been available. On the contrary, there have been a number of glaring examples of continued cruel exploitation. Humanitarian motives demand improvement and the returning American Negro troops who have had the disillusioning experience of see Negro self-government in action will insist upon it. It would seem desirable therefore to stress to Barclay and Tubman now our strong interest and desire for improvements in native administration before we are forced by unpleasant and scandalous revelations in the future to take more drastic and possibly unpopular action. – Hull to Roosevelt, 1943 *USSD Briefing Note* for the Visit, in Dunn 2009, 29).

[128] For example, in the 1876 war the Americo-Liberian State and South-eastern Grebo, a U.S. brokered truce successfully pressured the GoL to commit to the incorporation and extension of citizenship status, and equal rights and privileges to large communities of South-eastern Grebos. Many historians believe that without the intervention of the U.S. Naval ship and its Captain, GoL's defeat by the decisive Grebo forces was all by assured (Martin 1969, *Act of the Legislature*).

In the Note, Secretary of State Cordell Hall launched a pointed rebuke of the Barclay administration, accusing President Barclay of ruling "undisputed in a dictatorial manner worthy of the totalitarian state" (Dunn 2009, 29). U.S. authorities held the view that under such circumstances, "the moral fabric of the state [was being] destroyed and the native population often so cruelly exploited that serious sympathetic observers have become gravely alarmed over the final outcome of this vaunted experiment in Negro self-government (ibid). Sensitive to such U.S. criticisms, and desirous of continuous U.S. support, it is therefore not unreasonable to suggest that Tubman's Unification Policy also sought to assuage U.S. concerns over native welfare. Tubman's strategy of appeasement would become more glaring in the early periods of his presidency.

Whatever the controversies surrounding his underlying motives, however, it is more accurate to suggest that Tubman's Unification Policy sprung from a diverse wellspring, contrary to claims by Sawyer (1992), Kieh (2008) and others. With this important clarification, I shall now move to a discussion of the forms, sources and operationalization of rent during the Tubman Era, and their relationships to the post-war imperatives of post-colonial nation-building and state-building.

SECTION TWO: THE DOMESTIC CONTEXT

Fiscal Demarcations & Sovereign Rent in the Tubman Era

The longevity and dynamic forces of the Tubman Era have defied simple characterization and periodization due to their complexities. Lowenkopf (1976) and Dunn & Tarr (1988), however, a helpful periodization of the era based upon the authors' understanding of socioeconomic and political dynamics, and their view of Tubman's approach to governance. First was the period of political consolidation (1944-1955) wherein Tubman sought to create and expand the powers of the Chief Executive (i.e. that Presidency) and that of his own, beyond the narrow boundaries of Americo-Liberian coastal political power-grid. Key economic, political, and social reforms were initiated during this period, including the 'Open Door' and 'National Unification' policies, the latter designed to address historic chasms between Americo-Liberians and the indigenous populations they ruled.

The second phase was a period of so-called "modernization" (1956-1966), characterized by rapid social and economic transformations, expansions in economic productivity; expansion and strengthening of government institutions and bureaucracies; the launch of new social programs, and rapid infrastructural development. Third and finally was what Lowenkopf (1976, 162) terms a period of "political retrenchment" (from 1967 to Tubman's death in 1971), characterized by a decline in foreign investments, government austerity and related pruning in public programs and infrastructural projects. Also present was the practice of intimidation and prosecution of political opponents. A growing sense of disillusionment emerged as questions arose about the prospects of continuous economic progress, in light of rising cost of living, unemployment and price controls. Lowenkopf (1976) describes this period of "retrenchment" in in the following way:

> As Liberia's economic bubble deflated, and the government adopted necessary but unpopular austerity policies, discontent grew within various levels of the population. Americo-Liberians had to restrain their economic appetite; civil servants found their salaries frozen; educated tribal people had their expectations of status and wealth disappointed; and tribal migrants to the towns found the job market declining, housing scarce and the cost of living high. Tubman came to view expressions of dissent and opposition as ingratitude at best and virtual sedition as worst. He began increasingly to employ economic, social and political institutions to maintain his own power, and limit that of all possible contenders. The earlier tentative steps toward broader participation began to give way to political retrenchment by the end of the 1960s. – Lowenkopf (1976, 162).

Critics of the Tubman Administration continue to emphasize his efforts at "political retrenchment' as the defining character of his 27-year rule (e.g Sawyer, 1992). That President Tubman dealt harshly with his political opponents in the waning days of his administration, and demonstrated antagonism towards the critical free press, are without question, especially when he believed such criticisms to be unjustified (Bowier, Mar. 16, 2017, *Interview*; Dunn, June 17, 2019, *Interview*; Burrowes 1997; Wreh 1976). But also true was the unprecedented popularity and support he commanded among the country's majority indigenous populations. President Tubman caused his power to be thoroughly diffused throughout society to the extent of a cult-like following.[129] Thus, claims of Tubman as a "dictator", "authoritarian", "autocrat" or "totalitarian" (Sawyer 1992; Liebenow 1987, 119; Kieh 2008; Dalton 1965), must be examined very carefully, especially in light of the facts of his administration's liberal policies widening the political space, granting new civil and political liberties, including suffrage and citizenship, to indigenous people, and his administration's unparalleled advance of women's rights.[130] These criticisms of Tubman, and the

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[129] See the thousands of personal letters written to Tubman by ordinary Liberians, extolling his virtues and accomplishments, and in some cases invoking his personal intervention in their lives. In at least one instance, President Tubman was asked to intervene in a marital dispute of a couple. "The Tubman Letters", *The Liberian Collection*, University of Indiana, Indianapolis, IN, retrievable at http://webapp1.dlib.indiana.edu/findingaids/view?docId=VAB6923.xml&brand=general&startDoc=1.

[130] In his second major assessment of developments during the Tubman era, Liebenow (1987, 119) objects to describing Tubman as a dictator or a despot. Liebenow writes "While he became the dominant authoritarian figure in Liberian politics, President Tubman was not a totalitarian dictator. A more accurate description would be that he became the presiding officer of the Americo-Liberian ruling class and that at least until the political reforms of 1964, the president assumed the role of managing director of a moderate social revolution. Although Tubman manipulated the leadership of various family, regional, tribal, and other groups, he also depended upon them for support. The Continuing problems of transportation and communication, and the inefficiencies of administration (especially with respect to post-audit) left many independent pockets of independent political power throughout the system. The relative political autonomy of these groups forced the president constantly to placate his political opposition." I discuss Tubman's contributions to women's rights in the following section.

narrative they parley, are therefore not entirely accurate. I do not intend to refute these claims, except to argue that there is not one correct way of reading President Tubman or his administration.

As I show in the proceeding analyses, Tubman's stewardship brought remarkable transformations to in response to the imperatives of the new post-war reconstruction. President Tubman seized every opportunity to contextualize Liberia's rebuilding within larger post-war efforts unfolding across Europe and America. The primary goal of the following discussions, therefore, is to examine the Tubman Era from the perspective of sovereign rent and its relationship to postcolonial processes of state-building and nation-building. In so doing, I shall describe from the perspective of the Rentier State and revenue, the different phases, forms and sources of rent during the period. I identify three distinct phases of the Tubman Era, similar in temporal characteristics to Lowenkopf's (1976) framework, but based upon a different set of criteria. The first is what I describe as a period of fiscal consolidation and U.S. foreign assistance, 1944-1951. Second, a period of growth, development and reform, 1952 – 1960. And third, a period of fiscal inertia, government austerity and recovery (1961-1971).

Phase 1: Fiscal Consolidation and Early U.S. Assistance (1944 – 1951)

By the close of WWII, state fiscality had achieved increased level of expansion and centralization. Thanks of the *Barclay Plan of 1904*, GoL revenue base extended deep into the hinterlands and included land and labour rents. By 1946, the principal sources of domestic revenue comprised, among others, Hut Tax, Excise Tax, Tax on Leased Land, Royalty on Gold, Postal and Utility Revenue, Customs Duties, Vehicle License Fee and Consular Fees. All others taxes and fees were collected as General Customs, and encumbered under Firestone's loan agreement of 1926 (Banks-Henries 1969, 21-22; Steadmann 1952). The British loan of 1906 and subsequent international receiverships also had the effects of introducing more systematic coordination and reporting of GoL revenue, and a semblance of budget planning. Much, however, remained desired in terms of effective hinterland bureaucracy and rent/revenue extraction beyond levels of basic state sustenance. Bureaucratic consolidation – understood as the gradual and concrete development of a well coordinated, effective, efficient and automated administrative apparatus – still unfolded relatively slowly.[131] Only following the end of WWII and the start of the Tubman administration that the institutions of the 'modern' Liberian state began to crystalize, as state revenue increased, and as

[131] The Liberian government remained disproportionately reliant upon the coercive powers of the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) in administering the state, especially within the hinterlands. The security umbrella provided by the presence of considerable U.S. military and commercial interest (i.e. Firestone) in Liberia were what safeguarded Liberia's territorial integrity from further French and British encroachments (Dunn 2009; Buell 1947). Furthermore, the GoL had yet to independently raise revenue in excess of $3 million dollars, and thus continued to rely upon U.S. military and financial largesse and grants (Ibid).

more efficient roads and telephone connectivity brought the hinterlands closer to central government in Monrovia.

In the first year of the Tubman Presidency (1944), GoL total revenue stood at a meagre $1.6 million. By 1950, it grew by 250% to approximately $4 million due, inter alia, to the introduction of new taxes and revenue sources, including a $1 Centennial Tax in 1946, the introduction of a Maritime Code in 1948, as well as Sales Tax, Luxury Tax and Income Tax in 1950. During this 7-year period, increased U.S. military presence and early post-war activities facilitated the construction of new roads into the hinterlands (e.g. Monrovia to Ganta highway), expansion in vehicular ownership, traffic and related revenues owing to reforms in motor vehicle taxes based upon tonnage (GoL *Report* 1949, 1960. See also Clower et. al. 1996; McLaughlin 1966). There was also upsurges in existing categories of Customs and Internal Revenues. Hut Tax, which by 1944 began to collected together with a 'Centennial Tax', and later 'Development Tax', grew by over 150%.[132] Mercantile Sales and Profit Tax, two new revenue categories reflecting the growth in domestic commerce, also grew over 550%. The effects of new roads and increased vehicular traffic also resulted into a 255% growth in new Motor Vehicle License Fees. Customs Revenue itself increased by over three-folds (335%) in the same period (See Tables 9, 15 & 16 in Appendix A).

Until the end of 1951, Firestone's contribution to GoL revenue remained relatively manicured. In consideration of its exceptional tax exempt and duty free privileges, a further low share in revenue contribution represented considerable loss in revenue to GoL. Between 1935 and 1950, Firestone's total tax contribution did not exceed US$2.3 million. Between 1946 and 1950 for example, in no year did Firestone pay more than US$150,000 in taxes and royalties on the sales of rubber (GoL *Treasury Report* 1950, 1954, 1960. See also Steadmann *Report* 1952, C-2; Kraaij 1980, 224),[133] despite the doubling in both quantity and value of rubber export during the same period (see Table 10 & 15 in Appendix A).

We recall that improved U.S.-Liberia relations in the latter phase of the Barclay Presidency coincided with an upsurge in U.S. military and commercial activities in Liberia. Between March of 1942 and February 1946, approximately 5,000 U.S. troops were stationed in Liberia as part of a 1942 Deference Area Agreement (*Defence Agreement Agreement* 1942. See also Dunn 2009, 26-27). Furthermore, some 3,000 LFF personnel received U.S. training at the cost of $85,000, in addition to activities of Pan American Airways (ibid). These developments asserted a positive effect on GoL's fiscal affairs during the period. Unlike Barclay's more cautious, often confrontational, approach to

[132] Beginning in 1944, Hut Tax was collected together with a Centennial Tax (meant to finance Liberia's Centennial Anniversary on July 26, 1947), and later a 'Development Tax' – meant as domestic funding for GoL 'Development Programs'.

[133] Steadmann (1952, C-2) reports that "Prior to 1950, Firestone's taxes on sales of rubber seldom yielded in excess of US$100,000."

U.S. interest, including Firestone operations,[134] President Tubman choose a more calculative and purposeful alignment with U.S. interest internationally and in Africa (Dunn 2009). In support of U.S. interest, Tubman declared "aversion unreservedly and completely against Nazism and with it, its brothers in confederation – Fascism and Japanese Militarism – as a matter of national foreign policy" (*IA* Jan. 3, 1944, Guannu, 309). Barely a month following his Inauguration in January 1944, Tubman announced a Declaration of War against Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, severing diplomatic ties and confiscating all assets in Liberia owned by German and Japanese interests, precisely the same U.S. demand President Barclay had successfully stalled. Tubman claimed his government's actions responded to "the provocative attitude of Axis Powers" and Germany's "utter violations of the laws of war" (*Special Message*, Jan. 27, 1944; *AM* Nov. 22, 1944, in Dunn, 982).[135] He would later denounce Russia's "Dukhobortsy and Communism" within the context of the Cold War, rejecting all diplomatic overtures emanating from the Kremlin.

President Tubman's enthusiastic embrace of the principles of the *Atlantic Charter* and President Roosevelt's 'Four Freedoms' doctrine was constantly on public display internationally and domestically, earning Liberia firm and sympathetic U.S. security and economic guarantees (e.g. *IA* Jan 3, 1944; Jan., 1951, in Guannu 308; *AM,* 1944, 1945, 1946). New and substantial U.S. public and military assistance flowed into Liberia, including a U.S. Economic Mission, various assistances under such programs as U.S. Special Assistance, Special Program for Tropical Africa, U.S. Public Law 480 and Development Loan Fund, with most of these programs being administered by forerunner agencies of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), including International Cooperation Agency which extended loan support to GoL and private enterprises via the Export-Import Bank. AID assistance were also included support to the Peace Corp and International Voluntary Services in Liberia (Clower 1966, 362; McLaughlin 1966). U.S. grants and low-interest loans funded projects in energy, health and sanitation, road construction, education, public administration, etc. Within the context of the "New American Century" ideology, increased partnership between GoL's and U.S. private financial capita also featured permanently.

With the establishment of the U.S.-Liberia Joint Commission in 1951, most if not all U.S. assistance, especially 'development-related' aid to Liberia's various 5-Years Development Plans, began to be channelled through the Commission. Thus, foreign aid emerges as a new and crucial form and source of sovereign rent in Liberia (Svensson 2000; Hagan 2015), a central feature of this early

[134] For example, President Barclay "kept in abeyance" U.S. government request in 1941 for Liberia to join WWII in Allied support, and expel German nationals on its soil, as it did in WWI. Barclay also froze both principle and interest payments on the Firestone loan under suspicions that Firestone acted against Liberia's sovereign interest in advocating for a formal U.S. or European take-over of Liberia (Dunn 2009).

[135] Tubman listed at least 6 vessels sunk by German's submarines which belonged to nationals of governments with whom Liberian maintained friendly relations (*AM* Nov. 22, 1944, in Dunn, 982). Liberia remained in a state of war with Germany until 1950/51 when President Tubman requested its end (*AM* Nov. 7, 1950, Dec. 14, 1951, in Dunn, p. 1117, 1147).

phase of (and indeed throughout) the administration.[136] For example, in 1966, U.S. development aid alone equalled to a third of GoL total revenue for the year. Added to development aid was also U.S. military assistance, private philanthropy and Christian Mission programs in education and health which accounted for equally substantial outlays (Clower et al. 1966, 359-62; McLaughlin 1966). Table 11, 12 & 21 in Appendix A gives a sense of U.S. assistance for this and other phases of the Tubman Era.

In terms of GoL's partnership with private U.S. capital and firms, we also witness the birth of other forms and sources of sovereign rent, this time within the context of markets. Early U.S. private investments in iron ore mining, and the formation of Liberia's Merchant Marine Program, represented the main form and sources of rent, as told by the stories of GoL's agreements with the Liberia Mining Company (1946) and the Stettinius Associates-Liberia, Inc. (1947), two firms established by top former U.S. Government officials in persons of Colonel Landsdell K. Christie of the Army, and Former Secretary of State Edward B. Stettinius, Jr. Christie's Liberian Mining Company (LMC) won a concession in 1945 to develop and exploit iron ore in the Bomi Hills mountain range in Western Liberia. Col. Christie received significant initial U.S. Government support in a loan $4 million (over 10 years) from the U.S. Export-Import (Exim) Bank (Steadmann, C-4; McLaughlin, 147).[137] The U.S. steel giant, Republic Steel Company, also acquired 80% Common Shares from LMC in 1947 (Dunn et al. 2001, 70). Although LMC did not begin to export ores until 1952, its Agreement with GoL commenced the era of mineral rents in Liberia, locating its birth in the first phase of the Tubman Era. Once LMC had been significantly taken over by U.S. Republic Steel, Col. Christie moved on to operate the new *Freeport of Liberia* in Monrovia through his firm Monrovia Port Management Company. Mr. Christie would also establish another mining operation, the National Iron Ore Company (NIOC).

By 1949, Secretary of State Edward Stettinius Jr. and Stettinius & Associates, had established strong footholds in Liberia's maritime, banking, and finance industries, as well as "any other line of business, except those expressly granted to other concessionaires" (*Act* Maritime Code, Dec. 1948; *Statement of Agreement*, 1948). Mr. Stettinius most profitable venture was to be found in his control and operation of Liberia's "Flag of Convenience" maritime program, operated by the Liberia Company, his Liberia's holding, jointly owned with GoL (*Act* Maritime Code, Dec. 1948; see also Carlisle 1980). In the Liberia Company, Stettinius & Associates held 65% of stocks, while GoL held 25%, and 10% went to the Liberia Foundation, a philanthropic organization financing public health, education and foreign scholarships for Liberians. Steadman (1952, C-4) reports the Pan American

[136] A growing scholarship is developing that focuses on what has now been termed "newer" forms of rentierism, including foreign aid, worker remittances, and international tourism. See, among others, Richter and Steiner (2008, 943-44),

[137] Such transactions and arrangements would amount to claims of state capitalism today.

Airline held a major stock interest in the Liberia Company by 1952. The inclusion of a "philanthropic" cause appears to attest to the embedded liberal principles of "just social purpose" within the context of the 'New American Century'. This principle of "just social causes" was reflected in the Liberian Company stated objective: "the alleviation of the social and economic ills of Liberia". (*Journal of Commerce* Dec. 29, 1955, 16 in McLaughlin, 82, 89).

Stettinius & Associates seized upon the prevailing opportunity within the global maritime industry to transform Liberia into an industry leader and a corporate tax haven. Along the way, it profited immensely (*Journal of Commerce* 1955, in McLaughlin, 82). From the perspective of sovereign rent, the Liberian 'Flag of Convenience' Maritime Program was essentially a complex international legal mechanism whereby Liberia's sovereignty, represented in its flag and associated sovereign protections, was leased to private marine owners and operators for a fee. Stettinius International Trust Company (ICT), a subsidiary of the Liberia Company, operated and managed the Shipping Registry for a flat fee of 27% of all proceeds. In 1952, ITC's fees amounted to US$85,000 (GoL, *Statement of Understanding* 1947, 1949; Steadman, C-37). Together, GoL and Stettinius & Associates developed Liberia's Maritime Code, wrote the Liberian Corporate Law, and created the ITC to manage the Liberian Merchant Marine Program. Proceeds from the Maritime Program grew by 150% from US$146,000 in 1949, the year it was established, to US$224,000 in 1951 (Ibid. C-36). The Liberian maritime and shipping Registry under ITC grew from significantly from by over 30% between 1948 to 1951, as reflected in Table 13 in Appendix A. Stettinius & Associate, through the Liberian Company, also held concession rights in the cocoa, coffee, rubber and virtually any other industries and resources in which it took interest.[138]

By the close of this phase in the administration, GoL had either initiated or arrived as a significant level of social spending which continued into the following decade. For example, in 1950, President Tubman reported that total GoL expenditure on health and sanitation alone claimed 12% of total revenue, second only to Sweden in that year which expanded a reported 15% for the same purpose. In the same year, education expenditure accounted for 8% of total revenue, and agriculture 4%, bringing total social services are related spending to an impressive 24% of total revenue in 1950. In the same year, a pension program was proposed for traditional leaders and Chiefs (*AM* Nov. 7, 1950 in Dunn 2011, 1144-45; GoL *Report* 1950; GoL *Year Book* 1954;). In these numbers, one finds proof Tubman's demonstrated commitment to "embedded liberal" principles of "just social causes" and his fight against poverty.

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[138] A limited number of Europeans firms also entered the Liberian economy during this time. Once the War was over and West Germany emerged under U.S. influence, the German Concessionaire, African Fruit Company (1952), invested in banana fruits, but soon moved into rubber planting, as the banana planting failed. At least two other European concessions commenced operations during this period: Le Tourneau of Liberia, involved in timber, poultry and general agriculture; and Munarriz Industrial Works, in brick, tile and soap manufacturing (Steadman 1952; Clower et al. 1966, 127, 130; Banks-Henries 1968).

As this phase of the era progressed to a close, a major fiscal development occurred which dramatically improved GoL's revenue position. Already, Firestone had begun stepping up production and shipments of rubber in response to global demand and favorable prices. In light of this, a modification of the tax components of its Planting Agreement was effected wherein Firestone agreed to pay Income Tax on net profit (*Amendment to Firestone Agreement* 1950. See also Steadman 1952, C-2, C-3). A new Tax Code Law was also passed and introduced in 1951 imposing Income Tax on gross profits for all foreign concessionaires, including Firestone. As a consequence, Firestone paid an additional US$7.8 million in taxes in 1951. GoL's total revenue therefore increased from a meagre US$3.9 million in 1950, to US$12.8 million in 1951 – an increase of more than a third (GoL *Treasury Report* 1951; Steadman, C-1).[139]

Phase 2: Fiscal Expansion and Economic Development (1952 – 1960)

If any post-WWII period merits the acclaim of a "economic boom", it is this period between 1952 – 1960, characterized by immense FDI inflow, and the dominance of two key commodities – iron ore and natural rubber. Remarkable growths were seen in the enclave industry and commerce due largely to new FDI in the commercial agriculture and mining sectors. The public sector (i.e. GoL) also experienced tremendous revenue increased, and a corresponding expansion in GoL bureaucracy and public spending. GDP growth for the period 1951-1960 stood on average at 15%. Gross Domestic Money Income (GDMI) grew from US$45.7 million in 1951 to US$153 million in 1960. Similar trends were observed for labour utilization (i.e. employment) and expansion of the wage economy, providing further evidence of the dynamic transformation and progress underway. Tables 15 in Appendix A provides a sense of the order of magnitude of key growth and development indicators**.** Growth in vehicular expansion and traffic also remained constant as shown in Tables 9 & 16 in Appendix A.

The proportion of the value of total exports represented by minerals, especially iron ore, jumped from 19% in 1951 to 45% by 1960 (Clower 1966, 28-29). By mid-1961, the Liberian Mining Company (LMC), Firestone and a handful of Liberian smallholder farmers accounted for over half of national production, and approximately 80% of total export (Clower, p. 132). By mid-1956, a study by the National Planning Association estimated total investment in to be in excess of $60 million, with the following remarks:

[139] One of the earliest efforts at institutional reforms was the GoL Revamping Commission instituted in 1949 "for the purpose of studying and presenting plans for the reorganization and improvement of the several branches and departments of Government" (*AM* Oct. 28, 1949, in Dunn 2011, 1097). Together with fiscal and other reforms, the Revamping Commission represented an effort in bureaucratic consolidation and strengthening.

> Including Firestone, the total private U.S. capital invested in Liberia at present [mid-1956] can be roughly estimated at more than $50 million. To this should be added another $7.5 million to $10 million in private German, Spanish, Swiss, French, and Lebanese investments. The great bulk of this private investment is in agriculture and mining, with much smaller potions in air transport, shipping, manufacturing, and distribution – Taylor (1956, 16).[140]

Picking up from the NPA's $60 million estimate in 1956, the Northwestern University study in 1962 estimated a total concession investment of between $147.5 million to $163.7 million as at August 1961. Therefore, on average, annual concession investment between 1956 – 1961 was put at $20 million (Clower 1966, 228).[141] The annual rate of capital investments in iron ore alone reached $75 million by 1960: $60 million for iron ore, 10% for government infrastructure development, and the remainder $5 for small-scale commercial industries (Clower, 35). Between 1959 and 1963, Clower and team estimate the three (3) new mining companies (LAMCO, 1953; DELIMCO, 1958; and NIOC, 1958) would have invested an estimated $300 million in the sector, bringing the total investment in iron ore to $330 million by 1963. LAMCO alone, (the Liberia American Swedish Joint Venture) had invested over $200 million by the end of 1963 (Clower, 132).

The story told by commercial agriculture was slightly different and relatively small in scope. The six rubber concessions combined were estimated to have invested only $3 million during 1960, much of which went to constructing rubber factories,[142] each requiring average additional investment of $1.5 million. Two timber concessions had by 1960 invested approximately US$700,000 (Clower, 132). The period was also the beginning of a nascent manufacturing sector. New investments were recorded in brewery, printing plant, hotel and a transport company.[143] Together, these were estimated to account for US$7 million in private investments. The construction of a hydroelectric plant by 1965 accounted for some US$22 million in new investments, to which can be added further inflows for a new oil refinery, rice mills, shipping lines, and other new projects (ibid, 132). McLaughlin (1966, 65) provides a much broader investment picture of some 21 concessional operations as at January 1, 1961, in Table 17 in Appendix A. He estimates total investment by 1960 to be in excess of $435 million.

In terms of revenue, the period began with the most enviable fiscal position for the GoL. The last tranche of Firestone's 25-year-old debt was fully liquidated by Dec. 31, 1951, together with all

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[140] Taylor (1956).

[141] Rubber ($40-45 million), Iron ore ($100-110 million), Timber ($1-1.2 million), and others ($6.5-7.5 million) (Clower, 128).

[142] These were: B.F Goodridge Corporation (Sept. 1954, 80 years' agreement, American), Liberia Agricultural Company (Mar. 1959, 70 years, Italian), Salala Rubber Corporation (May 1960, 70 years, Dutch & German), Liberia Company (Dec. 1949, 40 years, American & German), and the African Fruits Company (Mar. 1953, 80 years, German). See GoL Bureau of Economic Research & Statistics, *Annual Report* (Nov. 15, 1961, 25-26; Oct. 30, 1962, 32).

[143] Some $5 million investment in Ducor Palace Hotel, including a $1.7 million expansion, by the Mafit Trust Corporation.

other public debts, funded or floating. By January 1, 1952, the new fiscal year commenced with a huge cash balance of US$2.5 million in the Treasury, reflecting GoL's newfound fiscal health (Tubman, *AM* Nov. 26, 1952, Steadman *Report* B-1). The effect of economic expansion was a corresponding increase in GoL revenue, consisted with previous trend. Except for the years 1952 and 1958 when revenue dropped from previous year levels due to reduction in global prices of iron ore and rubber, all categories of GoL revenue experienced consistent upward trends, especially revenue from commodity exports which, as a result of the New Tax Code of 1951, were now being captured in higher amounts under Corporate Income Tax and GoL Profit Sharing schemes from concessions jointly owned and operated with government. GoL's Maritime Program also experienced considerable expansion in both tonnage and rent revenue, such that by 1971 revenue from maritime accounted stood at US$6.1 million, 9% of total GoL receipt, and 1.6% of Gross National Product (GNP) which stood at US$375 million in the same year (MoF/Maritime Affair *Report* 1979, p. III-14). Table 13 in Appendix A reflects trends the sector and GoL revenue.

Another feature of the period was a significant expansion of government bureaucracy and the public sector, both in terms of GoL expenditure and growth in government departments and agencies. GoL expenditure as a fraction of GDP was estimated to be 20% throughout the 1960s (Guseh 2004, 63). By 1960, some 13 new departments and bureaus existed. Only 5 departments and 4 bureaus existed in 1944. Tables 19 in Appendix A, reflect these trends.

GoL's fiscal expansions were also accompanied, unsurprisingly, by rapid accumulation of public debt. Government's fiscal fortunes, and considerable U.S. government grant support under the U.S./Liberia Joint Commission, though representing a significant portion of needed financing, the full magnitude of funding needed for infrastructural and other capital developments could not be achieved without new private or bilateral debt.[144] As a consequence, GoL debt stock grew from zero dollars by January 1, 1952 to approximately $86 million by the end of 1961 (GoL *Report* 1962. See also Clower 1966, 26).[145] The average maturity time for most loans was only 8 years (a good indication of GoL eagerness for development), the implications being that large annual debt payments were to be expected by the following decade.

Regarding rent from foreign aid, the trend was an equally substantial U.S. Government assistance, mainly through the U.S-Liberian Joint Commission which would finance government's various 5-Years Development Plans. Together with loans to private enterprises, U.S. aid was estimated to be US$146 million during the period (Clower 1966, 39, 363-373) as shown in **Table 21,** Appendix A. By 1962, the value of loan applications pending amounted to $25 million. A minimum

[144] For example, an initial loan from the US EXIM bank made possible the first sewage and water purification and distribution system in Liberia, undertaken in the capital, Monrovia.

[145] By 1949, GoL's loan obligation to Firestone was less than $0.6 million which was fully extinguished in 1952 (Clower, 26; Tubman *AM*, 1952).

of $50 million was to be given in grants or direct program assistance under Tubman's new 5-Year Development Plan (1962-1966). Loans and grants from other western partners were also expected to be substantial, approximating US$20-$25 million under the same Plan (Clower 1962, *Staff Paper*; Clower 1966, 39, 363-373). President Tubman repeatedly drew a direct link between private participation in Liberia's mining sector to bilateral assistance from corporate home countries (*AM* Jan. 25, 1955; Dec. 23, 1963; Nov. 16, 1965). As can be expected, private American interests dominated Liberia's economy.

It must be said that GoL's fiscal fortunes could have fallen far below levels attained had a number of important fiscal reforms not been instituted during the period. The first and perhaps most progressive of these reforms stemmed from a study of Liberia's fiscal affairs by Robert Steadman, Comptroller General of the Michigan State Treasury. According to Steadman's contracting Terms of Reference, the study was "to examine and provide recommendations for "a revenue system which will produce the funds for [Liberia's development and transformation], without burdening enterprise unduly, and without discouraging expansion" (p. A-1)." Steadman's recommendations contained among the most progressive, as they seemed genuinely intent upon optimizing GoL share of mineral rent which, by 1952, had shown signs of gapping inequality with foreign private interest, mainly Firestone and LMC. Steadman recommended, among other things, (a) revisions in all major concession agreements (particularly those with more than 5 years initial exemption phase) with the goal of augmenting GoL's Corporate Income Tax, (b) the imposition of a 50% on 'excess profit' (i.e. a rent tax) of any business "earning 30% or more per annum on its invested capital after income tax"; and (c) a revision of the existing 27% fee paid to the International Trust Company [the managers of Liberia's maritime program], in favor of a fixed fee; otherwise ITC's duties must be transferred to the Department of the Treasury" (p. C-9 – C-23).

Of particular importance of the Steadman's *Report* (1952) was its revelation of the gapping disparity between corporate rents and GoL share of mineral profits. The Report found, for example, between January 1950 and December 1951 – in just two years – Firestone reported a net profit (after all cost and GoL taxes) in excess of US$44 million. For the same period, Firestone's tax contribution to GoL did not exceed US$4 million (Steadman, p. C-20).[146] The Report's sobering findings and recommendations struck a cord with President Tubman, who dedicated great space in his *Annual Message* to reading them verbatim before the assembled Legislature and foreign guests (*AM*, Nov. 26, 1952). Certainly, Steadman's recommendations must have caused apprehensions among foreign concessionaires, especially major U.S. interests such as both Firestone and LMC stood profit immensely from wide-ranging tax exempts and low corporate tax rates within a global context of

[146] In 1950, Firestones total direct payments to GoL amounted to estimated US$52,000 (Kraaij 1980:224), while 1951 income taxes, included its subsidiary, USTC, totaled 3.7 million. The start of Corporate Income Tax of 1951 resulted into an additional $7 million tax payment by Firestone (Clower, p. 134).

rising global demands and favorable prices for rubber and iron ore.[147] Thus, Steadman's recommendations provided vital impetus for the renegotiation of a number of concession agreements, and the introduction of new reforms in GoL's fiscal regimes regarding concessionaries.

<u>Phase 3</u>: Fiscal Deceleration, Austerity and Recovery (1961 – 1971)

This third phase of the Tubman Era represented the must challenging to the administration from the perspective of fiscality. Despite continuous, though slow, growth in revenue, GoL experienced a gradual contraction in its capacity for continuous capital investment in the economy. These difficulties had their roots in global price swings for Liberian exports, and the rising cost of imports. Additionally, repayments on most public debts emanating from the 1950s became due. Couple with rising interest rates on new debts, total debt financing began consuming on average about a fourth and a third of GoL's revenue annually between 1961 and 1971. Between 1962 and 1968, national debt repayment had peaked to some US$120 (on average $15 million annually), with principal and interest due in 1963 alone totalling some US$28 million, or 60% of total GoL revenue for that year. (Henries, ed. 1969, 28; *BERS* Nov. 15, 1961; *AM* Dec. 15, 1966, in Dunn, 1355). Clower and team estimate that total debt-related capital outlay by or on behalf of GoL, amounted to approximately 30% of total GoL expenditure between 1957-62 (Clower 1966, 26-27). Tables 11, 20 & 22 in Appendix A reflect this trend.

The combined effects of bureaucratic expansions and rising debt payments forced the GoL to adopt a program of austerity between 1964 and 1969. Part of government's response was the introduction in 1967 of a new Austerity Tax of 4.2% on salaries and wages (*Act Amending Revenue Code*, 1967, 1968), further renegotiations of concession agreements to increase Corporate Income Tax revenue, more vigorous tax collection, a freeze on civil servants' salaries, cutbacks on amenities to senior government officials, cutbacks on GoL foreign travels,[148] and new price control mechanisms. The involvement of both the IBRD (now World Bank) and IMF proved instrumental in helping GoL renegotiate and restructure the terms of its international debts and repayment schedules consistent with fiscal prospects, and in a manner expected to grant relief. By November 1970, these actions had yielded concrete results, such that President Tubman declared the austerity over, although some measures introduced (e.g. Austerity Tax) remained in place far longer (*AM* Dec. 18, 1967, in Dunn, 1366; *AM* Nov. 21, 1970, in Dunn, 1414-15).

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[147] Based upon available statistics (projected prices, $7-$12; and export tonnage, between 1 million and 1.5 million tons per annum), Steadman estimated that both mining interests would reap between 70-80% per annum on all investment capitals, and between 170% and 400% on common stock of the company. See Steadman, C-4. Prevailing corporates tax rate in the U.S. were far higher at the time.

[148] In 1960, foreign travels accounted for some 8% of GoL total expenditure. See GoL *Annual Report* (1960). See also Clower et al (1966, 69)

An important consequence of the austerity was the urgent rethink of Tubman's Open Door Policy and the administration's strategy towards state bureaucracy. Early in this phase in 1962, a major review of the economy by team of Northwestern University economists had revealed serious structural challenges. Following some eight (8) months of reviewing and characterizing the economy, with a view of recommending new measures and directions for optimum growth and development, the team concluded, among other things, that (a) despite incredible investments in commodity exports, growth was fast outpacing developing due in large part to failures to domestically growth forces and spread economic gains evening across society; and (b) that resulting increases in income and wealth were disproportionately consumed (90%) by foreign owners of capital, expatriate works and politically connected Americo-Liberian elites, which less than 10% accruing to the majority of the indigenous population across the hinterlands (Clower *Summary Report* 1963). Among its recommendations were (a) a proposal to renegotiate all major concession agreements, (b) strengthening GoL's internal mechanisms to effective monitor concession for revenue proposes,[149] (c) and renewed focus on converting and channelling subsistence labour into commercial agriculture.

Many of the team's recommendations were not new. The Steadman Report (1952), although narrowly confined to fiscality, had proposed these same measures a decade prior. A number of Clower's recommendations also appeared destined for rejection due to their sheer naiveté. For example, the team criticized the administration's 'universal education policy', including a $6.4 million expenditure for what is till today Liberia's highest public tertiary institutions (the University of Liberia main campus), on grounds that these are 'luxuries'. It recommended instead that GoL focuses on educating a limited number of 'talented' Liberians (Clower 1963). A similar approach was taken towards health, recommending to focus on "preventive" healthcare for such illnesses as malaria, parasites and other diseases, instead of curative health (Clower 1962, 50 para 3.60). Still another was a recommendation to end public investments in agricultural research and training, and instead to focus on channelling subsistence labor into commercial agriculture (Clower 1962, 48, para. 3.50).[150] In a more scathing critique of the administration's policies, the Northwestetrn team wrote in 1966, in contrast to its more cautious and nuanced conclusions of the 1962 *Report*, that Liberia's economy was "growing without developing" (1966). [151]

The team attributed Liberia's challenges in the following way:

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[149] It was discovered that some concessionaires were manipulating cost to reduce tax liabilities, and colluding in the setting of commodity pricing. Kraaij (1980), Clower (1966).

[150] To the team's recommendations must be added its objection to GoL capital accumulation of 'modern' public buildings, which today constitutes some of GoL's largest capital portfolio (Clower 1962, 1966).

[151] An important discrepancy exists between the key conclusion of Team's 1933 Study and its 1966 book. The conclusion of "growth without development" is not clearly apparent in the Team's 1962 Report. Nowhere in this Report does this exact phrase appear, raising questions about what exactly influenced the shift in in 1966.

> The economic backwardness neither to lack of resources nor to domination by foreign financial and political interests. Rather, the underlying difficulties is that the traditional leaders of Liberia [Americo-Liberians] have not permitted those changes necessary to develop the society and its economy…The overriding goal of the Liberian authority remains what it has been for the past 150 years: to retain political control among a small group of families of settler descent and to share any material benefits to economic growth among its own members. The politics and society, not the economics, of Liberia are what remain arcane and problematical – Clower (1966, 4-5).

Such an assessment, while accurate in its criticism of Americo-Liberian's subjugation of the majority indigenous population, does not accurately acknowledge and reflect the extent of social, political and economic transformations underway. Furthermore, the team's 'modernist' worldview established a certain incompatibility between 'development' and African 'traditional' societies over which it could not surmount. Even more worrisome was the team's clear lack of historical awareness. For since independence, Liberia had endured the perils of Imperial European encroachment until the first quarter of 20th Century (see Map 2, Appendix B). With the entry of Firestone in 1926, and U.S. political and commercial interests for the 1930s, the small west African has neither been left alone, enduring further Firestone and U.S. political and corporate dominance. Clower's assertion that Liberia's "economic backwardness is neither attributable to domination by foreign financial and political interests" cannot be further from the truth.

The consequence of bureaucratic bloating was an increased burden on expenditure. But there were equal concerns about bureaucratic effectiveness and efficiency. Furthermore, negative trends had begun to appear in the magnitude of FDI in the mining sector, still the largest sector of the economy (GoL *Report* 1964.[152] In response to these bureaucratic challenges, a Special Commission on Government Operations (SCOGO) was established in 1960 to help "strengthen the administrative organization and processes of government", with a view to eliminating or reducing excess capacity and waste, strengthening institutional bureaucracy, and improving efficiency. The results if this multi-year assessment, first of the Presidency, and later other parts of government, was a set of proposals intended to streamline the number operations and merge bureaus as needed (SCOGO *Report* 1961, 1; 1964). If SCOGO's recommendations for reforms had failed to gain traction, the Northwestern Team's more political verdict of "growth without development" certainly unsettled GoL into action. The implications of Clower's political solution to Liberia's economic dilemma was indeed striking, and appealed to critics of Americo-Liberian rule at home and abroad. As could be expected, it elicited greater attention to the political situation, more than the economic. President Tubman responded with angst and hostility to the team's book. Nether GoL's intense international public relations campaign (e.g. *The New York Times* 1966), nor the administration's ban on its circulation in Liberia (Carter

[152] See also Clower (1966) and Mclaughlin (1966).

1966), having lost a legal battle over its publication, prevented the book's release and the substantial influence its thesis would eventually wield with Liberianist and African studies. This was, indeed, in Lowenkopf's (1976) words, a moment of 'political retrenchment'.

The combined effects of the SCOGO and the Northwestern *Report* did much to spur reforms during the period. Reviews and renegotiations of concession agreements which began in 1950s continued throughout the 1960s. In at least one instance involving the 4 mining operations, tax rate on corporate profit was increased from 25% to 35%. In another instance, a new "Excess Profit Tax" (i.e. commodity rent tax) was applied against annual net profits in excess of 30% of total investment, a recommendation first made by Steadman (1952). There is some evidence that as the period approached its end, the Administration also began giving greater attention to developing more domestic industries and manufacturing, and increasing agricultural outputs, especially of domestic consumables such as rice, cocoa, coffee and other cash crops. In 1961, a national Produce Marketing Corporation was created to "foster and develop to the fullest extent the export trade of Liberian produce" (*AM* Dec. 30, 1969 in Dunn, 1399).

In 1965, new legislations were passed creating an Industrial Free Zone to assuage industries' concerns for land space and high rental fees (Tubman *AM,* Nov. 16, 1965). New concessions in the areas of manufacturing, transport, shipping, hotel services and general commerce were now being targeted. By 1968, considerable progress was reached, as some 32 medium and large manufacturing facilities were now in operations (Banks-Henries 1969, 119-20. See Table 14 in Appendix A). Greater emphasis also began to be placed on accelerating the achievement of the original aim of the Open Door Policy - creating forward and backward linkages between the enclave sectors and the rest of the economy, and triggering investments in ancillary industries by concessionaires. In 1960, the administration set up the *Emergency Reserved Fund* under the proposed *Liberia Development Corporation* (100% government owned) for the sole purpose of financing GoL's participation in targeting business development enterprises, consistent with the principles of imbedded liberalism (*AM* Nov. 22, 1960, in Dunn 2011, 1284).[153] Also in 1962, President Tubman proposed proposed measures to address the "uncontrolled influx and operation in the country of foreign based Investment Funds" whose alarming activities were leading to "millions of dollars being sucked out of the country [and economy] annually" (*AM* Nov. 23, 1962, in Dunn 2011, 1315). In response, the President mandated swift actions by the Secretary of Treasury to ensure systematic registration and annual licensing of all foreign investment funds in the country, as well as require these funds "to invest a portion of their total intake" in Liberia, and pay relevant corporate tax rates (ibid). There is also a sense that President Tubman felt betrayed by private concessionaires in their commitment to this

[153] The records on the Liberia Development Corporation is scanty. It is very likely this initiative eventuated into the the formal establishment of the Liberia Development Bank (later Liberia Bank for Development and Investment) in 1960 (*AM* Nov. 22, 1960, in Dunn 2011, 1297).

original development aim. Instead of supporting the creation of ancillary industries for the manufacturing in Liberia, with Liberian labour, of needed goods for concession uses, these concessions expensed millions purchasing goods from abroad. To this practice, President Tubman remarked in his *Annual Message* of 1969:

> We view this situation with grave concern because it was in consideration of these additional sources of employment and training for the Liberian people that Government felt justified to extend the many benefits according these concessions operating in our country. – *AM* Dec. 30, 1969, in Dunn, 1398.

In response, new measures were instituted by the Department of Commerce and Industry requiring specified support of ancillary industries by major concessionaires. Later in 1970, strict 'Liberianization' policies were introduced restricting distribution rights of key commodities manufactured in Liberia to Liberians only (*AM* Nov. 21, 1970, in Dunn 2011, 1411). A particular effort was commenced by 1968 to encourage Firestone to set up a tires manufacturing plant in Liberia. The Administration envisioned the production of a limited amount of tires through a joint venture with Firestone. Kraaij (1980) reports that President Tubman intervened to admonish Firestone towards this goal. How can Liberia, the largest producer of natural rubber internationally, fail to develop an industry in rubber products? Firestone's response proposing various preconditions appeared designed to thwart the effort. Eventually, neither a tire plant nor a rubber product industry came to fruition.

By late 1969, President Tubman began to question the wisdom of continuing policy of dollarization, and the absence of a central bank. Concerns regarding the country's monetary and financial policies grow out of separate recommendations by the Secretaries of the Treasury and Planning & Economic Affairs. Both secretaries advocated for a change of policy in light of "the growing complexities of the Liberian economy and the increasing magnitude of government financial operations" (*AM* Nov. 30, 1969, in Dunn, 1388). The greater unspoken concerns, however, seemed to pertain to massive capital flight (i.e. 'surplus transfer') in light of declining levels of FDI, limited achievements in non-enclave domestic industries, declining levels of foreign aid assistance in grants and loans (40% decline by 1969), and increasing burden of debt repayment (*AM* Dec. 20, 1969, in Dunn, 1398).[154]

A second major fiscal assessment occurred in June 1969. Led by Professor Carl S. Shoup of Columbia University, its purpose, among others, was (a) to describe in detail the existing tax structure of government, including those in treaties, concession agreements, and related contracts, (b) make realistic estimates of revenue gap or surplus for the upcoming fiscal year 1970, and (c) appraise and

[154] By 1968, debt repayment accounted for 21% of total GoL revenue, projected to be 32.5% by 1969 (Dunn 2011, 1376, 1398).

recommend measures to address the existing tax structures and the revenue demands upon it (Tax Mission, *Terms of Reference*, in Shoup 1970, xii). Upon its conclusion, the Mission recommended an increase in tariffs on luxury goods, and increase in business license taxes fees for the use of key government facilities (e.g. seaport, airports, etc.); further revisions in concession agreements; and finally, new taxes on motor vehicles and fuel which would finance new roads in the interior (p. 1-2).

By this time, however, President Tubman reformist agenda had suffered considerable inertia. At age 76, President Tubman rapidly succumbed to the frailties of his mortality. The GoL, and indeed the ruling True Whig Party, began to quietly turn their attention to perhaps the most important political question of the day: Who will succeed President Tubman upon his death? On its face, this question seems contemptuous, in view of Liberia's Constitutional 'succession clause'. However, when one considers Tubman's enormous influence, and the suspicion that he was grooming his own son, William V.S. Tubman, Jr., to replace him, such questions were not entirely unwarranted (Liebenow 1987; Sawyer 1992).[155] Shoup's proposed reforms would eventually fall to Tubman's successor, Vice President William R. Tolbert, to implement upon Tubman's death on July 23, 1971. Thus, the longest and arguably most transformative era in 'modern' Liberian history closed with the interment on one man – William Vacanarat Shadrach Tubman.[156]

SECTION THREE:
RENT & THE DYNAMIC PROCESSES OF STATE & NATION BUILDING

SOVEREIGN RENT & STATE AND NATION BUILDING

Like postcolonial spaces elsewhere in Africa, post-WWII Liberia exhibited profound hybridity and 'entanglement' in its social, political and cultural ingredients. The transition from the colonial to the post-colonial remained deeply entangled with each other in terms not only of social relationships, but also the persistence of state bifurcation. Socially, descendants of Afro-American immigrants had overtime fused together with indigenous Africans through intermarriages, the 'ward system' of cultural cleansing, and other forms of social fraternization such that by the 1950s and 60s, it was increasingly difficult to trace Americo-Liberian lineages directly to the original settlers. The term 'Americo-Liberian' underwent dramatic socio-political and cultural re-appropriations. Whereas in time past it specified persons with lineage to Liberia's original founders, its close modern day

[155] Tubman's personal charisma, as a decisive element of his leadership style and success, seemed impossible to replicate. The question of who would succeed Tubman was also voiced within this context (e.g. Lalugba 1971).

[156] Chieh (2011, 48-49) observed at least 22 African Heads of State and Government who journeyed to Monrovia for Tubman's funeral, including Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, Leopold Senghor of Senegal, Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, Robert Mogagbe of Zimbabwe, and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana.

association with concepts such as 'civilized' or 'kwi' (a designation of Western and formally educated life-style) introduced a certain conceptual malleability which was eventually extended to include persons of native African heritage, as long as they became educated, Christianized, urbanized, and given to membership of civilized fraternities (Fraenkel 1964; Brown 1982). At the same time that these processes of social amalgamation and agglutination were occurring, a concerted effort was being made by the Tubman Administration to return to Liberia's founding ideas of "civilization and Christianization" the natives. Despite some successes, Tubman's own membership into the powerful indigenous Poro 'secret' fraternity, though symbolic, was evidence this 'civilizing' agenda would be ultimately abandoned. Politically, postcolonial Liberia did not immediately produce full citizenship rights for indigenous people, nor the abrogation of colonial bifurcation exemplified by 'counties' and hinterland distinctions discussed by Mamdani (1996). Thus, the post-coloniality of the Tubman Era was a period of hybridity and deep entanglement.

In discussing the postcolonial Liberian state, it is important to keep in mind prevailing ideas of the nation and the state. Although more rigorous theorization of colonial and postcolonial statehood in Africa did not emerge until the 1970, 80s and 90s,[157] they attempt to capture Africa's state ontology in terms of the different phases of Africa's interaction with the outside world. These discourses of the African state essentially sought to fuse understandings of the 'nation' in the sense famously advanced by Anderson (1983) - as 'an imagined community of people', and Western notions of the state as a legal-rational, territorially confined, and institutionally regimented and coordinated set of apparatuses (North & Thomas 1973; Weber [1922] 1978). Thus, the concept of the 'nation' came to be associated more with the diverse, though cohesive sociological makeup of the state, the latter being identified largely with Westphalian conception of statehood (Weber 1978; Tilly 1973; Mann 1985). This fusion of the nation and the state, therefore, greatly influenced developments in African studies following WWII. At once, the processes of building a nation – a cohesive community of diverse peoples – and remodelling the state based upon shifting state-society relationships, attained greater urgency. Davidson (1992) describes this dilemma as *The Black Man's Burden.*[158] Whereas both processes of state-building and nation-building were believed to unfold simultaneously, the process of nation-building in Africa was felt to lag significantly behind that of the state-making (Mawhood 1989).

Under President Tubman (1944-1971), colonial statehood began to give way to a postcolonial dispensation. Indigenous subjects sought new and greater opportunities for national participation and self-actualization. Soon, the ruling Americo-Liberian would be persuaded by circumstances to reform both the nation and the state. President Tubman repeatedly alluded to this idea of a Liberian "nation" as a cohesive socio-political community when he called for "the assimilation and unification of our

[157] See, for example, Peter Ekeh's (1975).
[158] Davidson (1992).

various populations composing the body politic", insisting that "All classes of [Liberians] must be made to fuse and coalesce into a solid whole (*IA*, Jan. 3, 1944, 311, 312). In welcoming newly elected indigenous members to the House of Representative in 1947, he again extolled "the dawn of a new unification and agglutination of the different elements that make up the body politic" (*AM* Nov. 15, 1946, in Dunn 2011, 1035). Although Liberia's existence as a republican state within international relations was well advanced, Tubman believed a true Liberian nationality and statehood were yet to attain their fullest meaning. Often, he spoke of the state and the nation separately. At other moments, he spoke of them interchangeably, suggesting he viewed these processes as inextricably linked, although each, he seemed to believe, could be pursued separately.

A sub-theme of Tubman's state and nation-building agenda was the need for greater state revenue. He drew a direction connection between these processes and the indispensable element of state revenue and commodity rent. Again and again, he reiterated the need for citizens then and the generations yet unborn, to "contribute their fair share of taxes" for the twin endeavours.[159] At the same time, foreign concessionaires came under increasingly pressures to contribute greater shares of mineral profits. What follows is a demonstration of the central role sovereign rent played be the rebuilding process of new Liberian nation and state. This theme of the relationship between rent and nation-building featured permanently throughout the Tubman Administration.

Sovereign Rent and Nation-Building

The famed Harvard University international lawyer, Charles Henry Huberich, captures the epic national challenge confronting Tubman following his ascendency as president.

> It is a serious defect in the Constitution in the [Liberian] Constitution that no provision was made regarding the government of the native tribes, leaving all questions to be determined by general legislation subject to the limitation imposed by a Constitution framed for the government of an entirely different population.
>
> Entirely different problems of administration and law necessarily arise in the two grand Administrative Subdivisions into which the country is divided. The area of County Jurisdiction is inhabited by a small population that has grown up in surroundings of a Christian Western civilization, in large part descended from emigrants from the United States and the British West Indies, with a common language and common laws and customs, and government institutions and political philosophy based on American traditions, with a just pride in their political ands cultural achievements in a century and a quarter of the existence of their state. – Huberich (1997, vol. II, 1230-31

[159] Tubman rationalized the contraction of public debt in terms of the benefits to be enjoyed by future generations, and therefore their responsibility for future debt payments. See e.g. *AM* Nov. 26, 1952, in Dunn 2011, 1150-69)

Tubman's Unification and Integration Policy represented the spearhead of his nation-building efforts. As has already been observed, President Tubman perceived this effort in largely social and political terms. He spoke consistently of the need for amalgamation and agglutination of Liberia's diverse ethnicities and societies into a single unified whole. This was a herculean task, given Liberians history of deep divisions. Early nation-building lacked not only genuine and concerted efforts by past leaders, but also vital resources (Martin 1969). No leader before Tubman can be credited for more effectively and successfully advancing nation-building as he did.

Unveiled officially in his *First Inaugural Address* on Jan. 3, 1944, the policy sought to reverse more than a century and half of state-society rivalries, inter- and intra-ethnic conflicts; and to unify Liberians into a more coherent body polity. Tubman declared that "all classes of our people must be made to fuse and coalesce into a solid whole" (*IA* Jan. 3, 1944 in Guannu 1980, 305-313). He would reiterate this purpose later at the Convocation of the National Executive Council in Harper, Maryland County: "all Liberians must be united into one consolidated whole" (*Opening Speech*, 1st National Executive Council on May 20, 1954 1954). As a national program, Tubman's nation-building agenda rested upon two major planks: national reconciliation and conflict resolution on one hand between Americo-Liberians and the larger indigenous population, and on the other hand, among ethnic polities themselves. I shall elaborate.

National Reconciliation and Conflict Resolution

The urgency of national reconciliation and conflict resolution manifested itself early in the Tubman administration. This was particularly true in light of the bloody rebellion in 1932 by a Kru secessionist movement resisting impositions by the Barclay Administration, amidst threats of inviting neighbouring British control over them (Interior Dept. *Letter*, 1932; Dunn 2001, 252-53). It was against this backdrop that President Tubman announced "that the spirit of this administration will be: *No Reprisal; No Pay-Backs, No Get-Even-With; but let the dead past bury the dead*" (*IA*, Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu 1980, 305). To assuage indigenous fears and bring relief from well-known abuses within *Hinterland Administration*, Tubman granting unconditional amnesty to the Kru secessionist leader Paramount Chief Jua Nimley of Sasstown, and his fellow Kru confederates (*Executive Order No. 4*, 1944, in Smith 1969, 81). Marshall Law imposed upon Jodoh, Sasstown District as a result of the war, was immediately lifted, and civil order reinstating (Smith 1968). Various *Departmental Circular* went out abrogating extreme levels of coercion and oppressive requisitioning tactics by administrative officials, as swift investigation and punishment were meted for administrative misconduct of hinterland officials (Interior Dept. *Circular No. 3, 1944,* in Smith 1968, 81; *Presidential Decisions Rendered,* Central Province Aug. 28, 1945; Oct. 31, 1945; Eastern Province, Sept. 20, 1946; Department of War *Circular No. 2*, 1944; AM, Nov. 3, 1944, in Dunn 2011, 1000; *Executive Order* No. 5, 1944, in Smith 1969, 81).

These reconciliation efforts continued throughout the administration, and other symbolic gestures, such the deletion of the term "savage" in reference to indigenous people, from the diploma of Liberia's highest national order, the *Humane Order of African Redemption*; and replaced by the term 'unfortunate' (*AM* Nov. 11, 1957, in Dunn, 1245). New historical and anthropological researches into understanding the values and contributions of traditional cultures to the Liberian mosaic were launched; and due recognition to indigenous polities and leaders at every national ceremony and events were made (in Dunn 2011, 1373). National monuments rose around the country in honour of indigenous leaders who helped found the nation, together with their Afro-American counterparts (in Dunn 2011, 1265). A National Culture Center was constructed outside Monrovia in 1963, dedicated in indigenous knowledge, art, music and culture 1954. Perhaps the most power symbolic gesture of reconciliation was Tubman attainment of membership in the all-power indigenous all-make Poro society (Saha 1998, 111). Having achieved significant progress in reconciliation and unification, Tubman proudly announce a new day of friendship and peace in Liberia, declaring at an *Executive Council* held in Harper, Maryland County in 1954 that

> We must now destroy all ideologies that tend to divide us. Americo-Liberianism must be forgotten, and all must register a new era of justice. – Equity and fair dealing for everyone from every part of the country, regardless of tribe, clan, section, creed and economic status. – Tubman, *Executive Council*, Harper, Maryland, 1954, in Banks-Henries, p. 155.

There is another aspect of national reconciliation and conflict resolution which has received very little attention in Liberianist scholarship, but which deserves due recognition. It was President Tubman's regular *Executive Councils* and *National Unification Councils* meetings,[160] and their effects on peace and conflict resolution within the framework of National Unification. As Americo-Liberian and indigenous relationships evolved throughout the 19th Century, the president often played the role of arbitrator and peace maker in conflicts involving ethnic polities and societies (e.g. King *AM*, Dec. 14, 1921, in Dunn 2011, *584*; Barclay *AM* Dec. 22, 1931, Oct. 24, 1932, Oct. 29, 1937 in Dunn 2011). President viewed this historic role both as an opportunity into indigenous politics, but also as a crucial asset in his Unification Policy. Thus, his regular *Executive Councils* went beyond a administrative governance and into the arena of conflict resolution. For example, in 1946 President

[160] Executive Councils Meetings were regular (often annual) events confined to specific provinces of the county. At the larger National Unification Council meetings which took place every couple of years, all Panamount and Clan Chiefs and elders from every province, district, chiefdom, and 'tribe' of the hinterland attended. Over 500 tribal representatives attended the First National Unification Council held in 1954 in Harper City, Tubman's birthplace. Tribal representatives were flown into the event, many for the first time, on GoL's expense.

Tubman and his Interior Department Delegation travelled through the Western, Eastern and Central Provinces, including the south-eastern cities of Barclayville and Harper, holding *Executive Councils* with Chiefs, tribal leaders and hinterland populations, "hearing and disposing of matters of import to the tribes and Government" (*AM* Nov. 15, 1946, in Dunn 2011, 1051). On the same trip, President Tubman reported the successful resolution by his Interior Secretary of "the Gbandi-Giss land dispute of more than twenty years standing" in the Central Province (ibid). On another occasion in 1965, Tubman himself intervened in another land-related conflict involving the Yederobo and Nyanbo Tribes of Maryland County. He reports thus in 1965:

> Because of the importance I attach to this occurrence, I proceeded to Maryland county and personally investigated this matter and found the the Nyanbo Tribe was the Aggressor. I referred their conduct to a Council of Chiefs to recommend penalty that Should be imposed under native customary law. The report of the Council we incorporated into my decision, which was enforced by compliance of the Nyanbo Tribe with the penalty imposed and the same Council of Chiefs was directed to perform the usual customary ceremonies for restoration of peace between tribes where blood has been shed. This was effected and the two tribes are now on friendly relations again. – *AM* Nov. 15, 1946, in Dunn 2011, 1051.

The Interior Department records is replete with instances of milestone progress in intra- and inter-ethnic conflict resolution. This element of intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts in Liberia has received scent attention until the 1990s when full-scale ethnics struggles erupted into civil wars in 1990 involving at least four ethnic communities: Krahn, Gio, Mano and Mandingo (e.g. Elis 2015; Livett 2006). One gets the sense that like his predecessors, President Tubman perceived considerable threats from the rise of ethnic-nationalism among Liberia's ethnic polities. Thus, his reconciliation initiative seemed also targeted diffusing such threats. For example, on his visit to the Central, Western and Eastern Provinces in 1946, he observed a troubling trend among some 'tribal segments' which he reported to the Legislature thus:

> There seems to be however, transcendentalists, scattered here and there who appear not yet competent of understanding, in a practical way, the object, nature and office of the Government of Liberia, nor the opportunities which it affords them, nor the path that must lead it successfully to its destiny; and hence, they endeavour to promote the idea of Tribe, Clan and Element feeling. They cherish the hope and express in camera that the time will come when authority and conduct of government will evolve to one element or clan or the other, to the exclusion of others. Any such idea is preposterous and unpatriotic. For the office and purpose of the founding of this Republic was to offer a home for all of the sons of Africa – those who were originally here, those who came, and those who shall come here after (*AM*, Nov. 15, 1946, in Dunn, 1051-52).

Tubman's ire also extended to Missionary school administrators who he accused of "endeavouring to propagate this spirit of Clan and Element discrimination with a rule of divide and rule" (p. 1052). At least on one occasion he was invited at a certain Mission school in the St. Paul

River area where he witnessed students of the Graduating Class categorized as "Miss 'A' Vai", "Miss 'B' Grebo", "Miss 'C' Liberian". To this Missionary group he issued the sternest of warning, "requiring a full stop and an immediate halt" to the practice, or risk "measures to enforce the halt even to the extent of inhibiting all such institutions, or at least demanding a change in personnel" (p. 1053).[161] Such fears were heightened further in the aftermath of indigenous suffrage. In addition to his regular *Executive Council* sessions which gave in insights into prevailing politics, Tubman also instituted what he termed a "Relations Officer" program, "Because of the very powerful influence certain tribal institutions [such as the Poro and Sande societies] bear on the tribes and tribesmen" (*AM* Oct. 28, 1949, in Dunn, 1106). Critics of his administration cite this program as evidence of Tubman's 'Police state' – surveilling powerful ethnic fraternities, and later his political opponents within opposition politics (Dunn & Holsoe 1985, 143; Nevin 2012, 61). But the Relations Officers program, not unlike the Frontier Force, also functioned as a crucial means of employment and social circularity, drawing its recruits largely from indigenous hinterland communities. In hindsight, and given the destructive consequences ethnic violence in the 1900s and 2000s, one must credit Tubman's success in keeping ethnic nationalism in abeyance.

Assimilation and Integration of Indigenous Population

But political incorporation of indigenous people seemed an inevitable outcome in the post-WWII era. And President Tubman seemed committed his program of indigenous assimilation and integration as the second crucial plank of his nation-building agenda. In 1944, appropriate legislations were passed and referendum staged, amending the Constitution to "extend suffrage to male hut tax payers of 21 years" and older, as well as property owning and tax-paying women of the same age (*Act of the Legislature* 1944/45; *AM*, Nov. 9, 1945, in Dunn, 1026). With suffrage also came political representation which Tubman sought to channel through his ruling True Which Party. In 1946, the first three indigenous representatives were elected through popular vote to the Lower House of Representatives, representing the three Provinces of the Hinterland - Eastern, Central, and Western (*AM*, Nov. 1946, in Dunn 2011, 1035). From zero representatives in 1944, their number had increased to a third of total House membership by 1956, and was expected to grow (*IA*, Jan. 2, 1956). Later in 1964 with the abrogation of "counties" and "hinterland" distinctions, and the creation of four new counties (Lofa, Bong, Nimba, and Grand Gedeh Counties), indigenous the Senate was opened them, as well as appointments as Superintendents. Through these important government portfolios, indigenous incorporation in national politics and administration gradually became a reality (*Act of*

[161] Tribal rivalry regarding ownership of motor vehicles in Central Province; settlement of accusation against Gbandi Paramount Chief Barmo Jallah being a member of the 'human leopard society' Tubman investigated and found the allegations to be false. (p. 1081).

the Legislature 1945, 1945; *AM* Nov. 26, 1964 in Dunn 2011, 1335-39). On the particular issue of women's rights and suffrage, the evidence suggests President Tubman was far more progressive than he had been credited.[162]

In seeking to carve out a place in the new Liberia for its indigenous population, Tubman spoke constantly of the important role indigenous people must play, both as a unique community of people, but also as an integral part of a national collective – a new nation. But President Tubman had in mind a particular kind of nation, one not unlike that which his forebears envisioned at its founding. He declared in 1944:

> For it is to these fellow citizens of ours, inhabitants of the Hinterland, that we must look very largely to the future maintenance and perpetuity of the State; for we are aiming of developing a civilized State, the civilization of which will be as weak as the weakest pagan link, if due precaution be not taken. – *IA* Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu (1980, 313).

This new nation Tubman sought to build was one in which notions of "civilization" and ideals of Christianity would define its essential character. In this sense, Tubman's vision of the nation was not new, difference been simply a set of new circumstances in the 20th Century. In a way, it was a historical reversal – a sort of travel back in time when Liberia's Afro-American founders sought to 'civilize and Christianize' the native population. Although the concept of 'civilization' had lost potency elsewhere in colonial and former colonial spaces in Africa, it seemed very much alive in Liberia (Brown 1982; Fraenkel 1964). Overtime, Tubman conflated 'civilization' with more voguish concepts of 'modernization' and 'development' to win indigenous support (Brown 1982; Clower et al. 1966; Lowenkopf 1976). Christianity also helped bolster Tubman's civilizing agenda, as well as advance his political security. Tubman would repeatedly evoke the Christian obligation "to obey constituted authority as they are put in place by God" to dissuade opposition to his rule (Gifford 1998, 1993). In this regard, 20th Century Christianity, like its 19th Century counterpart, functioned both as an agent of change, and an instrument of social and political control.

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[162] Beyond the granting of women suffrage, President Tubman also ended porterage service for hinterland women; passed 'equal work, equal pay' laws in 1945 and 1947 for women; granted women's right to divorce on grounds of 'emotional hurt'; issued and enforced a ban on "inhumane" workplace conditions for women; extended jury rights and service to women; admitted women into the National Police Force and military for the first time; created a Bureau of Mother and Child to provide free natal care and make annual welfare payments to women having 6 or more children. See *An Act Creating the Bureau of Women and Child*', 1962. In 1953, Tubman also proposed the extension of maternity leave for expecting mothers from two to four months (Dunn, 1186). Laws regarding inheritance for woman were also reformed (Dun, 1049The evidence shows that his disposition to women's rights preceded his ascendency to the Presidency. In 1943 as he contested the Standard Bearer-ship of the TWP, women suffrage features as a campaign proposal (*AM*, Nov. 9, 1945). Tubman seemed influenced by the democratic mantra of "no taxation without representation", but also as a fulfilment of Liberia's own commitment to international principles, for example, the International Charter for World Peace and Security, chap. 9, Art. 55, Section "c", to uphold "human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without discrimination as to race, sex, language or religion" (Ibid).

The persistence state bifurcation between 'County' and 'Hinterland' jurisdictions posed a particular challenge to unification and integration. While Tubman appeared initially resigned to the system, commitment to its abrogation could not be more genuine (IA, Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu 1980, 313). His response to this challenge was, however, a phased approach to assimilation and integration, with western formal education playing a pivotal role. In 1944, he spoke of the need "to educate [indigenous population] into good and useful citizens, capable of knowing their duty, status and rights as citizens, and competent of exerting, enjoying and asserting them; to have them love their native land and feel proud to be called Liberians" (ibid). Later in 1952, he tied this goal directly to state resources, stating:

> It is the solemn duty of government to call to be diffused amongst its entire population this most desirable and most indispensable pre-requisite to national development. This fact is made more manifest by the rapid and almost phenomenon progress the Country has made both at home and in the field of external relations. We shall therefore vigorously seek to prosecute the educational program as envisaged to the highest possible level of recognized present day standards, and to the fullest extent of our national resources. – *IA*, Jan. 7, 1952, in Guannu (1980, 327).

He again reiterated the need for "a much larger national appropriation for education in Liberia than we have had in the years gone by" (*IA* Jan. 3, 1944 in Guannu 1980, 314), stating that:

> The reason for this need, is that the demand of Liberia calls for a prepared citizenry, particularly as the rights of suffrage is extended to a much larger mass, than ever had this civic privilege, in the way our country has been moving toward the centenary of her national life… The appropriation of public money for educational purpose would not only mean the training in letters, arts and science of a vocational character; but such education would be directed in such a way, as to extend to arousing in our youths and people, a sense of love for country, a sense of patriotic duty to the State, and the moral principles of virtues that should characterize a good citizen. – *IA* Jan. 3, 1944 in Guannu 1980, 314.

Tubman, therefore, sought to achieve this national agenda for education in close partnership with Christian Missionary Boards and schools.

SOVEREIGN RENT AND STATE-BUILDING

The character of colonial Liberia has already been examined in Chapter 4. Founded in 1822 as a colony for free black emigrants from the United States and Caribbean, Liberia formally declared its independence from the American Colonization Society (ACS) in July 1847 under circumstances of British opposition to its sovereignty. This was a moment in world history fraught with biases against the 'Negro' race, and skepticisms about the viability of a 'Negro nation' in the world and Africa (Buell 1947). Nineteen Century statehood was, therefore, for Liberia an experiment fraught with difficulties and complexities. The presence of Firestone, a major U.S. first cultivating natural rubber for U.S. markets and war-time needs, coupled with the existence in Liberia various U.S. assets, helped to preserve Liberia's independence from European annexation.[163] By the start of the 20th Century, 'modern' statehood for Liberia was merely de jure. Despite a standing army formed in 1908, Liberia struggled to asserted effective territorial control, nor did it possess a firm capacity for bureaucratic sustenance, due largely to fiscal exhaustion started with the failed loan British of 1870. Without U.S. diplomatic assistance failed, Liberia sovereignty on the international stage carried little or no substance.[164] Young (1994) was moved to describes this early 20th Century statehood "as a precarious polity subsisting by American patronage and Franco-British sufferance, loosely managed by a small Americo-Liberian minority" (p. 89).

Citizenship – that most fundamental of all relationships between the state and its inhabitants – remained unresolved for majority of African inhabitants over whom the state asserted sovereignty by 1904. The processes of postcolonial state-building, therefore, were to revolve, among other things, around this most fundamental question (*AM*, Nov. 1, 1944, in Dunn, 994). The success of such a national agenda implied a radical shift away from colonial state structures, and the transformation of state-society relations. Martin (1969) has should how opportunities for indigenous citizenship waxed and waned throughout the colonial period. By 1944, the facts of indigenous marginalization and 'subject' status was everywhere. For reasons already enumerated, President Tubman entered Office committed to "a new point of view and a new outlook for Liberia". Tubman's commitment to a 'new Liberia' seemed genuine despite claims to the contrary. His "Open Door" and "Unification" policies were reinforced with ground-breaking legislative and administrative programs. There was also a recognition early within the administration for strong alliances with the victors of the war, especially the United States, Liberia's historic ally. Tubman reasoned and made clear his view within the context of post-war reconstruction, that Liberia's path to transformation and development traversed straight through a strong alliance with the United States and Western allies. He remarked in 1944:

> From this war will emerge a new point of view and a new outlook, and as a nation we must exercise foresight and have vision. It is the duty of the statesmanship of this country, with the support and cooperation of the citizens, to prepare and execute post-war reconstruction plans and peace aims, and give practical effects to them…From my viewpoint, there were three basic questions involved: First, the practical principles of the *Atlantic Charter* which we are a signatory, within out territories and contribution to the international manifestations of those principles especially the two last of them, which seem to me to be new ideas – Freedom from Fear and from Want. – *First Annual Message* Nov. 1, 1944, in Dunn (2011, 993-994).

[163] Including an Air Force base, and critical satellite navigation facilities (Dunn 2009, 194-96).

[164] In early decades of 1900s, U.S. Secretary of State Elihu Roots was convinced Liberia was a U.S. colony. *Foreign Relations of the United States* 1910, 700, cited in Buell (1928, 7884).

Tubman had spoken more emphatically about the necessity of alliances in the year:

> It is therefore our right now, to begin arranging ourselves in position to apply the principles of the 'Four Freedoms' within our own borders, so that we may become dignified beneficiaries of the territorial, autonomous and economic securities assured in that Charter of the Atlantic to all States, great and small, victor and vanquished, as also the amplification and implementation especially made of it, by the President of the great United States of America. – *IA*, Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu (1980, 312)

Cognizant of Liberia's historic relationship with the United States, such alliance could be expected. But the processes of state-building involved other crucial elements, and would be defined largely by the following three: (a) 'economic development' through Tubman's "Open Door Policy", (b) state consolidation, that is to say, the sedimentation and strengthening of administrative, bureaucratic and coercive apparatuses, and (c) the projection of Liberia as a responsible global actor. The fourth and perhaps most important element of the state-building process was the shifting state-society relations through the granting of indigenous suffrage and eventual citizenship. I shall elaborate.

Economic Development

Economic development in Liberia was closely associated with ideas of 'modernization'. Not only was this modernist view of development championed by U.S. advisers within the context of "embedded liberalism" and the "New American Century", it was deeply held by Liberia's Americo-Liberian leaders, including President Tubman, whose civilizing mission was rooted in the nation's founding. Tubman's adeptness at fusing together ideas of 'civilization' with these more nebulous concepts of 'development' and 'modernization' appeared to have gained widespread traction among Liberians who emerged as willing supporters of Tubman's various 'development programs'. Tubman's 'Open Door Policy' was to be the economic approach to development.

The enormity of state rent during the period did not appear to preclude further entreaties by the Administration for Liberians to pay their fair share in domestic taxes. In 1952, for example, following an exhaustive enumeration by Tubman of what "Liberia needs and must have": roads well graded, properly drained, bridged and macadamized; School Buildings, College Buildings, University Buildings and Dormitories; Sanatoriums, Sanitarium, Hospitals completely outfitted and equipped; well equipped and furnished homes, public parks, buildings and hotels; our national airlines and a Merchant Marine of our own; a modernized army, air force and navy, coastal and internal defences, including air raid shelters; a network of aerial and other means of communication including television; industries, hydro-electric power, railroads, water and sewage disposal systems throughout the country; modern harbours built in all our seaports and ports of entry, modern farms of every kinds including diary, livestock, poultry and an ample production of rice, our staple food – he ended with these reminders:

> Every Liberian desires these things and is anxious to see his country possessed of them. But they cannot and will never be the result of nature…however, they can be into existence, but only by know-how and finances – in plain words, they must be brought by work and money…Therefore, the only means by which we may possess them is to pay for them, and it is an obligation of every citizen, for the benefit of life, liberty, safety, protection, peace and happiness afforded him by his country to contribute to these by the payment of taxes. – *AM* Nov. 26, 1952, in Dunn (2011, 1154-55).

Both mineral rents and domestic taxations expanded dramatically during the Tubman Era as as reflected Tables 7, 8, 9, 13 in Appendix A. As least 12 new direct and indirect tax categories were introduced during the period, all intended to address various aspects of development. At the unset of government austerity in 1963, new 'Austerity' and 'Development' taxes were introduced to help maintain or augment the level of public investments commenced in the 1950s. In addition to routine commerce-related taxation, there were also an education tax, a health services tax, a road tax, a water and sewage tax, an airports tax, etc. Table 9 **(**in Appendix A) gives a sense of this landscape of domestic taxation.

The suggestion by the Northwestern team (1963, 1966) of *'growth without development'*, despite its admittance of historical ignorance and primary focus on wealth and income inequality, could not be further from reality. While neither impugning the team's motive or the scholarship of its lead economists; and indeed praising it for the vast amounts of first-time economic data produced, as well as the political consciousness awakened by revelations of vast inequalities, I maintain that their modernist notion of development was deeply flawed, thus obscuring the level of physical and human development achieved, and preventing its recognition. For Clower and his team, 'development' was simply incompatible with an African society like Liberia believed to be 'backwards', 'traditional' and still in the early stages of the development teleology. As I have shown in previous discussions of the phases of the Tubman Era, all the transformations in society, politics and the economy could not have failed to assert significant development effects now known to comprise the process (e.g. Sen 2000, UNDP 2006).

State and Bureaucratic Consolidation

The second key pillar of the state-building agenda pertained to state consolidation, that is to say, the sedimentation of administrative and bureaucratic apparatuses of the state, including security, territorial control, human capacity development, and new levels of fiscal health. I have already given a clear picture of the fiscal situation during the period. Except for two years of revenue decline (in absolute terms), and seven years of austerity and declining public investment (1963-70), the Tubman administration enjoyed an enviable fiscal position, as Tables 13 and 18 show.

As Liberia lacked effective administrative and bureaucratic institutions at the start of post-war era, the various special commissions, fiscal and government-wide studies which President Tubman instituted appeared designed to strengthen and institutionalized public administration. Among the earliest of these efforts was the Government Revamping Commission established in 1949 "for the purpose of studying and presenting plans for the reorganization and improvement of the several branches and departments of Government", which laid the foundation for early reforms (*AM* Oct. 28, 1949, in Dunn 2011, 1097). At least five major economy-wide and government-wide studies were undertaken during the period (Table 23 in Appendix).

Other reforms included new legal regimes and codifications for all branches of Government (incl. *Executives Laws*, public education law, public health law, mineral and energy law, labour codes, codification of Liberia's jurisprudence. The creation of a Civil Service Bureau in 1960 (later Civil Service Agency, *Act* of Legislature 1975) was particularly crucial in curtailing the arbitrariness rife public bureaucracy through the standardization and systematization of public sector recruitment, deployment, salaries, pensions and benefits. A *Code of Conduct for Public Officials* was introduced to "provide punishment for mal-, mis- and nonfeasance in office by officials" (Tubman *AM*, Nov. 1945, in Dunn 2011, 1026). These reforms also extended to the military, territorial and state securities. Further U.S.-led training, military assistance and the formulation of a Military Code of Justice and relevant Court Marshalls. Tubman's ambition for a strong national army saw substantial expansions in the size and overall expenditure of the military as both a political and social instrument, especially in the first phase of the Administration.[165]

But more significant than any other reforms and bureaucratic institutionalization was the administration's program of human capacity development. President Tubman acknowledged the dearth of public sector expertise immediately upon his ascendency and set out to address it. He remarked in his *First Inaugural Address* of January 3, 1944:

> Government works more effectively when each Department and important bureau has an expert to advise on matters in which such expert has been scientifically trained. A permanent secretarial staff ensures a continuance of policy and more efficiency in administration. We politicians come and go, but these experts and technicians go on forever. They are the sheet-anchors. – If laymen and politicians control and act as experts and technicians, many blunders

[165] Military expansion during the period, especially in terms of personal, appeared to serve economic, political and social functions. Between 1944 and 1968, the Militia Unit increased from seven to seventeen Regiments (Henries, ed. 1969, 60-60). By increasing the army size by several brigades (from an Infantry Battalion in 1944 to an Infantry Regiment in 1968), Tubman incorporated more indigenous Liberians in the wage economy, increased employment, and helped integrate them into state institutions. However, the poor performance of the AFL in its first international peacekeeping mission in the DR Congo civil war in 1960, following years of U.S. training and equipping, revealed the stark limitations of the army.

> and mistakes may be made, something dangerous and fatal may occur and for such blunders and mistakes, there is no redress. The nation as a whole suffers for its ignorance. – We shall therefore, in virtue of this premise, seek as soon as possible and available, to stabilize our government by procuring [and training] expert technical assistance" (Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu (1980, 312-313).

Although within the larger framework of the Administration's national education and human development policies, this government program was clearly distinct, and seemed intended primarily to augment bureaucratic capacity. Starting with the organization of some 4 specialized training units within government, the program eventually extended to more advanced and specialized trainings abroad (*AM* Nov. 7, 1970; Oct. 28, 1949, in Dunn 2011, 1143, 1101-2).[166] A special Government Foreign Scholarship Program was setup as a result, funded significantly by the GoL, USAID, various UN Agencies, international organizations, and foreign governments.[167] When the program started, some 40 Liberians received 'technical training' according to the Secretary of Public Instruction, in such areas as Medicine, Finance & Economics, mining, civil engineering, dentistry, kindergarten Management, architecture, agriculture and Forestry, Business Administration, Photography, etc. (*AM* Nov. 14, 1945, in Dunn 2011, 1055). By 1968, the Secretary of Education reported that over 500 students had benefited from this and other multilateral and bilateral human capacity development programs (GoL Report 1968, 1969). Beyond general improvements in administrative coordination and effectiveness, there is anecdotal evidence the Tubman's success in bureaucratic institutionalization extended beyond Liberia's borders, towards its newly independent English-speaking neighbours, including Ghana.[168]

Citizenship: Transforming State/Society Relations

Citizenship – that most fundamental of relationships between the state and its inhabitants, together with its implied obligations and responsibilities – remained unresolved for most Liberians by the start of the post-war era. The 1919 Supreme Court ruling which asserted constitutional authority over all territories claimed by Liberia, including the Hinterlands, despite the latter being governed directly and strictly by the Secretary of the Interior under *Hinterland Regulations*, had until

[166] These included an Engineering Class at the Bureau of Engineering and Survey, a Law Class at the Judiciary, and Secretarial Science and Domestic Arts Class run by the renown educator Mary Ann Cheeseman, and an Accountancy Class held at the Treasury (*AM* Nov. 7, 1970, in Dunn 2011, 1143). The amalgamation of these various GoL programs under the Liberian College was the beginning of the University of Liberia. The various names President Tubman proposed for the soon-to-be colleges today remain their official names.

[167] A similar government scheme was established in 1969 in honour of President Tubman (*Act Creating Tubman Scholarship Foundation,* Nov 28, 1969)

[168] Mr. Ijoma Flemister, former Legislator during the Tolbert Administration, has publicly recounted, for example, how his mother was seconded to offer administrative assistance to the Office of President Kwame Nkrumah upon Ghana's independence in 1960.

early 1960s received no practical effects.[169] Tubman acknowledged it was therefore time the "the Legislature and the Executive take actions to implement and execute the Court's mandate." He offered a further very striking justification for abrogating these distinctions: He remarked:

> Another reason which makes the rearrangement eminently essentially is that the present Hinterland Administration was patterned upon the colonial system and must be abolished. – Last but not least, it is to be noted that these suggested changes are not courtesies to be extended nor privileges sought to be bestowed, but natural, inalienable and inherent rights to which each and every citizen of the nation is entitled under the provision of the Constitution that 'all men are born equally free and independent'. I attach great importance to the immediate necessity of this change. – *AM*, Nov. 22, 1960, Dunn (2011, 1290).

This was one of the first, if not the only example of clear affirmation by President Tubman of Liberia's colonial and postcolonial character. In this sense, one may assert that Liberia's postcolonial transformations got underway in 1944 upon President Tubman's ascendency, further affirming the view of post-coloniality as a process of shifting relationships between 'colonizers' and 'colonized', rather than a particular historical moment of political independence. Furthermore, Tubman's commitment to broad equality of men, and the necessity of indigenous integration appeared consistent with the motives driving indigenous and women suffrage in 1944 and 1945, respectively. (*IA* and *AM*, 1944, 1945). Between 1960 and 1964, appropriate legislations were passed and the Constitution amended, paving the way for the abrogation of 'County' and 'Hinterland' distinctions, and the formation of four new counties out of the three hinterland Provinces.[170] A superintendent each was appointed from indigenous stock as the most senior county executive. Additional county representatives were added by legislative enactment in 1967 (*Act of the Legislature,* Feb. 1967). Through this singular accomplishment, President Tubman transformed hinterland 'subjects' into into full-fledge 'citizens' for the first time in Liberia's history. About this historic transformation, Akpan (1974) writes:

> The creation of the new counties marked the beginning of the "Policy of Integration" and was perhaps Tubman's greatest achievement in national unification. For although some of their disabilities still remained, the African masses were raised from an essentially colonial, to a citizen status in that they themselves now managed their affairs, ran their courts, and appointed their representatives in the national legislature. Moreover, although it granted the

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[169] Chief Justice Dossen opinion in the case *Ballah Kamoh v. Johnn L. Morris, Secretary of Interior and Major John. Anderson, Commanding the Liberian Frontier Force*, decided May 2, 1920 (*Judgment Book*, p. 247, unpublished, in Huberich (1947, 1207-1210)). The Court ruled that to accept the defendant's (the Attorney General Edwin Barclay) argument that Statute granting governance over the Hinterland to the Interior Department precluded the assertion of constitutionality therein, would mean that Liberia's held no sovereignty other such territories. Thus, the Court rejected the Attorney General's argument. See *Act of the Legislature 1914*, establishing the Interior Department authority of the Hinterland

[170] The new counties were: Nimba (Northern Province), Lofa (Western Province), Bong (Central Province) and Grand Gedeh (Eastern Province), each with two seats in the Senate, and Representatives based upon demography.

Africans settler, political institutions, no attempt was made to interfere with the communal tenure of land in the hinterland, and no property or educational qualifications were required for African voters. – Akpan (1973, 236)

As the period progressed, More and more reforms unfolded, incorporating more and more indigenous populations into government and the mainstays of Liberian society.

Asserting Sovereignty Internationally: Liberia as a Responsible Global Actor

The role which Liberia would play in post-WWII international relations went far beyond alliance with, and support for U.S. and Western interests. As Africa's first and oldest 'democratic republic', [171] Tubman felt a deep sense of history regarding Liberia's place in the world, constantly evoking this sentiment in many of his public addresses. Liberia's peculiar place as the second "Negro State" (next to Haiti), and first in Africa was well established ever since it challenged Britain and France over customs revenue in 1845, leading to its declaration of Independence two years after. The post-WWII dispensation would introduce new and exciting challenges. Burdened by the weight of history and a deep sense of duty to the various international and African causes, Tubman admonished his compatriots to evolve "a new point of view and a new outlook", in acknowledgement of this new dawn. And as leader, therefore, he sought to shape this 'new outlook'. He asserted this in *Inaugural Address* of 1944:

> The part which we and our country are to play and take in a new day of international relations which is now upon us, and for which the nations are engaged in a life and death struggle; and what we shall be in the days that are to follow when Democracy shall have won the victory over based and vicious totalitarianism in the Construction period, will depend upon our preparedness now, and our character of oneness. We shall therefore recognize and stand for the demonstration of the indivisibility of coherent strength of the nation, as the supreme Issue of these days in which the whole world faces a crisis of manifold and radical changes. – *IA* 1944, in Guannu (1980, 311).

He later averred:

> We, during the state of our neutrality, were ever friendly to, and sympathetic with, the United Nations [i.e. Western Allies] and the cause for which they were fighting. Subsequently, we joined them in war against the common enemy and have contributed to the fullest extent of our ability and power to the war. We will continue ever increasingly to do so until the "Old

[171] The description of Liberia as a 'democracy' prior to the 1950s is a problematic one. Its institutions of governance and civil laws, having been patterned after the United States, extended governance through popular vote within Americo-Liberian societies both before and after the 1904 *Barclay Plan* more firmly incorporated indigenous societies into the state. Despite its Constitutional Republican form of government, with three co-equal branches of government, and a governance system based upon popular ballot, it was not until 1964 that Liberia's governance began to reflect the will of the majority.

> Symbolic Dragon" is smashed and falls to pieces like the "Potters Vessel". – AM Nov. 1, 1944, in Dunn 2011, 993.

Liberia's role in Allied victory and subsequent Cold War efforts in support of the United States are already well documented (e.g. Buell 1947; Dunn 1979; 2009). In addition to supplementing U.S. wartime needs for natural rubber through Firestone (McLaughlin 1966; Clower et al. 1966), its geo-strategic position at the shortest point "between the budge of Brazil [South America] and Africa" provided an expanded opportunity of Pan American Airline's "clipper services". Liberia also provided a military staging base for Allied aircrafts headed into and out of war theatres in North Africa, Near East, and China. It was also designated the location for a strategic harbour facility for naval security and the future "economic foothold on the continent of Africa for the post-war development of American commercial relations in that region (Dunn 2009, 28; Beecher 'undated'). A limited number of Liberian army officers also served alongside U.S. troops "fighting Germans", presumably in European theatres (*AM* Jan 3, 1944).[172]

Its status as the staunchest U.S. ally in Africa implied a close association with, and support for U.S. global interest, evidenced by President Tubman's Declaration of War against Germany and Japan in 1944, his adherence of the *Atlantic Charter*, and Liberia's signing of the *Declaration* and *Charter* establishing the United Nations in 1954 (*AM* Jan 3, 1944). This status earned Liberia invitations to and access into major international conferences where new global bodies were formulated, including at the famous Hew Hampshire Conference of the Britton Woods Organization in June 1944 which established the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IBRD, now the World Bank (*AM* Nov. 1, 1944 in Dunn 2011, 988). Over time, this new role involved beyond mere support for U.S. interest on the global state, and into independent actions in Liberia's own interest. President Tubman would develop a firm commitment to multilateralism and international norms in ways that even the U.S. itself often seemed reticent to follow. This commitment came to be reflected not only in Liberia's record as state party to all or most major international treaties and protocols (including modern-day ICC), but also its support for actions derived within these international frameworks. For example, in the aftermath of Europe's devastation from WWII and the resulting grave food crisis, a call went out to Liberia from His Britannic Majesty Government, seeking assistance. His Majesty's government: "The food problem [in Europe] was no longer of austerity but of absolute shortage", owing largely to successive

[172] Tubman averred in 1944 "that with the armies of the United States, there are Liberians fighting the Germans; one of whom visited the Capital en route to Brewersville to see his mother, the widow of the late Dr. Thomas. He is Will Thomas" (*AM* Jan. 3, 1944, in Dunn 2011, 984). The circumstances, however, of how the remains of many British dead of WWII came to be interred on "certain parcel of land in Harbel, Montserrado County, and Cavalla, Maryland County," remains a mystery of longstanding interest (*AM* Oct. 28, 1949, in Dunn, 1094).

severe droughts and devastations of the war (HBM, 'White Paper', 1946, cited in *AM* Nov. 15, 1946, in Dunn, 1036). As part of a global response, President Tubman reacted that "in addition to its regular annual contributions", Liberia would make further contributions to the Director General of the UN Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) for relief to Europe's food crisis (*AM* Nov. 15, 1946, in Dunn, 1037). The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 was another example. As the UN Security Council sought to mobilize Member States in an effort to repel communist North Korea's 'aggression' against the South, President Tubman responding to the Council's call by "authorizing $10,000 in natural rubber to the cause", vowing to take further actions as the circumstances may require (*AM* Nov. 7, 1950, in Dunn, 1116).[173]

The DR Congo post-independence civil war in 1961 posed a huge challenge to African unity, and to a unified African approach to the crisis which Liberia as a key African leader, was championing. Under Tubman's leadership, the overarching peace efforts led by the UN would receive GoL's unequivocal backing, and Liberia dispatched a full detachment of Liberian troops, equipment and finances in support of UN peacekeeping forces (*AM* Nov. 22, 1960, in Dunn 2011, 1281). Consistent with the UN's stance in preserving the territorial integrity of the Congo, President Tubman would later reject the secessionist leader Moise Tshombo's formal request for recognition of his breakaway Katanga Province (*The Liberia Age*, May 11, 1961; Marinelli 1964). Also under UN endorsement, Liberia and President Tubman would lead negotiations toward a peaceful resolution of the Nigeria's post-independence civil war; aside from significant Liberian government contributions to the humanitarian crisis created by the war (*AM*, Nov. 22, 1960, Nov. 23, 1962 in Dunn 2011, 1281, 1310). President Tubman's sense of high international standing was further displayed later in the decade in when, despite a clear lack of any military capacity to influence the prevailing situation, but counting only upon his good international standing, President Tubman appeared to insert himself into the Sino-India border conflict, dispatching a communication to the belligerents for calm and restraint (*AM* Dec. 18, 1967).

It was within the context of a rapidly transforming Africa that Liberia's standing as a responsible global actor would be most permanently and deeply felt. Dunn (2004, 4) has suggested that Tubman's 'Africa policy' was derived out of apprehensions towards radical nationalism internationally (a concern it shared with the United States), and its "Pan-African derivative" which Tubman believed Ghana's ambitious leader, Kwame Nkrumah, exemplified. Dunn's argument would explain why Tubman's 'Africa Policy' did not evolve until relatively late in the administration when Africa's independence was close on the horizon. However, it fails to explain Tubman's eventual support to some of the most radical elements within the African nationalist movements in West

[173] This Liberian gesture to South Korea went a long way in the war effort, and in cementing relations between the two nations. South Korea's current policy of 'visa free' entry to persons traveling on Liberian passport may have stemmed from this historic kind gesture by President Tubman.

African and beyond. What was very clear, however, was the shared U.S.-Liberia's interest in keeping in abeyance radical nationalist forces. In this alliance, the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) would deploy its assets, and U.S. government would commit unflinching support to Tubman's policies (Dunn 2012, 2009).[174]

As a continental leader, Tubman's efforts to moderate the peaceful transition from colonial to post-colonial order in Africa was met with powerful encounter-veiling forces in the firebrand Pan-Africanist and nationalist characters of leaders such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Patrice Lumumba of Congo, and H. Kamuzu Banda of Malawi, these leaders seemed intoned with Nkrumah's idea of a continental African state and government, and nationalist ownership of all of Africa's wealth. His idea of a new Africa seemed constructed along similar lines of his own 'Unification Policy' whereby gradual unification of the various ethnic polities in Liberia had "brought together twenty-eight tribes of varying dialects, traditions, cultures and customs". Thus was "the pattern of African unity we of this nation have advanced for the achievements of closer relations with the independent nations and freedom-emerging peoples of this continent" (Smith 1964).[175] Such stances ran counter not only to Western capitalist interests, but also to Liberia's own liberal orthodox policies of private owner and free movements of international capital. With Ghana's independence in 1957, and Nkrumah mounting the world stage, the two leaders seemed headed on a collision path. A meeting of "progressive" forces of Africa called by Nkrumah under the banner of "The All-Africa People's Conference" convened in Accra in December 1958, Nkrumah was joined by other nationalist leaders to pose the threatening question to Liberia's representatives: "Where shall Liberia be 10 years from now when we are free? You must ask yourself that question a thousand times" (Eastman 1973).[176]

Tubman's launch of his own diplomatic foray in July 1959 was meant as a counter measure to Nkrumah's 'All-Africa People's Conference', and intended to persuade Africa's moderate members of the value of his proposal for African Unity along the lines of a federation of independent states, instead of Nkrumah's version of a continental state and government modelled after the United States. But first, Tubman reasoned, a more intimate dialogue with Liberia's most nationalist West African neighbours, namely Ghana and Guinea, was in order. Thus, a meeting was convened in Sannequille, Liberia, to which Nkrumah and Guinea's President, Sekou Toure, were invited. Toure had recently led Guinea to a radical break with its former colonial Administrator, France. Thereafter, Tubman would lead a series of well coordinated continent-wide efforts that appeared targeted at

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[174] Among other strategic assets, the U.S. government maintained a Diplomatic and Intelligence Communication Relay Station outside Monrovia, stretched across 500 acres of antenna field and buildings servicing intelligence and communication needs of U.S. Embassies in Africa and the Middle East. Set up in 1962, the facility only shut down in the early phase of Liberia's civil war in 1990. Information about its operation and the inaugural Agreement setting it up remains classified. See Dunn (2009, 195).

[175] Quoted in Dunn (2012, 5).

[176] Eastman, T.E. (1973). *The Road to Addis*, cited in Dunn (2012, 61).

putting Nkrumah's continental government campaign on a back foot. The intrigues of these developments are well documented by actors in and outside Liberia, directly involved in them (Marinelli 1964; Eastman 1973; Horton 2005). In the final analysis, the culminated into the formation of Organization of African Unity in Addis Ababa in 1963, along the precise lines President Tubman had advocated. In Addis, with the assembled Heads and State and Governments, it was Tubman's propositional documents for formation of the OAU and African development bank that planted the pillars for both organizations. Nkrumah's idea of a continental government had effectively lost out (*AM* Nov. 14, 1958, Dec. 2, 1959, in Dunn 2011, 1253, 1269; Dunn 2012, 2009; Horton 2005; Sankawulo, 'undated').

In a little over a decade (1950-1965), Liberia would lead other more decisive efforts on the continent, including overt and covert support to nationalist and pro-independence movements in Zimbabwe, South Africa, Somaliland, Eretria, Zanzibar, Namibia, Algeria, Angola, and Tunisia.[177] Its respectability and leadership within the key UN General Assembly's Fourth Committee on Trusteeship, availed it the platform in 1950 to assail continued administration of Non-Self Governing and Trust Territories of the UN system, demanding their abolition (GoL *Dept. of State Report* 1950, 1951, 1960). The wisdom of Liberia's stance was vindicated later in 1960 with the eventual proclamation of the UN *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples,* paving the way for eventual independence across the continent (GoL *Dept. of State Report* 1960). In the same year, further joint actions with Ethiopia witnessed a formal filing of 'contentious proceeding' against Apartheid South Africa before the International Court of Justice (*AM* Dec. 9, 1961. See also Dunn 2012). Without the critical initiative and leadership of the Liberian Government, such continental bodies as The West African Rice Development Association (WARDA), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the Mano River Union (MRU), and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) may not have evolved at the time and in manner they did.

Regarding his role in African unity, President Felix Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire remarked in 1966:

> History will show the multiplicity and efficacy of President Tubman's actions: The Monrovia Conference of 1961, first bridging English and French-speaking countries of Africa; and his discreet and realistic interventions to apply to apply his personal prestige and the prestige of Liberia, to influence decisions in favour of African Unity. - Houphouet-Boigny (1966, 2). *The New York Times*.

[177] Such nationalist leaders as Herbert W. Chitepo Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), Hastings Kamuzu Banda of Nyasaland, Holden Roberto of the National Liberation Front of Angola (FNLA), and Nelson Mandela of the African National Congress (ANC) either journeyed to Monrovia, or were supplied money and weapons from their liberation struggles (Dunn 2012).

Upon his death in 1971, at least 22 heads of state and government journeyed to Monrovia to pay homage, as they did during his 27-year tenure, according to Tubman's private secretary (Chieh 2011, 48-49). The Nigerian Military leader Kakubu Gowon described Tubman as "one of Africa's greatest sons, a true servant of God who had served his people, humanity and the world at large with devotion and honest" (Dunn 2012, 13). Such glowing characterization typified the over hundreds of condolence messages delivered or cabled into Monrovia on the occasion of his death, as well as during the 27 years of in office, suggesting that the current controversies surrounding his rule appears to be a relatively recent one.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Key Findings

Introduction

This chapter outlines and discusses the key findings of the study relative to the four main postulates of the Rentier State Theory. The discussions are based upon empirical evidence from the period. Several other important findings have already been discussed in each substantive chapter of this dissertation; and will be summarized in the concluding section. For example, findings regarding the two overarching themes uncovered in this study (i.e. nation-building and state-building) have been presented and discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Here, therefore, my focus is an in-depth assessment of the evidence relative to the theory's four main postulates. Close examination of the evidence reveals sharp contrasts between the theory's predicted outcomes and the empirical reality. As will be laid out shortly, the evidence does not appear to support the predicted negative effects of rent upon the state during the period. Where the study is unable to clearly refute a postulate due to the mixed or insufficient evidence in one direction or another, critical questions are raised regarding the validity of the claim in question.

What follows, therefore, is a step-by-step assessment of each of the main postulates, starting with evidence related to the predicted relationship between rent and economic development.

***Postulate 1**: Rent Leads to Economic Decline and Underdevelopment?*

Regarding claims of rent's negative effects on development, the evidence does not support this expected outcome. This claim has been based upon, in part, upon the effects of the phenomenon of "crowding-out", whereby a preponderance of sovereign rent from mineral/resource mining sectors 'crowds out' investment and expansions in manufacturing, agriculture and other tradable sectors (i.e. the 'Dutch disease'). This 'crowding out' effect is based upon the view that, within a purely market environment, resources get allocated to the most productive and profitable sectors or economic activities. The result of this allocation mechanism, it is claimed, is a decline in manufacturing, agriculture and other tradable sectors, as the rent sector siphons away investments and entrepreneurial talents from other sectors (Corden and Neary 1982; Bruno and Sachs 1982). Through an emphasis on 'distributive' rather than 'productive' policies, new wealth, financial and human capital thus get diverted away from the private (formal) sector, towards more powerful special interest groups in society (informal sector) (Deacon and Rode 2015; Lane & Tornell 1996; Torvik 2002; Mehlem et al 2006, 2008). Under these circumstances, government functions primarily as a 'conduit of wealth transfer' rather than wealth creation (Deacon and Rode 2015, p. 235).[178]

Chapter 5 has have already examined and presented evidence describing the rapid economic transformations and growth of the Liberian economy during the period. Credible developments were observed in all aspects of the economy, measured both in terms of GDP growth, increased productivity, GNP and GDP/capita, GDMI, expansion in wages and employment, infrastructural development, manufacturing, economic organization and labour development, etc. Significant human and social capital development also occurred in the areas of education, health, housing and welfare (Banks-Henries 1968; GoL *Report* 1970; Kraaij 1980).

I argue that the influential claim made by Northwestern University (1966) economists that Liberia was *'growing but not developing'* during the period, does not reflect the reality at the time, when come to economic development. And although the team's findings are relevant only to the period 1951-1960 for which data was gleaned and analysed, many African and Liberianist scholars continue to wrongly attribute its findings to the entire post-WWII era, often as far as 1980, the last year of Americo-Liberian rule. But a careful review of the team's original 1962 study[179] and subsequent book, reveals that its '*growth without development'* thesis was a consequence of ideology, rather than empirical justification. The Northwestern team was deeply influenced by the prevailing Modernization Theory articulated by both Rostow (1960) and Galbraith (1958, 1962). Modernization Theory perceives economic development as a central corollary of modernity itself, and as a rigidly phased process through which so-called 'traditional' societies moved along a linear continuum from 'backwardness' into 'development'. Within this modernist view, economic development in so-called 'backward' societies such as Liberia, came to be defined not by the same standard econometrics of GDP, GNP and overall productivity, but instead, by the extent to which these societies, including Liberia, successfully approximated Western capitalist and liberal ideals. In other words, despite evidence of tremendous economic transformations, growth and 'development', the 'traditional' character of an African society like Liberia was simply incompatible with the modernist teleological views espoused by Rostow (1960) and Galbraith (1958, 1962). Liberia, in the minds of Northwestern team, was trapped in its "traditional" phase along Rostovian teleology. In such an environment, the goal of development, therefore, became a strive "towards making the advantages of westernization

[178] This new government role as a "conduit of wealth transfers", or what Shafer (1986, 916-20) call the "funnel state" has also been associated with conflict by making the state ripe for intense political or violent contest.

[179] The study's *Report* (1962) comprised over 34 separate *Staff Papers* and a major *Summery Report* by Professor Robert Clower, the lead investigator.

both obvious and attainable" across Liberia (Clower et al. 1966, 87); and to economically and socially rearrange and "break up tribal societies by commercializing agriculture and instilling other incentives to generate widespread commitment to a Western way of life" (Ibid. 101).[180] George Dalton (1965), another American economist and co-author with Clower (1966) describes Liberia as "an extreme example of underdevelopment which persists because of traditional social organization, culture, and politics" (p. 184). Dalton also viewed economic development as incompatible with Liberia's dominant 'traditional' social and economic systems. He remarked: "It is difficult to estimate how many of the hundred or so under-developed nations of the world that are still "traditional societies", or are still acquiring what Rostow calls the pre-conditions for growth and development…These are countries in which the principle impediments to development lie in traditional social organization, culture and politics – institutional arrangements unreceptive to development policies suggested by economists". Dalton argues, that "it is these refractory institutional arrangements" which resist and inhibit development, and not any other factors (p. 571).

The evidence of economic development does not mean, however, that the growth forces needed for sustained and long-term development – i.e. economic diversification, manufacturing and industry, and strong forward and backward linkages – were fully and successfully domesticated during the period. Aside from a handful of domestic actors and financiers, including GoL, foreign capital still accounted for a lion share of the forces propelling economic growth and expansion. However, by the close of the Tubman Era, a nascent manufacturing industry had emerged in the areas of construction, fisheries, beverages and breweries, glass, soap and detergents, dynamites, oil refineries, etc. (Banks-Henries 1968, Min. of Finance *Reports* 1965, 1970, 1973, 1975). Subsistence agriculture and production for domestic consumption, however, declined significantly during the period due particularly to GoL's policy of diverting indigenous labour aware from subsistence agriculture, and into the commercial production of rubber, and into the mining sector.

Regarding rent's effect on state autonomy and the "tax effects", it is very clear from examining the evidence presented in Chapter 5 that despite GoL's newfound fiscal independences, the predicted fiscal disconnect with society did not result. Precisely the opposite resulted for two mean reasons. First, the revenue-sharing policy between GoL and indigenous leaders served to incentivize more rigorous tax collection across the hinterland. By law, tribal chiefs received 10% of

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[180] This goal of development was also shared by other Western economists of the Liberian experience, Americo-Liberian authorities, including President Tubman, as well as other economists and academics writing on the period. McLaughlin (1966), for example, in reviewing post-WWII developments in Liberia, also concludes that "economic development means complete social change, whereby all of the social elements must be reordered and rearranged" (p. 196). In Clower et al. (1966), Dalton is cited verbatim without appropriate citations in ways that would otherwise raise academic questions (e.g. Dalton 1965, 584; Clower et al 1966, 7-8). I note that although married to Modernization Theory, Galbraith did not advocate exact duplication of western economic institutions into 'Third World' economies as the means of achieving development (Galbraith 1962, 15-18; Clower et al., p. 337). On this point, Clower appears to misread Galbraith.

taxes collected within their territories, divvied up between Paramount, Clan and Town Chiefs. Hinterlands taxation, expecially the Hut Tax, comprised significant fraction of GoL's Internal Revenue category at the time. The evidence shows that during all the three phases of the Tubman Era, these revenue categories either increased considerable or remained relatively stable. For example, revenue from Hut Tax which in 1944 began to be collected together with a 'Centennial Tax' and 'Development Tax', increased by 150% between 1944 and 1951. It rose from US$503,000 to 510,000 between 1952 and 1960; and by 1970 stood at US$1.8 million (See Table 9 in Appendix A). At such levels of collection, tribal leaders likely received as high as US$46,000 annually, far more then certain government officials.

A second factor influencing the growth in domestic revenue was the clear evidence of popular support President Tubman received from Hinterland population for his various 'development' programs. Through these 'interior development' projects, indigenous people came face-to-face (many for the very first time) with improved infrastructures, paved roads, bridges, portable water and sewage systems, electricity, telephony, etc., including motorized vehicles, modern medicine, Western education and other amenities of 20th Century living. They therefore credited President Tubman personally, and his administration for these developments. Thus, when when it came time to demand new taxes for "development" purposes, Hinterland populations appeared inclined to comply, although not always. Indigenous contributions for Liberia's "continued development" was given greater urgency during the period of austerity (1963-1970) as new taxes were introduced, including an Austerity Tax of 4.2% in 1967 on all incomes (*Act to Amend Revenue Code*, 1967, 1968). The positive trends in Internal Revenue generation do not in any way reflect a withering of state capacity for domestic revenue extraction. The evidence demonstrates the exact opposite. Aside from the major government-wide studies and reports on fiscal reforms, including the Steadman Study (1952) and Shoup Tax Mission (1966), the creation of numerous tax commissions and specialized tax bureaus within the Treasury Department (e.g. Bureaus of Concessions and Maritime, Hut Tax Assessors) and tax auditors, offer further proof of the strengthening of government revenue generation capacity, instead of its decline.

***Postulate 2*: Rent, Corruption and Fiscal Profligacy**

Regarding claims that rent leads to social waste, corruption and fiscal profligacy, the evidence is mixed. Critics of Americo-Liberian rule and the Tubman administrations have adduced the most incisive claims of corruption and state profligacy. For example, Clower et. al. (1966, 20-21) offers anecdotal evidence of various illegal payments (in cash and kind) by skilled and unskilled individuals for government jobs, involuntary contributions to Americo-Liberian True Whig Party (TWP) projects, affiliated-organizations and churches; unexplained and unapproved deductions in workers' salaries for an array of innovative government projects; tax evasion through the payment of 'dash' (a Liberian term for tip of bribery depending upon the amount and circumstances of payment), etc.[181].

Beyond these particular instances for exploitation, however, there is some evidence of abuse and exploitation within Hinterland Administration. GoL's system of 'requisitioning' for labour, crops, livestock, and other material items from hinterland inhabitants represented an extreme burden on the population. Through the system of 'requisitioning', government officials demanded and received commodities, food and other valuables without adequate compensation, or none at all. Requisitioning of indigenous labour were also made by Chiefs, often in response to demand by government officials, or for purposes of public works, porterage and military services, or for work on the private farms of national and local government officials, and private firms (GoL-Interior Dept. *Requisition*, 1946, 1952; *Presidential Decisions,* Central Province Aug. 28, 1945). Frequent requisitioning of crops and livestock (including rice, ingredients for stew, chicken, cows, goats, etc.) also occurred to meet the needs of local administrative sustenance, special government projects, traveling officials of government, Frontier Force operations in the hinterland, tax collectors, and other state representatives, including President Tubman himself. While many of these exchanges occurred within the context of hospitality and gift-giving, the pervasiveness of formal government 'requisitioning' amounted to a new layer of in-kind taxation upon hinterland populations.

The evidence suggests that activities of Paramount and Clan Chiefs were also a key source of abuse and hinterland exploitation. On at least one occasion in 1944, President Tubman recounted a novel form of exploitation suffered by hinterland dwellers. It was the abuse of GoL's system of collective fines and penalties imposed upon various tribal collectives. Tubman gave a sense of this exploitation in a speech:

> There is a new technique in vogue and by some of the chiefs themselves. If a fine is imposed of say \$10 on a Paramount Chief, he assessed each Clan Chief to pay a sum sufficiently large to raise \$20 to \$25. The Clan Chief imposes a sum sufficiently large on each town to yield him 100% assessment made by the Paramount Chief. And when total collection is made to liquidate the \$10 fine imposed, the tribesmen have paid \$80 to \$100. And \$10 is paid into the Revenues. The Paramount Chief received \$10 to \$10; the Clan Chief about the same sum, and the Town chiefs their emolument. Thus some of the Chiefs seek an occasion to be fined as a means of exploiting their tribesmen for personal gains. (*AM* Nov. 1, 1944 in Dunn 2011, 1000).

[181] A particular instance in 1959 is reported wherein all government male employees of a certain age with Liberia's National Reserve of the Armed Forces were required to pay US\$31 for official uniforms. Despite initial payments by many, some were forced to make second payments because they failed to display receipt confirming their initial payments (Clower 1966, p. 21).

These practices formed a range of abuses officially or tacitly sanctioned by the government. Together with other forms of direct and indirect cash and in-kind payments, they constituted a part of a larger scheme through which hinterland populations were overtaxed. Many of these practices continued throughout the administration, and into the next.

What is often termed 'lavish' and 'extravagant' government spending, especially by President Tubman, sits at the heart of claims of fiscal profligacy. As Chief Executive, Tubman was well known for personal grandiose and titanic ambitions, evidenced by the magnitude, scale and opulence not only of national ceremonies and gala balls, but also in the elegance and grandiosity of public infrastructures and capital assets (Roberts 1964, 1969). At the level of the presidency, Tubman owned and maintained at least three Presidential yachts during his administration, with which he made frequent international excursions as the public expense. At US$1 million was allocated annually in "Presidential Discretionary Fund", which Tubman used invariably to patronize his sympathizers, win friends and enemies alike, while extending personal charity across the country (RL-MoF *Annual Report* 1960, 1961).[182] Furthermore, President Tubman was granted incredible special spending powers by which budget resources within certain limits, could be reallocated without prior legislative authorization.

In the criticisms of fiscal waste and proclivity, some important and worthwhile national projects of the administration have not been immune. For example, the Northwestern University team criticized the administration's investment in "agricultural research and expansion", suggesting that GoL follows and rely upon the commercial agriculture models of the foreign agricultural concessions (Clower 1962, 48, para. 3.50). The team also criticized Tubman's universal educational policy, suggesting instead that the GoL focuses on educating "a small number of competent" citizens as was done in former French West Africa (Clower 1962, 45 para. 3.40-.41; Carter 1966, 135). The team also criticized GoL health and social welfare programs (i.e. public housing, social security and comprehension medical care), terming them "luxuries", and arguing instead that "Expenditure for health be concentrated mainly on measures to prevent rather than cure disease; expenditure on welfare should be directed mainly toward the provision of adequate water and sewage disposal system" (Clower 1962, 50 para 3.60). Criticisms were also lobbed against the cost of GoL's international diplomacy, oblivious of the centrality to the success of Tubman's continental and international diplomacy (Clower 1962). More vociferous criticisms were lobbed against Tubman's public building and hinterland roads projects, including the construction of the main campus in Monrovia of the 98ria in 1960 (Clower 1962, 1966). In a particularly awkward recommendation, the team argued that

[182] In 1960, for example, a total of $1.1 million (4% of total outlay) was spent on presidential 'Contingency Fund', against a projected budget of $32 million (GoL *National Budget*, MoF *Annual Report* 1960, 1961). The Fund was likely set up between 1951/51 (see AM Nov. 26, 1952, in Dunn 2011, 1164. See also Clower *Summary Report* 1962, 28).

government's extension of transportation and telecommunication infrastructures into the Hinterland, though vital, did more to facilitate increased exploitation and abuse of hinterland populations through more rigorous tax collection and requisitioning, then it did to facilitate development (ibid). President Tubman rejected many of these recommendations outright. In hindsight, one may argue that had President Tubman been inclined to accept such recommendations, government public infrastructural landscape and fixed assets would be far more vacuous than it is today.

Most of the criticisms against the administration seemed to have emanated from within Liberia's large diplomatic and expatriate communities, including U.S. Government representatives and commentators who Tubman described as "detractors [who] sometimes utter and write slanderous and derogatory things about Liberia which are most invariably false" (*AM* Nov. 21, 1970, in Dunn 2011, 1404). In these criticisms, President Tubman began to sense a certain racial bias, which he felt compelled to address.[183] He remarked in one of his public speeches in Monrovia:

> But even if they [these criticisms] were true, they could not in any degree equal the crime, segregation, murders, lynching, robberies and lawlessness relatively or comparatively obtaining in their own countries.…We have been quietly but intently watching the attitude and trend of some of our friends who render assistance and aid to us, but in a manner that not only infringes the sovereignty of the country but seeks to dictate what development should be undertaken and where…Loans, grants and aid are not the wrath of God that destroy both soul and body, and this Government will tolerate no more of this ambitious performance (*AM* Nov. 21, 1970, in Dunn 2011, 1404).

President Tubman seemed to have in mind his American partners upon whom he had come to rely for significant loan and grant assistance, but who were publicly and privately critical his elements of his administration. Earlier in 1963 when criticisms emerged over expenditures for the construction of Liberia's iconic Executive Mansion in Monrovia, estimated at a cost $11 million, President Tubman had some choice words for his critics:

> Foreign governments and international financial agencies have consistently refused to grant us loans for the construction of public buildings in this country. Yet their nationals have criticized the Liberian Government, alleging that all of our public buildings are rented houses with thin roofs built on the pattern of the old houses in the deep South of the United States. We were determined that this condition should be changed, and now that modern public buildings are rising in the capital and elsewhere throughout the country, they have turned their criticisms in other directions. We would like to make it understood that the type of buildings this government shall have is a decision that rests squarely with it and the Liberian people alone. This devious group must be negrophobes who do not like black men to have anything decent that they would have to respect… Be that as it may, we must make it clear that grants, aids and loans are not like the wrath of God which can destroy both soul and

[183] In 1950, Tubman recommended the passage of anti-discrimination legislation, apparently out of serious concern over racial biases against Liberian workers by Western expatriates. Tubman had earlier labelled them "negrophobes" for refusing to fund the 'modern' buildings and facilities he desired for Liberia.

body, and if such grants are intended as the golden calf or the brazen serpent set up in the wilderness, or the golden image set up by King Nebuchadnezzar for all nations and peoples to bow down to a worship at the sound of the trumpet, we shall not subscribe to, be led by, nor participate in such idolatry. (*AM* Dec. 23, 1963, in Dunn 2011, 1331-32).

Notwithstanding evidence of exploitation, graft and what can be termed 'fiscal profligacy', it is important to situate these developments within the context of Liberia's long-term state formation and shifting commitments of different political classes. As I have shown in Chapter 4, the various practices of Hinterland abuse and exploitations have their roots in colonial rule, and therefore predate the Tubman administration. Lowenkopf (1976) argues that the evolution of graft and abuse of public resources commenced at a particular moment in history when the True Whig Party (TWP) – a partly dominated by the poor and underprivileged class of Americo-Liberian – ascended to political power in 1869. About this development, Lowenkopf writes:

A fundamental and enduring preposition of Liberian political and economic life was established in this period [of TWP ascendency]: not only would the holders of political power partake of the lion's share of the economic wealth of the country, but the government itself would become an important, if not the principal source of income for many of their supporters…By focusing their economic appetite upon the government, the lower-class [dark-skinned] Americo-Liberians committed themselves to the preservation of the evolving political system, and give it, in a sense, its legitimacy. – Lowenkopf (1976, 23).

Prior to this period, Liberia's Reformation Party of First President Roberts, espoused original Whig philosophies which emphasized virtue, integrity and honesty in public office. Roberts and Reformation partisans demanded that public officials be men of personal and independent means, as a guide against public corruptibility (Kieh 1988). The record of GoL expenditure reveals significant expansions following TWP's permanent ascendency in 1877 when its grip on political power in Liberia became unbreakable. A period of unparalleled growth in public expenditure began, as the GoL began to linger from one debt crisis to another (e.g. Barclay *AM* Dec. 13, 1909; *AM* 1877-1920, in Dunn 2011).[184]

There is some evidence that the Tubman administration took concerted actions to mitigate hinterland abuses, while also curtailing administrative malpractices. In his first *Inaugural Address,* Tubman emphasized "the duty of preserving the Government free from the taint of even the suspicion of corruption". He declared:

We shall therefore insist upon the strictest economy and frugality compatible with vigorous and efficient civil administration, and shall demand the enforcement of honesty in the public

[184] In 1909, GoL budget deficit stood at approximately $80,000. President Arthur Barclay lamented increases in legislative salaries of $40,000 in that same year, despite the "body [making] no suggestion as to how to meet this increase in expenditure" (Barclay *AM*, Dec. 13, 1909 in Dunn 2011, 480).

service, and the punishment of ascertained dishonesty by due process of Law without regard to persons, with legal rigidity and impartiality." (*Inaugural Address,* Jan. 3, 1944, in Guannu 1980, 316-317).

A year after, his administration backed the passage into law of a Code of Conduct for public officials – a "Statute to provide for punishment for mal-, mis-, and nonfeasance in office by officials" (*AM* Nov. 9, 1945, in Dunn, 1026). Much relief was brought to the hinterland population as on account to Tubman's regular tours in which he summarily reprimanded, often dismissing from office GoL officials against whom allegations of corruption, injustice or administrative malpractices were levelled (e.g. *Presidential Decisions,* Central Province Aug. 28, 1945). To President Tubman's credit must also be added the establishment within the Treasury Department of the *Bureau of Auditing* whose task included curtailing waste, corruption and administrative malpractices in government. Also established and strengthened was a Bureau of Civil Service envisaged to introduced merit-based evaluation and recruitment to government employment, instead of what Tubman termed 'the old political method of appointment'. Initial opposition to this policy saw a relative slow start, but certainly insufficient to prevent its eventual rollout across government (*AM* Nov. 28, 1948, in Dunn 2011, 1088).

***Postulate 3*: Sovereign Rent and Democratic Decline**

In Chapter 1, I have detailed the causal mechanisms underlying claims of rent's adverse effects upon democracy and civil society. It is helpful, however, to restate these underlying mechanisms while assessing the evidence regarding this claim. The first causal mechanism suggested regards the predicted effect of 'state autonomy' as a consequence of relative fiscal independence. The fiscal autonomy derived from direct inflows of external rent is believed to enable independent state actions, and inure state responsiveness to popular aspirations which otherwise would derive from democratic consensus-making between the state and the tax-paying citizenry. Second and relatedly, rent is believed to enable authoritarianism by financing political co-optation of opposition politics, state coercion through increased military spending, securitization of the state, and election tempering.[185] Third and finally, rent is believed to undermine the development of independent civil society, through the creation of a pliant population content and politically indifferent on account of

[185] It is extremely to difficult to apply another claim of the diminutive effects on democratic institutions and constraints, and the weakening of property rights (however vaguely defined).

'allocations' and welfare programs they receive without having to pay taxes .[186] In other words, 'no taxation, no representation' (i.e. 'social modernization', in Hachemaoui, p. 4).

On the question of rent's effects on democratic institutions and the rise of authoritarianism, the evidence appears to be is mixed, but weighs more on the side increases in democratic tendencies. Evidence from the period shows no decline in political representation, nor a reduction in key political and civil rights. As has been presented in Chapter 5, the Administration extended suffrage and granted voting rights to women and tax-paying members of indigenous societies 21 years and older (*Act of the Legislature* 1945; *AM* Nov. 1, 1944, Nov. 9, 1945, Nov. 15, 1946 in Dunn 2011). In 1945, the legislature passed a law providing for four representatives in the National legislature from the four Hinterland Provinces at the time, who were eventually elected by adult franchise in the elections of 1947. In a speech given in 1946 laying out these important reforms, President Tubman drew a direct link between taxation and political representation. He remarked:

> I, for my part, have always felt that taxation without representation was oppressive and tyrannical. It is therefore with the maximum degree of pleasure and gratification that I extend to these Honourable Gentlemen, congratulations and express the belief that their presence in the Council of State is the dawn of a new unification and agglutination of the different elements that make up the body politic." (*AM* Nov. 15, 1946. See also Nov. 26, 1948, in Dunn 2011, 1035).

In a congratulatory message to President Tubman, U.S. President Harry Truman described these developments as "broadening the basis of the Liberian democracy" (Tubman, *AM* Nov. 15, 1946). The Quadrennial Elections of 1947 was in fact the first in Liberia's history in which indigenous natives and women voted universally in a national election. With the extension of citizenship to indigenous people in 1964, and the creation of four new counties out of previous Hinterland Provinces, new civil and political rights and privileges were extended under constitutional rule. Increased capacity for autonomous action, as the evidence suggest, did not result into fiscal disconnect, nor a diminution in domestic revenue capacity or political representation. To the contrary, we witnessed increases in all major categories of domestic revenue as a consequence of these reforms, but also due to increased access to the hinterland areas (*AM*, in Dunn, p. 1048).

These reforms and increases in political representations, however, did not mean the absence of illiberal and autocratic tendencies on the part of President Tubman or his administration. Clearly, President Tubman was neither a friend of the free press, nor kind to his political opponents, evidenced by the stifling the opposition Reformation Party candidate, Didhwo Tweh, in the elections of 1951; as well as his persecution of Former President Edwin Barclay, and treason charges against the

[186] It is striking to note that many of these subsidies and welfare supports are integral to the social contracts of many welfare states in the Wests, including the US and Europe. How these programs therefore are viewed to be unique to rentier states in Africa, remains a puzzle.

Coleman family in the aftermath of 1955 elections (GoL *Report* 1956; Wreh 1976). These and other examples of opposition harassment and prosecution for causes real or imagined, have led to claims of 'autocracy', 'dictatorship' and 'authoritarianism'. The evidence of these more controversial claims are complex and can to asserted in one direction or other. However, in the face of evidence pointing to the extensions new rights, and the broadening of Liberia's political space, claims of democratic decays become increasingly difficult to assert.

Claims of authoritarianism during the period are also related the fact of Liberia's single-party system in which the TWP held universal dominance. But there is also the real and irrefutable reality of President Tubman's personality cult, what Liebenow has termed the 'cult of the presidency' (Liebenow 1987, 116-134; Sawyer 1992). Evidently, President Tubman enjoyed an unparalleled level of indigenous support, resulting into political longevity of six separate terms over a 27-years. But there exists strong and competing views on both sides of this debate as to whether or not this was the result of authoritarianism or popular support. Kieh (1988, 13) describes Tubman as the "Superchief" in reference to claims of patrimony and his status as the patriarch of Liberia within the eyes of indigenous societies. Kieh describes how Tubman's political powers extending beyond the realm of politics and the state, and into the socio-cultural domain of the family and civil society. Under Tubman, it is asserted, the Liberian presidency evolved into a new form of "patrimonial" and "personalized authority" based upon patronage and the commanding personal control Tubman asserted of national politics (Kieh 1988).

Perhaps the most influential critiques of Americo-Liberian rule generally, and the Administration of President Tubman particularly, has emanated from the works of Liebenow (1962, 1964, 1969, 1987), Kieh (1988, 2008), and Sawyer (1992).[187] And it is not an overstatement to suggest that the dominant authoritarianism claim can be attributed primarily to the works of these three scholars. In his 1969 book, *Liberia: The Evolution of Privilege,* Liebenow describes a dystopian, immoral, corrupt, inhumane, unequal and uncharitable "colonial" African society in which Americo-Liberian descendants lived as 'colonizers' over the majority indigenous Africans who they colonized. Liebenow argues that this "colonial" relationship owed it persistence in post-WWII configuration to the "political adroitness" of President Tubman, who, according to him, did all he could to pacify the indigenous majority through co-optation, and when necessary, coercion. He argued Tubman secured the lion share of the fruits of economic transformation for the ruling Americo-Liberian elites, concluding that despite remarkable transformations in the "New" Liberia, in an apparent reference to Marinelli's (1964) highly complimentary book of the Tubman's administration, much did not change. He writes

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[187] It might be a coincidence that the three men, together with Clower before them, are all alumni of the Northwester University system. But such coincidence, one must acknowledge, has had the single most influential effect on Liberianist scholarship – in economics and politics – over the last 70 years.

> the essentially aristocratic relationship between the descendants of the settlers and the descendants of the original tribal inhabitants has remained substantially the same. The most significant difference is that privilege has been raised to a new level of magnitude. – Liebenow (1969, x).

In his second major work on Liberia, *Liberia: The Quest for Democracy* (1987), Liebenow, however, attempts a nuanced approach to the assessment of Liberia's social political evolution. Here, Liebenow attempts to qualify some of his broad generalizations in his previous work, and to credit Tubman for a range of important accomplishments (p. 59-70). Liebenow retained the same conclusions he reached in 1969: that Tubman was "the dominant authoritarian figure in Liberia's national politics" at the time (p. 119). It was Liebenow who coined the idea of a "cult of the presidency," charging Tubman for mobilizing a godlike loyalty and submission across Liberia. However, he felt compelled to offer the following clarification:

> While he became the dominant authoritarian figure in Liberian national politics, President Tubman was not a totalitarian dictator. A more accurate description would be that he had become the presiding officer of the Americo-Liberian ruling class and that at least until the political reforms of 1964, the president assumed the role of managing director of a moderate social revolution (p. 119).

Exactly what is meant by Tubman being the "dominant authoritarian figure" while at the same time "not [being] a totalitarian dictator", Liebenow does not clarify. However, he seemed hard-pressed to acknowledge important strides in national reconciliation, social integration and expansion of the democratic space. He also acknowledged the existence of relatively autonomous and powerful political actors at sub-national levels, who President Tubman felt compelled to consult and placate from time to time on important national issues (p. 118-20).

Sawyer (1992) builds upon Liebenow's broad and interpretive critique of the Tubman administration in his own book *The Emergence of Autocracy*. In it, Sawyer describes Tubman's rule as "oppressive" and "autocratic" on account of his personalized power, patronage and harsh (often violent) response to political opposition. Tubman's disposition to opposition politics, Sawyer writes, was to "ruthlessly crush it", in reference to sedition charges and prosecution of Tubman's political opponents, including Didhwo Tweh (the first politician of indigenous stock), former President Edwin Barclay, Colemen and their ITWP supporters as well as the trial of Amb. Henry Fahnbulleh, another Liberian of indigenous stock (p. 281). Sawyer also criticizes Tubman for "the introduction of violence as an instrument of political competition in modern Liberia", and the "securitization of the state" via an elaborate network of police and intelligence outfits (p. 281, 282). Not unlike Liebenow, Sawyer charges Tubman with the remarkable elaboration the "cult of the Presidency". He writes:

> Under Tubman, the Presidency transcended its original role as the symbol of the dignity of Liberia, and protector of the state. It became, directly or indirectly, the ultimate source of individual livelihood. Whether derived as a gratuity from the briefcase carried by Tubman's valet or from earnings from private agricultural estates or peasant farms, all incomes were perceived to be derived from President Tubman. Accordingly, all praises went to him (Sawyer 1992, 285).

In other remarks, Sawyer implicitly draws strong and direct relationships between Tubman's personalized authoritarianism, corruption, withering of civil society and violence, on one hand, and increases in rent revenue from rubber, iron ore and timber – the crust of the third postulate of the Rentier State Theory. He writes:

> The transformation of the presidency into a personal domain could not have taken place under Tubman without the financial and other resources made available to the government as a result of extensive exploitation of Liberia's natural resources in the post-war era [How could Sawyer know this with any certainty]…[T]he new economic prosperity changed the source and increased the amount of revenue available to the government…The shift from customs receipt and hut tax, the collection of which required considerable bureaucracy, to corporate taxes and royalties reduced reliance upon customs and hinterland administration. The presidency was financially able to pursue its objectives free from dependence on sluggish tax- collection bureaucracies and accountability to tax-paying constituents (Sawyer 1992, 283-284).

Sawyer concludes:

> One must perceive the personalization of authority by Tubman for what it was, namely, a failure to build institutions that operate according to the rule of law, and attain legitimacy based upon their own performance in society. The celebration of graft and corruption as a national virtue distorted the national ethos [*corruption*]. The establishment of a pervasive security apparatus, and the victimization of individuals for personal and political reasons provided a powerful disincentive for the development of an open public realm and the enhancement of participation of the society [*authoritarianism and decline of civil society*] …Finally, the transformation of the presidency into a personal domain posed an inescapable problem for the continuation of the social order upon the death or retirement of the leader [*autocracy*]. The political and social upheavals of the 1970s and the destruction of the regime in 1980 make this point all too apparent [*Violence and conflict]* (1992, 286).

Despite claims of authoritarianism and dictatorship, President Tubman's legitimacy as a leader did not appear to have its roots in political and economic patronage alone. Nor for that matter, was it rooted in his secret police or military. Hardly did Liberia's military rise above a matching band, as Tubman himself once described it.[188] And neither is there any evidence of wide-spread repression against any particular ethnic community, commonly reported elsewhere in postcolonial Africa. Instead, the evidence supports the view that Tubman drew his political legitimacy from (a) credible

[188] The evidence of the AFL's poor showing during its Congo Mission can be cited as further evidence.

efforts towards economic development and improved levels of indigenous welfare; (b) reconciliation efforts bridging historic gaps social and political gaps between Americo-Liberians and indigenous peoples, and (c) democratic liberalization by which the greatest numbers of indigenous people gained suffrage, citizenship and were ultimately incorporated into the mainstays national political life. In very credible ways, President Tubman took the 'government' to the people. The powers of his personal magnanimity, diplomacy, and conflict resolution skills endeared him to the indigenous majority. Even more significant was the symbolism of Tubman's admission into the powerful all-male 'secret' Poro Society as 'Chief Zo' (Saha 1998, 111).

Regarding claims of authoritarianism and autocracy, it is important to note that these practices do not originate with President Tubman or his administration. Nor did they emerge for the first time alongside the rise of intense state rentierism in the 1950s and 1960s. The evidence suggests that the rise of presidential autocracy and authoritarianism following the Fernando Po labour crisis on 1930, as President Edwin Barclay sought to suppress the rise of ethnic nationalism and potential secession. The Liberian Constitution was amended at least three times granting Barclay enormous emergency powers to charge tribal leaders with sedition, declare national emergencies, and impose marshal law in restive sections of the country (RL *House Resolution* 1930, 1931; Hall, *Note* 1943). Buell (1947) has argued that Barclay was the worse dictator Liberia has seen. Authoritarianism was, in fact, a feature more often associated with the administration of President Edwin Barclay, on account of the very broad scope and exercise of his Executive powers, in response to indigenous disaffection following the Fernando Po Labour crisis and the war Kru 1932 (e.g. Buell 1947, Sawyer 1992). Thus, we find evidence of a much earlier root of the practice.

***Postulate 4*: Rent, Violent Conflicts and Civil Wars**

Aside from the credible instances of Tubman's assault against the media and his political opponents (often through the power of the Courts), the evidence of his rule suggests it was arguably the most politically stable and peaceful 27-year period in Liberia's 20th Century history.[189] By 1944, threats of ethno-national resistances and secession constituted the greatest threat of violence and challenge to Americo-Liberian hegemony. The Kru Rebellion of 1932 threatened further losses of Liberian territories, and likelihood of a Kru secession into British control (Dunn, Beyan and Burrowes 2001, 339-40), and therefore required urgent and delicate conciliatory efforts by state leaders. I have shown in Chapter 5 the range of actions by the Tubman administration to diffuse tensions with Kru

[189] Such a claim can be extended to 19th Century which was characterized both by large- and small-scale skirmishes, rebellions and outright wars between indigenous societies and the Americo-Liberian state. Until the civil wars of 1990, the Kru Rebellion of 1932 represented the last full-scale state/indigenous clash (see Levitt 2005).

territories, including the unconditional release and amnesty of the insurgent Paramount Chief, Juah Nimley, and a lifting of marshal along the Kru Coast following the rebellion (see also Smith 1969). These conciliation gestures extended to every indigenous society and hinterland populations across Liberia. Further actions were taken to diffuse inter-class and inter-ethnic conflicts due largely to to Tubman's Unification and Integration Policy (and its corollary 'Tribal Unification' programs elaborated in Chapter 5. A central feature of Tubman's Unification Policy was the holding of regular Executive Council meetings throughout the Country. Through these Executive Council Meetings, Tubman received grievances personally and directly from ordinary citizens, rendering immediate administration redress to such grievances, while also settling tribal and interpersonal disputes between influential tribal leaders (e.g. *Presidential Decisions Rendered,* Central Province, Aug. 28, 1945, Oct. 31, 1945; *Presidential Decisions Rendered,* Eastern Province, Sept. 20, 1946). While endearing himself to Hinterland populations, these policies held the explicit purpose of addressing historic class tensions, while averting potential threats of indigenous revolts witnessed elsewhere in colonial Africa.

The evidence of general calm and political stability has, however, not deterred critics from holding President Tubman responsibilities for the eruption of violence and civil wars in subsequent decades. Without an explicit statement of rent's effects on violence and civil war in Liberia, Sawyer (1992) appears to postulate this relationship in his discussion of personal rule and Tubman's "cult of the presidency". Sawyer argues

> [Tubman's] transformation of the presidency into a personal domain posed an inescapable problem for the continuation of the social order upon the death or retirement of the leader. The political and social upheavals of the 1970s and the destruction of the regime in 1980 make this point all too apparent. – Sawyer (1992, 286).

Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) has expressed similar claims, perhaps under influence by Liebenow (1962, 1964, 1987), Sawyer (1992) and others. A post-civil war outfit established to "investigate the underlying factors and antecedents" of the country's 14-year conflict, the TRC's Final Report concluded that

> President Tubman's authoritarian reign, though progressive in some instances, laid the structural foundation for the continuation of Americo-Liberian hegemony through oligarchy, and unfortunately, leading to national chaos, state break down and deadly conflict between 1979 and 2003…Also, it was Tubman who introduced into Liberian politics the partisan use of democratic institutions, the political control of the military, the culture of extermination of political opposition, invidious destruction of lives and property, and more importantly, the rise of authoritarianism and political brutality. All these vices festooned during this period and birthed a political culture that would nurture future wars. (TRC 2009, 89-90. *Consolidated Final Report*).

Undoubtedly, President Tubman's fixed his personal imprimatur the post-war transformation of the Liberia Presidency, and therefore justly merits scrutiny. However, such claim that Tubman "introduced into Liberian politics the partisan use of democratic institutions, the political control of the military, the culture of extermination of political opposition, invidious destruction of lives and property, and more importantly, and the rise of authoritarianism and political brutality", could not be farther from truth. The historical records suggest that centralization of political power in the presidency has its roots in earlier colonial periods, particularly the immediate aftermath of the *Barclay Plan on 1904* when concerns roses over ethnic nationalism and potential indigenous revolts. Americo-Liberian leaders felt pressured to devise more effective ways of containing this menace, and thus granted the Chief Executive new, sweeping and arbitrary powers to respond to these concerns (e.g. Barclay *AM* Dec. 15, 1908, in Dunn 456).

Causal claims of Tubman's role in facilitating future violence and conflicts have had the effect of lessening the role of his successor, William R. Tolbert, but also of invalidating and excusing Tolbert's actions and agency. Furthermore, these downplay credible evidence of the success of Tubman's Unification and Integration Policies, and their effects upon society. I argue that President Tubman's political power and legitimacy were anchored not merely upon polities of fear and oppression, as his critics would like us to believe. Instead, Tubman's power and legitimacy derived from his broad-based consensus-making agenda with Liberia's majority indigenous community, in which were commitments to delivered economic development, liberalize the political system, foster reconciliation and inclusion, and a system of revenue-sharing. Also included were government-subsidized amenities and welfare programs which respected and upheld indigenous autonomy, norms and tradition. In return, indigenous societies pledged total loyalty to President Tubman, guaranteeing his authority and political longevity.

There is another aspect of Tubman's rule and his Unification Policy which impacted long-term stability and peace, but which has received little or no attention in Liberianist scholarship. It was Tubman's policy of diffusing ethno-nationalist sentiments among Liberia's more than 21 indigenous polities. Following the Barclay, Americo-Liberians strategy of rule over indigenous people occurred indirectly through Tribal Authorities and Chieftaincy Councils whose leaders were elected by their peoples, but commissioned by the President. Within the proprietary arrangement, political power remained centred in Monrovia. Regular tours of the interior, dispatches of presidential emissaries, and occasional arbitration in intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts achieved for the Liberian president the status of the Chief conflict resolver and peace maker. From these roles, President Tubman derived much credibility among indigenous societies for his Unification Policy and other broader national programs. But despite these supports, Tubman was neither indifferent nor naïve to the threats ethnic nationalism posed to Americo-Liberian, and Liberia's political stability. Like Barclay and leaders before him, Tubman repeatedly assailed attempts by tribal leaders to mobilize their people around what he termed ‘dangerous sectarianism’, constantly subordinating ethnic identities to a a form of Liberian nationalism, even if only symbolic. On at least one visit to a high school in Maryland County, Tubman berated the school authorities for identifying the various contestants in a ‘Queen Contest’ by their respective tribes, threatened to summarily dismiss them (Tubman *AM*, Nov. 15, 1946, Dunn 2011, 1052).

The historian and anthropologist Holsoe (2008) has also argued against the view that the Tubman era was anything but peaceful. Or that in it laid the roots of conflicts in Liberia. Appearing before Liberia’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission in 2008, Holsoe (2008) argued that despite instances of abuse and inequality, the Tubman Era was among the most stable and peaceful. Contrary to popular claims, he argued that it was the breakdown in central authority, not its consolidation under President Tubman, which contributed to civil war twenty years after. Under Tubman, Monrovia’s central authority, Holsoe argued, achieved “not only the ending of internal conflicts [among ethnic polities], but also the cessation of [indigenous] hostilities toward the state” (Ibid.). As with state-building processes everywhere, varying degrees of centralization have been essential for the exercise of state administration, including revenue generation and the exercise of violence. The two important state imperatives effectively achieved under the *Barclay Plan of 1904* through the establishment of Hinterland Administration (i.e. ‘indirect rule’) and the formation of Liberian Frontier Force later in 1910. But as concerns grew among Americo-Liberian leaders regarding the rise of ethno-nationalism following Barclay’s exit, new emphasis began to be placed on strengthening the powers of the Chief Executive to address such concerns. In time, the Liberian president acquired wide-ranging powers over the hinterland, through the Interior Department. Whereas indigenous leaders were selected and held legitimacy independent of Monrovia, these new presidential powers ensured that all tribal leaders when elected, must first receive a Presidential Commission before assuming assuming authority. The President held the power to deny commission to any Chief, who would therefore forfeit his/her leadership. Further, various District Commissioners, as official representatives of the president, held command over the Frontier Force, and could act against tribal authorities (with or without presidential orders), often with impunity. Under President Tubman, the the evidence suggests that political centralization went hand in hand with credible efforts towards ameliorating hinterland exploitations, as well as improvements in the fair distribution of national resources through revenue-sharing schemes, state salaries, pensions and other welfare programs.

Conclusion

The preceding analyses has amply demonstrated the empirical anomalies in the negative predictions of the Rentier State Theory regarding the effects of rent during the Tubman Era. The contradictions raise serious questions about the usefulness of the rentier state theoretical framework in understand Liberia specifically, or postcolonial African generally. The evidence from Liberia sharply contrasts with the postulated effects of rent, and thus demonstrates the need and effectiveness of a more nuanced politico-historical approach to unpacking sovereign rent across time and space.

CONCLUSION Original Contributions, Implications for Scholarship and Future Research

Introduction

This dissertation examines very closely the phenomenon of sovereign rent, tracing its development and operations throughout Liberia's *longue durée* state experience. The inquiry was undertaken within the context of the state's 'revenue imperative' – that exclusive prerogative of states to extract revenue and other gains within their territories (and beyond) for purposes of development and sustenance. In so doing, the research exposes the liberal conception of rent and its fidelity to neoclassical market theories, as the underlying analytical foundations of the Rentier State paradigm. Accordingly, it challenges the accompanying premises of what good governance is, the legitimate sources of state revenue, and ideas about corruption that undergird the Rentier State scholarship. The Rentier State theory therefore assesses a given state's extraction of rent through this liberal theoretical grid, despite serious questions about the efficacy and applicability of neoclassical market theory in understanding state behaviour in general, and African states, particularly. This doctoral research challenges these assumptions through the case study of Liberia.

Summary of Key Research Findings and Main Arguments

It is clear from the evidence examined that sovereign rent has been derived from multiple sources; and have assumed diverse forms and operations throughout Liberia's *longue durée*. *The Little Ben Affairs of 1845,* in which Great Britain and France objected to the payment of customs duties to Liberian authorities, was the first major instance whereby the lawful extraction of customs rent served to authenticate statehood, thus providing for the political perpetuity and fiscal sustenance of the Liberia state. Later in 19th and throughout the 20th Centuries, new forms and sources of rent would emerge (i.e. labour rent e.g. Head Money; international assistance (e.g. foreign debt and bilateral loans; land rent, e.g. Hut Tax), whose uses seemed directed primarily toward state consolidation and nation building, however unevenly achieved. The immediate post-WWII era of President William V. S. Tubman witnessed the emergence of new forms and sources of state rent (i.e. mineral rent, e.g. rubber, iron ore, forest commodities; maritime proceeds and elevated levels of foreign aid)] during what was unquestionably a period of intense rent windfall for GoL. Until this time, there was hardly any suggestion of rent's destruction capacity. In fact, the opposite view held sway: that rent revenue was indispensable to "capital accumulation, economic growth, social mobility", and an important "fuel for economic take off" within a Rostovian development construct (Ginsburg 1957, 211; Balassa 1980, 2; Drake 1972).

If, as I have demonstrated throughout this dissertation, the preponderance of state rent served the useful purposes of state consolidation, nation building and economic development, while failing to result into the expected negative effects postulated in the Rentier State Theory, why then does the theory continue to dominate political-economic inquiries into Liberia's political economy in particular, and resource-rich African nations in general? In response to this key research question, I find that the ascendency of the Rentier State Theory coincided with the period of decolonization and post-independence in international affairs; and the rise of neoliberalism as the dominant global economic principle whose object is, in part, to retrench the state (mainly Southern states) from markets and economies in favour of a return to *laissez faire* policies following the decline of embedded liberalism. By themselves, the theoretical and analytical problematic of the theory are especially formidable to be overlooked.

The case of Liberia reveals the Rentier State Theory to be grossly ahistorical; and demonstrates significant theoretical and analytical weaknesses as an intellectual tool for properly understanding post-colonial developments. Contrary to claims within the Rentier State Theory, the development of the 'modern' state has revealed that sovereign rent has not only been confined to 'late developing' states, but instead, has persisted throughout the entire state experience in one or another form of revenue generation. And it has functioned mainly for state and nation-building when the imperatives of administrative centralization, and the forging of a cohesive community of diverse peoples, seem most urgent. In the case of postcolonial Africa, the imperatives of nation-building commenced only after decolonization and European colonial exit between 1957 and 1990, when the last colonial/trusteeship holdout, Namibia, gained independence. In the case of Liberia, a key finding of this dissertation is that contrary to the predicted negative effects of rent, the evidence from the Tubman era supports the view of rent's constructive functions in forging the socio-political consensuses which underpinned the relative success of President Tubman's Unification and Integration programs, and Liberia's eventual postcolonial transition.

The imperatives of nation-building in Liberia were fulfilled through President Tubman's sagacious use of state rent. Furthermore, the evidence presented in this dissertation refutes the central claims of the Rentier State Theory, but shows that (a) Liberia did not succumb to underdevelopment, but instead experienced phenomenon economic growth, capital accumulation, and relatively significant levels of development; (b) that Liberia built strong public administrative and bureaucratic institutions, as well as institutions of accountability; (c) that despite credible claims of hinterland exploitation, corruption, autocracy, and illiberal tendencies, these tendencies did not originate within the period, and therefore cannot be causally linked to the more recent phenomenon of rent windfall. Furthermore, President Tubman's policies of political liberalization, women and indigenous suffrage and citizenship, succeeded in laying important foundations for democratic consolidation in the years and decades ahead. And finally, (d) there was a clear absence of political instability, intra-and inter-ethnic conflicts, and civil war during the period, and 10 years after. This evidence exposes inconsistencies in the rentier state framework, and highlights the need to revisit it as an efficacious tool for analysing developments in resource-rich Liberia, and Africa more broadly. Moreover, it emphasizes the urgency to revisit dominant Eurocentric and monolithic frameworks developed to frame a vast continent through a single, ahistorical conceptual structure. Unlike this dominant neoliberal ideological construction, the *politico-historical* framework I advocate in this dissertation engages more intimately with both the domestic and international complexities of sovereign rent in a postcolonial African milieu. What follows, therefore, is an overview of my dissertation's original contribution to knowledge, the implications for broader scholarships, and potential future research paths.

Original Contributions to Scholarship

In this dissertation, I have produced new data obtained through extensive archival research conducted over a three-year period. This data – drawn from archives across three continents – permitted me to answer my research question and establish that sovereign rent was indispensable to state-making and nation-building throughout Liberia's history, particularly in the decades immediately following WWII (1944-1971). These findings stand in sharp contrast to widely accepted premises within the Rentier State scholarship that sovereign rent undermines democratic institutions, hinders economic development, promotes corruption, and leads to social wastefulness, often resulting in conflict and civil wars. Furthermore, a careful examination of developments in Liberia throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries reveals the disparate forms and uses of state rent, and their centrality to state-building and fiscal sustenance. The evidence provided in this dissertation describes the mutually reinforcing relationships between state formation and rent extraction; and underpins its three main contributions to knowledge: empirical, theoretical, and methodological.

Empirical Contribution

My first original contribution to scholarship is empirical. Through extensive archival research and careful analyses of primary and secondary historical records, I have identified, uncovered, and systematically assembled a body of historical and fiscal evidence that challenges generalizations about postcolonial African states, and the Liberian state, particularly. My analysis of rare forgotten data radically challenges mainstream claims of rent and its relationship to state development in the African context. This data, for the post-WWII period, comprises approximately three decades of legislative and fiscal records, National Budgets, Annual Reports of fiscal, monetary, and economic planning departments of the Liberian government. Also included are copious amounts of official and personal messages given by President William V.S. Tubman (1944-1971). I am the first African scholar of Liberian history to bring these multiple sources of data and information together to offer a scholarly revision of the main accounts being told about Liberia, its history, and the more recent civil war. My dissertation, therefore, establishes a new research agenda that will permit further inquiries into the relationship between state development, nation building, and rent accumulation in Africa. These findings are presented in detail in Chapter 5 and summarized in the proceeding paragraphs.

Contrary to claims that state rent leads to economic decline and underdevelopment, the evidence from the post-WWII period in Liberia reveals the occurrence of both economic growth and moderate levels of development, alongside high rent revenues. My finding differs sharply from the conclusion of the Northwestern University team that Liberia was growing but not developing, i.e. the popular thesis of 'growth without development' (Clover et al. 1966). Of course, at the heart of this debate is the concept of development. Evidence from my research confirms that the rapid transformations of the period were not only confined to economic growth, reflected in infrastructure development, manufacturing, expansion of the money sector, and overall productivity measured in GDP, GNP (Ibid., also Carlsson 183). But that they also extended to the spheres of social and human capacity development, with a significant accumulation in social capital formation – what is today understood as important elements of 'human development'.[190] The magnitude of both investments and outputs in education, health, sanitation and human services in Liberia increased significantly from their benchmark positions in 1944, as demonstrated in Chapter 5.

Alongside these changes we modest but significant advancements in manufacturing, industry, and the financial and services sectors. Between 1944 and 1968, for example, approximately thirty-three manufacturing (import substitutes) firms had been established, producing a wide range of items from furnishers, detergents, mattresses, paint, plastic items, feet wear, foodstuffs, beverages

[190] On the larger discourse of 'human development', see e.g. Sen (2000) and UNDP (1990).

(soft drinks and beer), explosives, shotgun shells, and cement (Henries, ed. 1969, 117-20. See Table 14 in Appendix A). A US$12 million oil refinery was set up in 1958 (The Liberia Refining Company), producing 10,000 barrels of regular and high-octane gasoline, kerosene, jet fuel, diesel fuel, cooking gas (LPG) and asphalt (1969: 117). Commercial agriculture in cash crops, mainly rubber, cocoa, coffee, and forestry expanded with the setup of new plantations, at varying scales. At the same time, subsistence agriculture (especially rice production) declined. But the decline, in contradiction to analyses in Rentier State scholarship, did not result from any siphoning out of investments from subsistence agriculture by the Liberian government. In fact, higher levels of investments were pushed into rural agriculture, for example, via new partnerships with the Republic of China, the establishment of an Agricultural Experiment Station in 1951, various Extension Programs, Youth Agriculture Clubs, and the Operations Production of 1964, which encouraged county-based production through government incentives (e.g. Henries, ed. 1968, 89-91). Instead, the decline in subsistence farming occurred as a direct consequence of deliberate and self-inflicting labour policies put in place by GoL, in concert with Firestone and other multinational agricultural and mining concessionaires. The aim was to divert indigenous labour away from subsistence production and into commercial agriculture and mining, the products of which were destined for international export.[191] This clearly demonstrates that it was not national practices of sovereign rent accumulation that 'crowded out' local economic practices, but rather transnational capitalist interests in raising profits in Africa.

What then was the basis of the Northwestern University team's 'growth without development' conclusion? To be clear, aside from the trove of new econometric estimates of the Liberian economy, the team reached two important and irrefutable findings. First, it found that the fruits of economic growth were unevenly distributed across society at the time. And second, it found that the growth developed during this period failed to achieve enough domestication and structural alignment to sustain economic transformation in the long-term (Clower 1963; Clower et. al. 1966). But there is, on the other hand, ample reason to believe that the Northwestern University's teams central 'growth without development' thesis did not derive primarily (or entirely) from these two main findings. Taken together, these findings are insufficient grounds for a definitive conclusion about economic development in Liberia,[192] and rather refer to cycles of development in any postcolonial political economy. In other words, these are weak and incoherent arguments upon which to build not only scholarly literature, but also to inform public policy within the African context of some 54 countries. In sum, wealth and income inequalities, along with weak structural linkages to enclave sectors, are not by themselves determinants of development or lack thereof.[193]

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[191] McMaughlin (1966) and Kraaij (1983) make similar observations.

[192] Clower's clearly acknowledges this fact in 1963. See Clower (1962, p. 13, para 1.27-1.28).

[193] For a discussion of wealth and income inequalities in 'developed' nations, see Stiglitz (2012) and Piketty (2014).

The most decisive influence upon the term's conclusion, I argue, was its flawed understanding of the concept of 'development' itself. Clower and the Northwestern team construed the process of 'development' as a corollary of 'civilization' and 'modernity' incompatible with Liberia's perceived status as a 'traditional' African society within the linear 'development' construct put forward by liberal scholars like Rostow (1960) and Galbraith (1958, 1962). This flawed understanding of 'development', therefore, obfuscated a clear-eyed assessment of credible economic and human advances occurring during the period. Despite the reforms introduced by the administration – particularly its gradualism – the social cleavages in Liberia at this time resembled those elsewhere in colonial Africa.

Along these lines, this dissertation challenges other widely held claims within the Rentier State Theory, that (a) rent undermines democratic institutions, (b) rent promotes corruption and social waste, and (c) rent leads to civil wars.

My research highlights that on the question of rent's effects on authoritarianism and democratic decline, there exists a controversy in the literature. For example, Sawyer (1994), Kieh (2008) and Liebenow (1969) have at different times argued that President Tubman was a dictator par excellence, an autocrat, and the father of Liberia's patronage state. This stems, according to these authors, from his effusive power, his heavy-handedness towards political opponents, and his dislike of the free press, made possible, ostensibly, by immense resource wealth. Other writers, including Marinelli (1964), found reason to profusely adore the man, calling him "a single architect of progress", a "Prophet of unification" (p. 53) on account of his progressive economic and social policies, and his administration's embrace of indigenous majority. This dissertation argues that it would be a serious mistake to attempt to settle the controversy over Tubman's impact upon Liberia's democratic tendencies merely on account of instances of illiberal authoritarian tendencies. This caveat is not meant to downplay the grief and losses to the victims of Tubman's often ruthless political manoeuvring, which undoubtedly instilled fear and stifled their political and human development. Although the Tubman administration exhibited illiberal and autocratic tendencies, these tendencies (at the level of state authority) did not originate within the period, and therefore cannot be the causal outcome of state rent emanating from the period. It is important, also, to consider these developments in comparative historical terms, such as the evolution of democratic governance in America, including the gradualism of the vote for women in 1920, and even later for Black people in the 1960s (Sneider 2010). What must be emphasize here is that, notwithstanding claims of authoritarian tendencies, such tendencies do not negate the important long-term society-wide impacts which flowed from his his twin policies of 'Open Door' and 'National Unification'. The evidence from the period reveals an unprecedented expansion in political and civil rights to hitherto excluded segments of society, including suffrage (voting rights at age 21 years, with property qualifications) and political representation for majority indigenous citizens and for women, though circumscribed by the nature of the political system. New forms of social, economic, and political consensuses emerged between the administration and Liberia's autochthonous societies, akin to the *Barclay Consensus of 1904*. These consensuses emerged out of various necessities, not least because of strident calls from the U.S. government for hinterland reforms, and President Tubman's own desire to safeguard his political fortunes. They ultimately guaranteed considerable levels of ethnic autonomy, various forms of resource-sharing, and mass incorporation of new political claimants into Liberia's democratic space.

Related to the second claim, evidence suggests that the Tubman administration undertook credible measures to curtail corruption and institutionalized exploitation of hinterland populations by government officers (e.g. *Code of Conduct* 1945; Executive Council Meeting, *Reports* 1947, 1950; First Nat'l Executive Council, Report 1964). Akin to claims of authoritarianism and dictatorship, so too are claims of government corruption and exploitation of the hinterlands due to rent windfall. Although they appeared to have been amplified within the context of rent windfall, these practices did not originate within the period, nor were they confined to actions by GoL officials alone. They could also be found within the conduct of *Native Authorities* and *Native Courts*. These traditional governance systems came under scrutiny at the regular President's Executive Council Meetings, and near-daily presidential consultations at the Executive Mansion and through hinterland representatives (e.g. Tubman *AM,* Nov. 1, 1944 in Dunn 2011, 1000). Furthermore, the administration instituted measures aimed at achieving greater public accountability, including the establishment of a National Audit Bureau within the Treasury Department; the creation of a Special Tax Enforcement Unit to pursue tax cheats; the creation of a Special Commission on Government Operation (SCOGO) aimed at reducing public waste and institutional redundancy; and a Civil Service Bureau, aimed at infusing meritocracy and professionalism into government recruitment, and reducing corruption and arbitrary public sector recruitment. And notwithstanding Tubman's tendencies for excesses, pump, and pageantry at the expense of public resources, such outlays paled in magnitude and scale, compared to the grandiosities which he extended to national life, in terms of massive infrastructural development, social services, welfare programs, and the accumulation of national assets.

Thirdly, regarding claims that sovereign rent leads to conflict and civil wars, there is little supporting evidence from the Tubman era. Rather, as this dissertation establishes, it was perhaps the most protracted period of peace and political stability in Liberian history. Whereas President Tubman's National Unification Policy sought to reconcile the Americo-Liberian state with its indigenous citizens, its corollary Tribal Unification Policy helped to diffuse intra- and inter-ethnic conflicts, laying the foundation for inter-ethnic unity and cooperation. Thus, a new and unprecedented era of political cooperation, co-optation, and consensus-making emerged between the administration and indigenous societies, as well as among indigenous people themselves. This was a moment in history when African peoples emancipated themselves from a century of colonial yoke. And yet, despite finding himself in similar circumstances as the rest of Africa, President Tubman skilfully navigated Liberia's post-colonial transition in such a manner as to avert any major upheaval. The political stability forged under Tubman lasted another ten years following his death in 1971. One may suggest that the political prosecution and side-lining of leading members of indigenous educated leadership might have engendered tensions and left Liberia ripe for revolution.[194] Notwithstanding the credibility of such claims, they do not detract from the facts of political stability and cooperation in the preceding decades; nor are they to be substituted for the agency of Tubman's successor, President Tolbert, in striking the needed delicate balance. The nature of popular participation and growth of indigenous intelligentsia unleashed under President Tubman seemed purposeful; and could be expected to collide, even violently, with any social or political forces seeking to circumscribe their advance and ultimate emergence, as was the case in 1979 and 1980.

Once again, it would be a serious mistake to attempt to explain this *Pax Liberianna* – if one can call it that – merely by the administration's police and military effectiveness; or by its intelligence network of Public Relations Officer (PRO), National Security and Intelligence Agencies.[195] Or by the strength of its alliance with the United States, as many scholars have suggested (Sawyer 1994, Kieh 2008, Dunn 2009).[196] More credible explanations can be found, I argue in this dissertation, in the new relationships and consensuses President Tubman forged with the majority indigenous population, guaranteeing support for his policies and political fortunes.

Another important component of the empirical evidence set out in this dissertation is the copious collection of more historical fiscal and legislative records dating back to the colonial period. As I have shown in Chapter 4, these records paint a lucid picture of the multiple forms, sources, and operationalization of sovereign rent across Liberia's *longue durée,* ostensibly for the purposes of state and nation-building, and fiscal sustenance. In the century prior to 1945, sovereign rent moved from the collection of customs duties, to international debts, foreign assistance, and later labour and land rents. Other forms of rent emerged later in the post-1945 Tubman era, including mineral rents, maritime proceeds, and a ramp-up in U.S. and Western development assistance. This empirical and evidentiary assemblage – systematically discovered, compiled, and analysed from the perspective of state fiscality and the 'revenue imperative' – is for the first time presented in this dissertation, and thus adds a new layer of empirical depth to the rentier state scholarship. From this evidence, fresh analyses and new perspectives beckon.

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[194] Example, the removal of Superintendents Farganlo (Nimba County), Quellie Kennedy (Lofa County), Gbarbea (Bong County) after 1964, and later the trial of Amb. Henry B. Fahnbulleh, Sr. in 1968. Also, Lowenkopf (1976) and Wreh (1976).

[195] It must have certainly felt this way to Tubman's political opponents. But serious questions are raised about such a claim. Tubman himself had publicly acknowledged that the Liberian army was nothing but 'a marching band'. AFL's dismal performance in Congo, its first international peace mission, is further proof of its poor and very limited capacities for security.

[196] Unlike these authors, Holsoe (2008) has attributed the Tubmanic peace to the administration's success in maintaining effective political centrality in Monrovia, despite various ethnic autonomies.

Theoretical Contribution

Theoretically, this dissertation deconstructs the Rentier State framework by placing rent and its centrality at the very inception and character of the 'modern' Westphalian state. Such a view of 'sovereign rent' as an intrinsic element of statehood sharply contrasts with claims within the Rentier State theory that state rentierism is unique to 'late developing' states. The evidence and findings in support of this stance are consistent with the case of Liberia across temporalities, as well as when we carefully examine the evolution of the 'modern' Westphalian state.[197]

The history of state formation in Western Europe is replete with affirmations of rent's centrality to the processes of state formation and consolidation. It was the state's exclusivity (i.e. 'monopoly') over the twin features of violence and revenue extraction (i.e. rent, tributes, etc.) which emerged as central tenets in the Western Europe state, becoming indispensable to our understanding of how the state attains administrative and bureaucratic centralization, territorial dominance, and the very exercise and effectiveness of sovereignty itself (e.g. North & Thomas 1973; North 1981; Tilly 1985; Weber [1922] 1978). By the 17th Century, and as the concept of sovereignty crystalized in liberal intellectual thought as a juridical asset monopolized exclusively by states, rent and revenue extraction become central to a state's exclusivity over territorial sovereignty. Thus, the term 'sovereign rent' came to be understood as a product of this sovereign prerogative – a sort of property rights over sovereignty and all other gains flowing directly from it. Contrary to suggestions within the rentier state paradigm, the evidence from Liberia does not support the view of state rentierism as a unique phenomenon of 'later developing' states. For the most part, the evidence paints a lucid picture of the multiple forms, sources, and operation of sovereign rent across Liberia's *longue durée,* used for the purposes of state and nation-building. Rent extraction was also tantamount to dramatization of sovereignty, exemplified by the contest between Liberia and Great Britain over the collection of customs duties in 1845.

The term rent (and 'the rentier') found rationalist applications in early classical economics within the context of agrarian market. It came to be understood as gains derived primarily from an individual's monopoly rights over the use of private property (Smith 1776[2004], Malthus 1815; Ricardo 1821). Soon, however, this rationalist conception of the term began to be applied, quite problematically, to the state within the domestic political economy. This is because not only does it lead to a view of the state as a monopolist in the sense of the market, but also because it assumes the

[197] In this respect, my finding shares similarities with Gerdes' (2013) model of state development in Liberia. While Gerdes focuses on early state building from the perspective of territorial expansion and administrative consolidation, I extend the analysis to nation-building and into more contemporary periods, i.e. post-1945.

state can and should be subjected to similar constraints as a monopolistic company within a market context. If, as I have argued, what we understand as sovereign rent is in fact a fundamental feature of states' exclusivity over sovereignty and all that flows from it, then state rentierism can hardly be expected to conform to market dynamics. Nor is the pejorative treatment of the concept justified, except for the purpose of retrenching the state from economies and markets in favour of *laissez faire* practices. In this sense, and as I argue in this dissertation, the term 'sovereign rent' becomes tautological, as rent is, for all intent and purposes, intrinsic to sovereignty and statehood.

The implication of this theoretical clarification is profound. It is profound theoretically and empirically as the Rentier State paradigm informed public policy in Africa for decades with dire consequences for its populations. If sovereign rent is in fact gains derived primarily from states' exclusivity over sovereignty and all tangible or intangible assets (and assets positions) deriving thereof, then we must conclude that most, if not all, forms of state revenue are in fact rent. And that such rents possess no intrinsically negative, debilitating, or destructive characteristics except the uses to which they are put into action by the state. How then, this dissertation asks in the case African development and economic growth, did a completely different analytical framework come to be applied to postcolonial countries when rent is central to all states. In other words, the implications of this dissertation's findings are that the very means by which postcolonial African states could hope to establish secure and growing political economies – drawing on rent to build their countries and nations – were condemned by Western scholarship and international institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and World Bank as malpractice, corruption, bad governance, and detrimental to future growth. This implies that the policies and development approaches adopted and recommended by major international financial organizations, including the IMF and WB, need to be revisited, reviewed, and modified. But it also implies that African policy analysts need to distance themselves from this paradigm with weak theoretical foundations, in a first instance and, secondly, recognize that this set out ideological norms were never applied to so-called developed industrialized liberal economies.

Mbembe's (2001) idea of the postcolony as *entanglement of time,* and as a unique *rationality* which fuses 'customs' and 'modernity', imply an awareness to *longue durée* history, and a recognition of the postcolonial state as a hybridity of diverse forms. Whereas rent's centrality to early state-making and state consolidation served to advance early state development and sustenance, new uses have been found in response to the postcolonial imperative. Key among these is the object of nation building among Africa's vast ethnic, political, and social heterogeneities. These new uses, while occurring within the context of socio-political consensus-making and cooperation, do not detract from the overall agenda of state sustenance, stability and survival. These uses, therefore, do not impute any pejorative character into rent, anymore then its other uses do, such as, war-making. The neoliberal construction of sovereign rent in so-called 'late developing' state seems designed, therefore, to cast aspersions upon the African state's legitimate prerogative of rent extraction from important national assets.

Methodological Contribution

Methodologically, this dissertation upholds and demonstrates the epistemological power of a politico-historical approach to the study of rent in Liberia, and in Africa more broadly. Like a photographic projector which cast photo rays against a wall, so has sovereign rent – ontologically and empirically – been cast against the canvas of a *longue durée* history where political and other elements are carefully examined. Fernand Braudel's philosophy of *longue durée* history captures the salience of this sweeping politico-historical perspective which I emphasize (Braudel 1966, 1980). But even more salient is Mbembe's idea of history and time as 'entanglement'. In examining the African postcolony, Mbembe's notion of time as entanglement is an attempt to transcend the understanding of history as a linear 'irreversible' procession of the past, present, and future, with one closely following the other. Rather, Mbembe offers a means to view history and time as particular epochs 'of interlocking presents, pasts and futures, that retain the depths of other presents, pasts and futures, each age bearing, altering, and maintaining the previous ones' (2001, 16). In other words, the African postcolony, as a particular age, can be thought of as an enclosure of multiple ages or *durées,* made up of "discontinuities, reversals, inertias, and swings that overlay one another, interpenetrate one another, and envelope one another" (ibid), themselves being inscribed within a *longue durée*.

Mbembe's idea of history (or time) as *entanglement* offers a powerful framework of understanding history in postcolonial Africa because it emphasizes the inevitable connectedness and interconnectedness of the entire pre–, during, and post-colony experiences. *Entanglement* offers a means to conceptualize the complex web of historical linkages, intersections, and overlaps, pointing to the interpenetration of processes and flows that are neither linear or sequential, nor perpetually persistent or brief. And whose points of entanglements are only illuminated by new knowledge, discoveries, and insights of history. Although Mbembe focuses of *entanglement* as an essentially temporal phenomenon – a product of the 'before', 'during' and 'after' colonialism (2001, 15) – the case of Liberia suggests a certain spatial dimension of the concept by which new insights on the postcolony are discernable. Building upon this spatial dimension of the concept, it is easy to discern the multiple ways in which Liberia's entanglement with the United States and the Euro-American world impacted not only state developemt, but the multiple forms of state rent. I therefore propose an understanding of entanglement also as integrated geographies, where developments in each are contemporaneously impacted and mutually reinforced by the other. This requires understanding geography as both materially and socially imagined spaces. Such understanding is, in fact, the essence of how empires, imperialism, colonialism, and colonies overlap as practices in specific geographic locations, imbricated through these associations.

In the case of Liberia, the uprooting and emigration of American Blacks to Liberia in the early 1800s was both a process of spatial dislocation and (re) integration, exemplified by the mutually reinforcing developments occurring simultaneously across the two spaces. For example, the end of the U.S. Civil War in 1865 triggered renewed hostilities from U.S. Blacks, to the idea of colonization to Africa. This development immediately slowed the state building processes onging in Liberia, because territorial expansion and state consolidation depended to a large extent upon the uninterrupted flow of Black emigration from America, and the planting of permanent 'civilized' settlements within hinterland territories. This spatial entanglement of Liberia with the United States also challenges Bayart's (2006) notion of 'extraversion' when it comes to Americo-Liberians. This is because 19th and early 20th Century Liberia were never truly separate from the United States as to suggest an 'external' environment. Despite their transatlantic separation, Americo-Liberians in fact belonged to, and remained deeply entangled with, the Euro-American world in more ways than one.[198] Through these entangled and imbricated relationships were developed and operationalized new forms of rent, such as international debt, military assistance, and Liberia's maritime program.

When it comes to the question of sovereign rent and the rentier state, therefore, this dissertation demonstrates the importance of a *longue durée* politico-historical approach in a postcolonial African context. The perspective has shown itself capable of discerning rent's complexities across time, further exposing the Rentier State paradigm as grossly ahistorical. By reverting to *longue durée* history as the prism for examining state rentierism, my dissertation reaffirms the epistemological and methodological prowess of a politico-historical approach.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SCHOLARSHIP

The analyses presented in this dissertation have developed a clear understanding of the constructive roles sovereign rent played in the processes of state and nation-building in Liberian history. Its role in the immediate post-WWII was especially vital in the building of a strong and economically vibrant Liberia state, as well as the success of President Tubman's political consensus-making, within the context of Liberia's postcolonial transition. As a result of these analysis, new perspectives, future research and implications for scholarship emerge in regards, for example, to the debates around (a) sovereignty and the 'Quasi-state' in Africa, (b) the 'modern' v. 'traditional', (c) the complexities and multiple dimensions of citizenship, (d) notions of 'blackness', race and racism,

[198] This entanglement spans culture, political ideologies, religion, the economy and trade. For W.E.B. Du Bois, it was also deeply psychic – a sort of 'double consciousness' (Du Bois 1969, 45).

(e) and notions of economic development in Africa. For each of these debates, I will show how my dissertation helps broaden and clarify important aspects.

Sovereignty and the 'Quasi-State' in Africa

It is clear from the threats posed to Liberia's sovereignty by European powers throughout the 19th and 20th Centuries that, in the case of Africa, the concept of sovereignty was defined both in terms of empirical considerations (i.e. 'sovereignty in fact'), as well as international legal norms, consistent with the prevailing dual world order (Keene 2002). In other cases, the rule simply became whatever one or another imperial power insisted it was. We recall the incident of the *Little Ben Affairs of 1845* when both Great Britain and France sought to circumscribe Liberia's sovereignty based upon claims that it was not a state because it lacked recognition from "even the country from which its settlers emigrated" (Jones to Roberts, Sept. 9, 1844). Backchannel diplomacy between British and U.S. authorities soon revealed the imperial paternalism underpinning the idea of 'international recognition'. For example, on Aug. 9, 1843, the British minister in Washington, Fox, sought clarity from U.S. Secretary of State Upshur, as to "what degree of official patronage and protection, if any, the United States extended to the Colony of Liberia" (Fox to Upshur, Aug. 9, 1943, in Huberich, 270). Secretary of State, Upshur replied that his government considered Liberia "to be occupying a peculiar position…with peculiar claims to the friendly considerations of all Christian Powers". The U.S. Government was, therefore, "very unwilling to see [Liberia] despoiled of its territories rightfully acquired" (ibid.).

Overcoming the so-called legal challenges, and finally being admitted into the 'family of civilized nations' in 1847 still did not guarantee Liberia equal application of international norms regarding sovereign tolerance and respect. Further constrictions upon its sovereignty would come with the unset of Europe's *Scramble for Africa*, as Great Britain and France continuously chipped away Liberian territories, this time on grounds of "effective occupation", i.e. empirical sovereignty. And as Liberia became saddled by international (mainly European) debts, further actions were taken to circumscribe sovereignty through the seizure of tax collection and budgeting authorities, under a series of financial receivership beginning in 1906. It was within this context of imperial strangulation that Young (1994, 89) correctly described early 19th Century Liberia as a "precarious polity subsisting by American patronage and Franco-British sufferance". In this respect, the debate over sovereignty and the quasi-state in Africa – exemplified by arguments between Robert Jackson (1991) and Siba N'Zatioula Grovogui (1996) – may be further illuminated by a careful review of the case of Liberia, Africa's oldest independent state. Jackson (1991) claims that the unset of 'juridical sovereignty' in post-1945 decolonization unleashed into the global community a flurry of 'quasi-states' in Africa which could hardly fulfil the "empirical criteria" of statehood. This was because, according to Jackson, they lacked “a common or public realm, effective government and authority”, and were morally bankrupt and corrupt (Jackson 1987, 526-27). Grovogui, on the other hand, argues that racial and other biases inherent in the “historical philosophical system and structures of the international order” (1996, x) were responsible, as well as the “discursive structures” which characterized the inter-war and post-WWII legal order. These biases, he argued, had much to do with the ‘quasi-sovereign’ nature of the postcolonial Africa state, and the “shortcomings” and “disappointing outcomes” of decolonization (1996, 1-2).

But the case of Liberia suggests that neither side of the debate is entirely correct. Jackson is wrong to suggest that the ‘quasi-state’ in Africa is necessarily a post-WWII phenomenon, occasioned by a shift in international jurisprudence. It is clear from considering the evidence from Liberia that as early as the founding, and throughout the first quarter of the 20th Century, quasi-sovereignty in Liberia was the result of direct actions be European powers in the uneven application of international norms, ‘empirical criteria’, and the arbitrariness of imperial power. Grovogui (1996) is also only partially accurate to suggest that racial and cultural biases inherent in international norm are to blame for quasi-sovereignty in post-independence Africa. The evidence from Liberia suggests that European powers straddled between legal norms and ‘empirical’ justifications whenever it was convenient, often in pursuit of narrow national interests. Naked realist politics was therefore another important factor. In this respect, the debate, particularly Grovogui’s critique of Euro-centric international law and decolonization, would be further strengthened and solidified by incorporating the Liberian experience, thus adding a broader comparative dimension.

The ‘Modern’ vs. ‘Traditional’

The imposition of the ‘modern’ Westphalian state upon Africa achieved two important outcomes. Firstly, it fastened a new political order upon the continent based upon Western traditions. Secondly, it significantly rearranged African economies along largely capitalist lines. But these developments and adaptations to colonial and postcolonial Africa came at a great cost to the ontological design and internal coherence of the ‘modern’ state as it is known in the West. This observation is true in the case of Africa’s first independent republic, as well as for the newer postcolonial states emerging out of WWII and decolonization. And although the discourses of the ‘modern state in Africa’ and ‘the indigenization of the state’ are premised, by and large, upon perceived distinctions between the so-called ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’ within the context of post-independence (Kawabaka 2006; Dia 1995), the case of Liberia suggests that the phenomenon has a more historical root. The evidence shows that ‘indigenization of the state’ stretches far back into the development of the colonial state itself, particularly at the onset of the introduction of *indirect rule* over indigenous peoples beginning in Liberia in 1904 with the start of the Barclay Plan.

It is clear from the evidence examined in this dissertation that the Barclay Plan of 1904 – what I have termed the *Barclay Consensus* – was simultaneously a process of incorporation and exclusion. Whereas autochthonous societies and institutions of power and authority were incorporated and fused into the 'modern' republican state, these societies were at the same time arbitrarily demarcated into tribal districts, administrated under 'traditional' tribal authorities, effectively bifurcating the state. The result was the creation of a new political order in which was introduced new imaginaries and notions of power, authority, and social organization. Ethnicity and the 'tribe', although previously designating sociocultural and political entities, as well cultural identities, acquired new meanings and significations within the state system. They become effectively proprietary units of power and authority. Thus, was born the phenomenon of 'tribalism' in Liberia. Each 'tribe' acquired the status of semi-autonomous political sub-division within the state system. The tribesmen could negotiate their positions in the state only through one channel – the tribe with which they were affiliated and identified; or to which they held sub-national allegiance. Within this new political order, therefore, emerges new institutions and centres of power and authority, not least very powerful African groups such as the Poro (all-male) and Sande (all-female) societies (e.g. Gibbs, 1962, 1965). These societies, now holding first level administrative and judicial sways over indigenous populations, began asserting their own powers and influences (often in conflict with Americo-Liberians interest) in ways hitherto unseen. The Liberian state thus became simultaneously 'modern' and 'traditional', such that any reference to the 'modern' state in Liberia seems utterly anachronistic.

It here we must begin to pay serious attention to Rutazibwa & Shilliam's (2018, 4) articulation of 'coloniality'. The authors describe it as "the principles and rationalities of colonial and imperial rule that survive even in the absence of formal colonialism". In other words, coloniality defines the postcolonial 'afterlife' – like a spirit, so to speak – which bears the remains of the colonial itself through politics, sociology, culture, religion, etc.[199] The state practices following the *Barclay Consensus* were, therefore, never confined entirely to Weber's legal-rational ideal-typical notions of statehood. They drew inspirations and imaginations from that contrasting sphere of society often perceived as the 'traditional' (Weber 1976, 1968; Tilly 1975). One finds evidence of the fusion of the 'modern' and 'tradition' by which the postcolonial state is today defined. For example, key political decision about who is elected into the national legislature, and the conduct of politics in certain parts of the country, are often resolved in the 'secret' edifices of traditional councils, by Poro and Sande authorities. The results are simply relayed to voters in what becomes a perfunctory practice of votes casting on election day (e.g. Sawyer 2008; Kieh 2006). The case of Liberia suggests that 'the

[199] Mbembe (2001, 14-16) idea of the postcolony as an *age of entanglement,* in which the 'before', 'during' and 'after' colonialism exist simultaneously, is akin to Rutazibwa & Shilliam's (2018, 4) articulation of 'coloniality'.

indigenization of the state' in Africa has a more historical root, and that it is anachronism to speak of the 'modern' state in Africa.

Citizenship and Ethnicity

The case of Liberia exposes, once again, the complexities of citizenship and ethnicities in Africa, and the multiple layers which citizenship has assumed on the continent, thanks to colonialism. The phenomenon of 'tribalism' created by the *Barclay Consensus* of 1904 implied that civic and political membership and reciprocities would be limited to the tribe. Civic reciprocities (i.e. the rights and duties of citizenship) between the African and the Liberian state did not apply. Within this new political order, indigenous people were first and foremost citizens of their 'tribes', not of the state. And despite pledging allegiance to the state, thus constituting themselves subjects to it, the African also retained firm allegiances to his or her ethnic communities, many modified as a result of the imposition of new districting measures. Thus, a tier system of citizenship emerged wherein the tribe come to constitute the locus of citizenship for the African. Citizanship to the state was secondary because the state was a secondary actor, whose main concerns centred around maintaining territorial sovereignty and effective revenue collection. When in 1964, President Tubman abrogated County and Hinterland distinctions, bringing indigenous peoples into formal citizenship and under direct constitutional order, this new state/citizen relationship did not entirely replace old ethnic allegiances. Nor did it effectively reconcile them. While yielding some credible fruits, and for a time successful in keeping ethnic sentiments in abeyance, President Tubman's effort to supplant ethnic citizenship with Liberian nationalism did not succeed entirely. Strong ethnic sentiments would manifest themselves in a military soup in 1980, during the rule of the Krahn-dominated military junta, and later in 14-years civil wars beginning in 1989.

In this sense, then, it is possible to begin to think about the Liberian (and indeed African) civil wars a little differently, including questions of peace and security. Tribalism (i.e. affiliation, identity, and allegiance to the 'tribe') evolved as a new political phenomenon within the 'modern' African state, such that war-making in the interest of the tribe constituted a legitimate civic duty each African citizen felt obligated to perform, even when this meant war against the state or its interest. It is therefore a serious mistake to neglect the multiple and complex layers of citizenship in Africa when it comes to understanding civil wars and 'ethnic conflicts', or the challenges posed to postcolonial nation-building. The inter-ethnic cleavages which erupted into violence and civil wars in Liberia throughout the 1990s, have had lasting imparts upon social relations and national reconciliation in Liberia (Weah 2019). Popular generalizations about "ancient tribal hatreds", "clash of civilizations", or dystopian predictions of conflicts driven by resource scarcity, overpopulations, disease and tribal animosities, have not always been helpful (Ellis 2005, Kaplan 1994; Huntington 2007). From the perspective of ethnic nationalism, African conflicts share similarities with many nationalist conflicts elsewhere. This new way of thinking about civil and ethnic wars in Africa has implications for peace and security on the continent, and for African security studies more broadly.

Blackness, Whiteness, Race and Racism

Within the context of post-colonial African studies, the dichotomies of 'black' vs. 'white' and 'Western' vs. 'African' have emerged as powerful signifiers of racial and cultural distinctions between European and African peoples. These dialectics seemed useful then within the framework of European colonization over African societies, where racial and cultural distinctions, although contrived, seemed far more apparent. They may, in fact, help explain why Americo-Liberian colonialism over African peoples have been largely neglected from African colonial historiography, based upon the belief that Americo-Liberians "shared a racial identification with Africans" (Shick 1979, 2). However, a careful examination of the experience of Americo-Liberian colonialism begins to challenges the salience and analytical powers of these categories, often emptying them of all meaningful significations. They lend themselves to new and complex conceptualizations and functions. This has been the case, for example, with the concepts of 'race' and 'blackness'.

In a recent work, *Critique of Black Reason,* Achelli Mbembe (2017) reflects upon the complexities of race, and thus, of Blackness. He writes that "[N]either Blackness nor race has ever been fixed. They have, on the contrary, always belonged to a chain of open-ended signifiers. The fundamental meanings of Blackness and race have always been existential (p. 6) … - In fact, race does not exist as a physical, anthropological, or genetic fact. But it is not just a useful fiction, a phantasmagorical construction, or an ideological projection whose function is to draw attention away from conflicts judged to be more real— the struggle between classes or genders, for example. In many cases race is an autonomous figure of the real whose force and density can be explained by its characteristic mobility, inconstancy, and capriciousness" (p. 11). Mbembe (2017) undertakes his critique primarily within the context of Euro-America's creation of race and Blackness in its relationship with Africa and the African. But the dehumanization and creation of 'natives' and savages out of Africans did not always occur at the hands of Europeans or American colonialists. The evidence shows that Americo-Liberians themselves – considered 'civilized' Negros – perpetrated similar acts of inhumanity against African peoples based upon received racial distinctions. Interestingly, as early as the period of Settlement, leaders within the American Colonization Society (ACS) and Americo-Liberian society, such as Joseph J. Roberts, Alexander Crummell, and the famed Edward W. Blyden, from time to time asserted racial distinctions between themselves and African natives (e.g. Blyden 1857; **'**Latrobe to Johnson**'** Oct. 26, 1883; Roberts 1845).

There is ample reason to believe, however, that this new racial categorization was not based entirely upon any biological or phenotypical characteristics, or differences in skin colour. But neither was it based entirely upon class distinctions, or the master/slave relationship. While the latter differences did exist at one time or another, they were, to a large extent, captured in non-racial terms. But like race of a phenotypical kind, this new racial category (i.e. Americo-Liberians – if one can call it that) was an invention designed to function as an apparatus of social distinction and differentiation, designating one group superior, and the other inferior. In the case of Americo-Liberians, race functioned, therefore, as a signifier of cultural difference, based primarily upon notions of Western 'civilization'. Thus, Liberia emerges as a unique space in which 'race' and 'civilization' did not always serve the interest of Europe, the West, or the 'white man'. As recently as the 1950s and 60s, even as the terms 'civilized' and 'civilization' began to lose appeal in the West, with pejorative implications elsewhere, they still retained their potency in Liberia, deeply anchoring notions of race and social hierarchy. Up until the 1950s, President Tubman remained fascinated by the idea. In 1944, he declared that "the 'Americo-Liberian population' … needs vigorous new blood of our own race from without to assist in the Herculean task set before them as the bearers of the torch of Christianity and civilization to their uncivilized brethren" (Tubman *Inaugural Address,* Jan. 3, 1944 in Guannu 1980, 319). Later in 1956, while highlighting new reforms in Liberia's immigration laws, he again voiced his impression of "the very high standards of education, thrift, initiative and wealth of a large portion of our racial group in the United States [i.e. African American]", emphasizing the need for encourage these "relatives of ours" to come to Liberia (Tubman *IA*, Jan. 2, 1956 in Guannu 1980, 337-38). By asserting ideas of 'racial' superiority and distinctions over 'native African races', Americo-Liberians leaders like Tubman located themselves similarly as Europeans/'whites' did elsewhere. It is unclear how notions of race and social hierarchy played out in other segments of the Liberian society, such as among Christian missionaries and the clergy. Or how indigenous Liberians perceived themselves, and received the articulation of such distinctions. But President Tubman's repeated references to 'race', 'kith and kin' gives the impression of its persistence within Americo-Liberian leadership, through time.

Most post-colonial writers have paid little or no attention to the complexities of race and racism in a society like Liberia which is viewed as racially homogeneous. The same can be said regarding the study of 'Blackness' or 'Whiteness'. Once again, the case of Liberia elucidates the complexities of race/racism, and exposes its social and cultural dimensions, offering fresh insights into these complex phenomena.

Economic Development & Development Studies

The discourse of economic development within the context of Third World Development took roots in Liberia in the 1940s when U.S. economic advisors and 'money doctors' sought to showcase America's social liberalism abroad within the framework of 'The New American Century' (Carlisle 1980). Their goals were (a) to generate markets for American products and preserve American free enterprise; (b) encourage an American-business-led attack on poverty, while championing social causes in developing nations; and (c) to prevent world-domination by Fascist- or Soviet-planned economies through consciously exporting technology, capital, food, and know-how abroad (p. 175-76). U.S. post-war economic interests in Liberia remained focused primarily on mineral extraction and commodity exports; and therefore, the goal of "attack[ing] poverty, while championing social causes" seemed designed mainly to soften the effects of this new regime of U.S. commodity exploitation.

The case of Liberia illustrates two important elements of international development within the context of an African nation. The first is the constriction of sovereignty as a consequence of investment and development-related debts contracted internationally. Between 1906 and 1950, international debt for fiscal sustenance and 'development' purposes involved the seizure of important elements of sovereignty, including the collection and management of fiscal intake, and veto over key fiscal and monetary (i.e. economic) decision-making. Even today, development study is rife with debates about the exigency of developing nations, especially in Africa, surrendering sovereignty and key decision making to market forces and international financial organizations, in exchange for 'modernization' and so-called 'development'. The second important observation involves the transformation and rearrangement of African societies into western capitalist forms, especially in the areas of agriculture and industry. In Liberia, this particular goal of development has been underpinned by an understanding of development as a corollary of 'civilization' and 'modernity' through which an African nation must traverse along a linear development continuum from 'traditional' to 'advanced' (Rostow 1960, Gilbraith 1952).

International development in Africa is viewed, therefore, as mimicry of the experiences of richer western nations, or the surrendering of African sovereignty to markets or international financial institutions (and bilateral creditors). These notions remain central to the agenda of international development, if not the enduring view that credible development outcomes are impossible without Western capital and investment.

Opportunities for Future Research

The analyses presented in this dissertation have developed a unique perspective of sovereign rent as an inherent feature of the state, and as an indispensable element of state sustenance. As with all rents, sovereign rent is itself a function of the state's exclusivity over sovereignty as a juridical asset, internationally and domestically asserted. And as I have demonstrated throughout this dissertation and in the proceeding section on the implications for scholarship, the case of Liberia presents valuable opportunities for new perspectives on sovereignty, the state in Africa, the multiple dimensions of citizenship, concepts of ‘blackness’ and race, and what is meant by ‘development’ in Africa. But this opportunity has been stymied by a general neglect (or lack of awareness) of the Liberian experience within African postcolonial historiography, and inquiries of Africa’s place in contemporary International Relations.

As a result of the preceding analyses and key conclusions reached in this dissertation, at least two areas of future research can be identified. *First*, the Liberian state suffered significant assaults on its sovereignty from the international system despite independence in 1847 and membership in the so-called modern ‘family of civilized nations’. And as a nation of majority indigenous Africans, governed by a small Afro-American minority, Liberia is similar to the rest of Africa whose peoples, by the start of the post-WWII milieu, desired an end to minority rule. And yet, as many postcolonial Africa nations imploded into one civil war to another, Liberian leaders navigated the immediate post-war transition relatively peacefully, maintaining an effective and stable political environment until the late 1970s. So how did this happen?

Such an outcome, I suggest, cannot be explained merely by Liberia’s *longe durée* experience with statehood, nor by its fulfilment of the empirical criteria of sovereignty, if we may evoke Jackson’s (1987) categorization. In order to understand Liberia’s exceptionalism in Africa in this respect, it is important to carefully examine developments during the period, and their impact upon political stability. I argue that President Tubman’s deliberate efforts at consensus-making with autochthonous African polities, and his quest for genuine nation-building, sit at the heart of Liberia’s escape from potential post-colonial upheavals. There is general agreement among scholars of Africa that the product of decolonization was, for the most part, the creation of new states, and not nations in the same sense that Anderson (1983) speaks of ‘nations’, as an ‘imagined’ and relatively cohesive community of diverse people. Within the context of colonialism and decolonization, therefore, such a dismal outcome could be expected, because colonialism by design, held the various African heterogeneities firmly apart. The resulting postcolonial state was, therefore, at its core a fragmented confederacy of semi-autonomous ethnic nations, large and small, loosely held together within the framework of the Westphalian state. The post-colonial state does not aptly enjoy the status of a nation-state.

It is without question that President Tubman’s political fortunes rose dramatically as a result of his economic and social policies. But their impacts upon state and nation-building seemed most consequential. Although these policies failed in permanently resolving Liberia’s historic divides, they nevertheless engendered a sense of Liberian nationalism amongst its vast ethnic heterogeneities. They also heled ease age-old ethnic divisions and rivalries, while keeping ethnic nationalism at bay. In order to fully comprehend the significance of Tubman’s nation-building efforts, and its implications for a proper understanding of post-coloniality on the continent, it may be helpful to incorporate a comparative dimension. Hence, the Liberian experience offers an important opportunity for comparative analysis, and this a future research path. But first, it is important to elaborate the idea of consensus, the second area of future research.

I draw inspirations from the idea and strategies of c*onsensus-making* from the *Barclay Consensus of 1904,* and subsequently the *Tubman Consensus* (1944-71). In order to properly understand the notion of the *consensus-making* or consensus politics in Africa, I suggest for a moment that we set aside popular notions of the African state which theorize it mainly based upon functionality, operating ideology, or institutional logic (e.g. Young 1982, Stark 1986, Schraeder 2000, Villalón 1998). By *consensus-making*, I wish to suggest, instead, a more normative principle of state operation, one which has as its aim the sustenance and meaningful socio-political coexistence of divergent segments of society. Such a view of the African state seems warranted, I argue, in light of the continent's recent experiences with nation building amidst vast socio-political, cultural and ethnic heterogeneities. At independence, many African peoples found themselves torn between loyalty to an 'immoral' and distant state, on the one hand, and membership in one or another of the hundreds of ethnic polities, on the other. Thus, nation-building would require a delicate process of cooperation and coexistence through socio-political consensus-making.

By consensus-making, I do not mean necessarily the wholesale appropriation, re-allocation or access to scarce political and economic resources by political rivals, as the term is often construed in political science (Doron & Sened 2001, 7), although such elements are discernable in both the Barclay and Tubman consensuses. Neither do I imply a state of social or political equality between Americo-Liberians and ethnic societies, although these are not necessarily mutually exclusive long-term goals. Instead, the compromises which I suggest underpinned both the *Barclay and Tubman Consensuses*, were first and foremost a re-negotiated framework of social and political relationships which served primarily to ensure state survival. But they also foster coexistence, mutual support, alliances and protection as the basis for present and future cooperation. These interactions involved co-optation of influential indigenous leaders as an important element of cooperation, which must not be understood pejoratively within the context of consensus politics, or political co-optation within elite groups. In both the Barclay and Tubman Consensuses, Americo-Liberian administrations applied concerted efforts to win over reluctant and intransigent Chiefs. Barclay reiterated his commitment to effecting its agenda "without bloodshed, and with the least possible friction", anchoring the agreement on the sharing of national income and wealth (*AM*, Dec. 14, 1905). President Tubman followed a similar trend.

Indigenous societies derived significant new rights and privileges under both the *Barclay* and *Tubman Consensus*. In light of the prevailing power asymmetries, the *consensus* resulted neither into equality nor parity. But such goals need not necessarily undergird *consensus-making,* generally. Whatever claims of inequality and power asymmetry, however, hardly can it be said that the *Barclay*

Consensus lacked the essential element of a *generally accepted and agreed-upon compromise by which the parties derived new political and economic rights*, *privileges and benefits*, as expressions of independent agency. Over time, as the balance of power shifts and the parties move through one moment of consensus-making to another, unresolved issues of inequality and power asymmetries continue to be sorted out and potentially resolved. Meanwhile, indigenous leaders made no real attempts to supplant Americo-Liberian primacy within the state.

But an important distinction exists between both consensuses which require some attention. Whereas the *Barclay Consensus* results into integration and bifurcation at once, the *Tubman Consensus* sought and achieved full integration and state citizenship for all Liberians, but only gradually, and for a while maintaining the bifurcated order. Sensing the 'wind of change' sweeping across Africa, President Tubman slowly but steady began the process of liberalizing the political space: granting suffrage and political representation to women and majority indigenous people, admitting them to full citizenship in 1964, a status previously denied, except through 'civilization and Christianization'. Like the *Barclay Consensus of 1904*, a key aspect of the *Tubman Consensus* revolved around resource and revenue sharing. In addition to the 10% revenue sharing already in place, President Tubman instituted new programs which saw indigenous leaders enrolled into government salaries and state pensions. New opportunities emerged for wage employment as the economy expanded, including military recruitment. Indigenous leaders could now acquire vast amounts of public lands for private use, from which many developed family farms and plantations. Symbolically, and for the first time in the history of Americo-Liberian leadership, President Tubman sought membership into the all-power, all-male Poro Society as the Chief Zo and 'Grand Leader'. Mrs. Tubman also became a member of the powerful all-female Sande Society (Saha 1998, 111). Some scholars, especially critics of Tubman, have dismissed this move as purely Machiavellian, intended to manipulate tribal societies. But the meaning and symbolism of a Liberian president submitted to tribal authority as a member of the Poro was powerful and profound. Through compromises and co-optation indigenous leaders and their peoples flocked to Tubman with unflinching loyalty to his economic and social programs, further guaranteeing for his political longevity as a leader. More educated indigenes who often found themselves in influential government positions and party hierarchy, and thus members of the political class, however, often found themselves on the receiving end of Tubman's draconian political manoeuvring.

There is another element of consensus-making which deserves attention. It is the element of sovereignty (i.e. the right to rule) and its enforcement by the dominant actor(s). Whatever consensuses are forged from time to time, expectations of enforcement are certain. Mbembe (2001) suggests that such sovereignty and order, especially within the postcolony, are achieved first, through a complex system of *social transfer* and *allocation* which includes the granting of the salary (p. 44-45), but also includes other benefits such as pensions, revenue-sharing, and forms of wealth distribution. There is also the private appropriation of public resources for the purpose of creating allegiance (Ibid., 45-46). Not only do these activities acquire a certain imperative within the context of consensus-making and co-optation, but they are often perceived as morally justifiable if and when they are intended to satisfy satisfy 'moral obligations' within the realm of indigenous social institutions in a highly fractionalized environment; and as long as they provide social safety and protection for members of these institutions. That resources are transferred, re-allocated, distributed, privatized or even siphoned out of the public sphere into the private, does not always constitute corruption in a moral sense. But this is the case only because the 'civic public' has come to be perceived and defined to be 'amoral', as Ekeh (1975) suggests, and therefore a space from where one is expected to gain and enrich himself or herself (but never to sacrifice). And also because public resources and wealth are perceived as social commodities within the context of political consensus-making [when economic things become social and political things]

Such consensuses do not always imply the absence of serious conflicts, or even violence. Nor are they free of occasional use of fear and the application of pain in the exercise of sovereignty by dominant actors. What is important to stress is the presence of an agree-upon mechanism of cooperation by which such conflicts may be resolved, and consensus restored. Such a view of the postcolonial African state as a *consensus-making* configuration seems useful, therefore, in light of the continent's vast religious, cultural and ethnic heterogeneities, and concerns over mutual and popular control of government and state resources. The consensuses forged by both Barclay and Tubman significantly expanded ethnic autonomy and resource-sharing as the basis for political cooperation and coexistence. The relative successes of both consensuses, therefore, offer a normative way of reflecting upon, and advancing new thinking about the African state.

Concluding Comments

In conclusion, this dissertation has analysed a wealth of original archival sources on Liberia, across three continents over a three-year period, to offer fresh perspectives on the concepts of sovereign rent, and to deconstruct the Rentier State in Africa. This previously unexplored fiscal perspective of Liberia's state evolution has shed new light on state rent as an inherent feature of sovereignty and statehood itself. The evidence from Liberia's immediate post-WWII experience appears to sharply contradict the major claims of the Rentier State scholarship that rent leads to underdevelopment, undermines democracy, results in corruption and waste, and eventually leads to conflict. Evidence for these claims can hardly be found in the Liberian experience.

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1. *Mr. Emmanuel Bowier* – Historian and former Minister of Information under President Samuel Doe. Personal Interviewed, on March 16, 2017. Currently, Bowier is a prelate and Christian radio show host in Monrovia

2. *Dr. D. Elwood Dunn* – Personal Interviewed, March 4, 2019. Liberianist scholar and historian. Research focuses on the foreign policy of two Liberian administrations: William V.S. Tubman and William R. Tolbert. He now resides in Silver Springs, Maryland, USA.

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APPENDIX A

CHAPTER 4

Table 1
Commonwealth Revenue
Jan. – Dec. 1841 – 1845 [200]

Receipts	1841 (12/'41)	1842 (12/'42)	1844	1845
Duties on imports (i.e. customs and tariff)	N/A	$3,897	$6,383	$5,853
Anchorage & light duty		520	519	305
Tonnage duty		91	-	-
Court & military fines		148	110	212
Auction fees		50	18	-
Sales of public lands		-	96	140
Amt. from Lackey's estate		-	144	-
Licenses/duties on colonial vessels		-	46	28
Licenses (Auction, Commission, Special and Retail license)		753	919	834
Sales of sundries at Central Fort		-	0	78
Deposited by Executors of D. Johnston's estate		-	-	1,975
Balance in Treasury at End of FY	(859)	(1,118)	(201)	(989)
Total Receipts	$2,000	$5,403	$8,175	$8,525
% of Customs to Total Revenue		72%	78%	69%

[200] Analyses of Gov. Roberts *Message to the Commonwealth Council*, April 4, 1842; Jan. 9, 1943; March 4-20, 1943; Jan. 6, 1845; Jan. 5, 1844; Jan. 5, 1846, Jan. 4, 1847, Jan. 5, 1846 in Huberich (1947, 741, 757-58, 784-85, 803).

Table 2
General Customs Revenue
Fiscal Year Oct. 1 – Sept. 30
1912 - 1830

FY Oct. 1 – Sept. 30	General Customs Revenue[201]			Total Revenue
	Customs	Head Money	Misc. Rev. & Re-imbursement	
1940	431,000	n/a	n/a	899,000
1939	474,500	n/a	n/a	827,000
1938	538,000	n/a	n/a	885,000
1937	653,000	n/a	n/a	1,009,000
1936	529,000	n/a	n/a	773,000
1935	n/a	n/a	n/a	620,000
1934	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1933	n/a	n/a	n/a	321,299
1932	n/a	n/a	n/a	353,388
1931	n/a	n/a	n/a	551,306
1930	n/a	n/a	n/a	840,473
1929	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,013,572
1928	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,276,438
1926	384,881.00	20,947.00	n/a	n/a
1924/1925	455,457.27	20,908.00	5,513.78	$481,879.05
1923/1923	$350,241.19	22,486.00	7,351.20	$380,078.39
1922	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1921	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1920	$323,917.00	30,591.00	40,791.00	551,121.80
Jan. 1 – Dec. 31, 1914	468,395.72	14,375.54	2,806.00	485,577.00
1913	475,287.41	8,696.74 (excl. Woermann's)	n/a	534,500.00

[201] De la Rue (1925, 2, *Appendix*); King *Annual Message,* Jan. 13, 1920, in Dunn, 500, 513, 522-24, 574-575. See also Kraaij (1980, 298, 301).

1912	492,679	12,521.02	10,829.48	534,085
1911	438,552	n/a		483,255
1910	377,379	n/a		403,408
1909	355,000	n/a	n/a	380,000
1908	379,469	n/a	n/a	395,234
1907	362,176	n/a	n/a	n/a
1906	275,158	n/a	n/a	357,433
1905	n/a	n/a	n/a	295,647
1904	n/a	n/a	n/a	160,000

Table 3
GoL Revenue: General Customs and Internal Revenue
1904 – 1912 [202]

Year	General Customs Revenue	Internal Revenue	Total Revenue
1940	431,000	468,000	749,583
1939	474,500	354,000	826,700
1938	n/a	347,000	883,328
1937	n/a	356,000	1,006,036
1936	n/a	244,000	784,151
1935	434,100	191,000	604,295
1930	n/a	n/a	840,473
1929	n/a	n/a	1,013,572
1928	n/a	n/a	1,276,438
1913-1934	n/a	n/a	n/a
1912	492,679	18,055 [+]	534,085
1911	438,552	43,000 [+]	483,255
1910	377,379	n/a	403,408
1909	355,000	17,000	380,000
1908	379,469	15,765	395,234
1907	362,176	n/a	-
1906	275,158	12,000	357,433
1905	n/a	12,000	$295,647
1904	n/a	n/a	$160,000

[202] Author's analysis and tabulations from the following sources: *Reports of the Liberian Treasury*, *Annual Reports of the General Receiver of Customs*, 1907, 1924-1925; *Receivership* and *Treasury Reports,* 1822-1944, as summarized in *Annual Messages* and *Inaugural Addresses* of Liberian Presidents (Arthur Barclay, Daniel E. Howard, Charles D. B. King), in Guannu (1980) and Dunn (2011). Also, Sidney de la Rue (1924-25), *Report of General Receiver of Custom & Financial Advisor;* Brown (1941) *Economic History of Liberia*; Steadman (1952) *The Steadman Report*; see also McLaughlin (1966, 180-190), Buell (1928, 724-727), Kraaij (1980,301).

Table 4
Selected Years of GoL Revenue
from 1911 – 1944 [203]

Hut Tax

Fiscal Year Oct. 1-Sept. 30	**Hut Tax**	**Total Revenue**
1944	288,400	1,598,401
1943	232,000	1,429,927
1942	231,000	1,005,272
1941	n/a	972,245
1940	268,000	749,583
1939	173,900	826,700
1938	200,000	883,328
1937	208,000	1,006,036
1936	146,000	784,151
1935	111,000	604,295
1934	77,700	353,388
1933	57,905	321,299
1922	89,053	570,782
1912-1921	n/a	n/a
1911	$10,000	$483,255

[203] For the years 1935-44, Steadman (1952, C-28) presents the figures as a combination of Hut Tax, Centennial Tax (a $1 extra per hut, $1 per capita for all male plantation laborers, $1 on all men and women not otherwise covered. It was first levied in 1945 and paid towards Liberia's 100th anniversary) and Development Tax (a substitute for the Centennial Tax beginning in 1949). Technically, the above figures therefore represent only Hut Tax in force before 1945. Kraaij (1983, 301) present a Hut Tax figure for 1935 as $111,000 which appears more consistent with growth tread, instead of Steadman's figure of $11,400. Based upon a Nov. 1960 proposal by President Tubman, the tax was increased to 10% annually (Tubman, *Annual Message*, Nov. 22, 1960, in Dunn, p. 1290). See also Kraaij (1980, 310)

Table 5
GoL Revenue: Trends in General Customs and Internal Revenue
1904 – 1944 [204]

Year	General Customs Revenue	Internal Revenue	Total Revenue
1944	932,700	592,900 [+][205]	1,598,401
1943	724,200	629,800 [+]	1,429,927
1942	496,600	444.300 [+]	1,005,272
1941	n/a		972,245
1940	431,000	468,000[+/-]	749,583
1939	474,500	352, 000[+]	826,700
1938	n/a	347,000	883,328
1937	n/a	356,000	1,006,036
1936	n/a	244,000	784,151
1935	434,100	166,000[+]	620,000
1934	n/a	n/a	467,964
1933	n/a	n/a	321,299
1932	n/a	n/a	353,388
1931	n/a	n/a	551,306
1930	n/a	n/a	840,473
1929	n/a	n/a	1,013,572
1928	n/a	n/a	1,276,438
1927	n/a	n/a	-
1926	n/a	n/a	-
1925	481,879 [+/-]	n/a	943,203
1924	380,078	308,381 [+]	699,709

[204] Author's analysis of primary archival and secondary records: *Reports of the Liberian Treasury*, *Annual Reports of the General Receiver of Customs*, 1907, 1924-1925; *Receivership* and *Treasury Reports,* 1822-1944, as summarized in *Annual Messages* and *Inaugural Addresses* of Liberian Presidents (Arthur Barclay, Daniel E. Howard, Charles D. B. King), in Guannu (1980) and Dunn (2011, 482, 494, 500, 513, 522-25, 574-575). Also, Sidney de la Rue (1924-25), *Report of General Receiver of Custom & Financial Advisor;* Brown (1941) *Economic History of Liberia*; Steadman (1952, B-3 – B-4, C-1), *The Steadman Report*; McLaughlin (1966, 180-190), Buell (1928, 724-727), Kraaij (1989, 298, 310). Figures for 1928-1944 reflect calendar years (Jan 1-Dec. 31) in Steadman (1952, B-3, B-4).

[205] The Table does now show miscellaneous, reimbursements and revenue brought forward, etc., thus '[+]' to indicate unspecified (but discernable) additions.

1923	372,098	271,485	663,994
1922	307,262	226,183	570,782
1921	249,285	169,539	477,363
1920	323,920	151,920[+]	551,122
1919	216,105	101,151[+]	349, 808
1918	161,449	n/a	n/a
1917	163,634	119,966	335,353
1916	185,716	47,667	295,233
1915	247,483	n/a	273,368
1914	359,409	n/a	358,339 [+]
1913	475,287	n/a	534,500
1912	492,679	18,055 [+]	534,085
1911	438,552	38,007 [+][206]	483,255
1910	377,379	n/a	403,408
1909	355,000	17,000	380,000
1908	379,469	15,765	395,234
1907	362,176	n/a	n/a
1906	275,158	12,000	357,433
1905	n/a	12,000	$295,647
1904	n/a	12,000	$160,000

[206] Buell, 724

Table 6
List of Foreign Loans
1869 – 1929 [207]

Year	Loan Amt. & Terms	Grantor	Purpose/Status
1926	Anticipated $5 million Loan through an initial GoL bond purchase of $2.5 million, 40 years' maturity at 7%.	Firestone Financial Corporation	Loan successfully contracted. Intended as part of Firestone 99-year Concessional Agreement with GoL.
1918-22	$5 million Loan/Line of Credit @ 5% interest; intended to convert Liberia's financial administration to an 'all-American receivership' to be called "Financial Commission", with a Financial Commissioner appointed directly by the USG.	U.S. Government	This USG loan was intended as a 'war credit' under US Second Liberty Loan Act (1917), to refund the loan of 1912 and offer GoL fiscal relief. An initial amount of $18,000 of the loan was disbursed to GoL to facilitate its participation in the Paris Peace Conference where further loan negotiations would occur on the 'side-lines'. Congress however failed to approve the loan following Presidential transition from President Harding to in 1922, and the official end of the 'state of war' between the U.S. and Germany in July 1921.
1912	The 'Refunding Loan': $1.7 million @ 5% interest, payable over 40 years. Interest and sinking fund on the loan amounted to $99,500 annually. Liberian finances also to remain under int'l receivership.	An international consortium of American, German, French, British, Dutch banks.	Intended for "the adjustment of Liberia's indebtedness and settlement of claims", as well as for "use for productive purposes."
1908	No amount agreed, but likely to exceed previous loan amount.	U.S. Government.	Loan unsuccessfully contracted. It was

[207] Authors compilation from the the following sources: Starr (1913, 199); Barclay, *Annual Message*, Dec. 12, 1911, in Dunn (2011, 500); Jones (1962, ch. 8, PhD diss.), Azekiwi (1934, 117), Sawyer (1992, 180), Buell (1928, 805), McLaughlin (1966, 180-190), Steadman (1952, 83-84); British Foreign Office (1919, 49-58).

			intended for GoL relief, and to repay all outstanding loans. It failed as Liberia's debt burden exploded.
1907	'The Harry Johnston Loan' totalled US$100,000; placed the Liberian army under British command, and Liberia's finances under British receivership.	An unspecified financier in London	Contracted to aid the organization of the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) under British Command.
1906	- £100,000 ($500,000) total loan amount @ 6% interest. - £30,000 (US$150,000) to for urgent obligation and to redeem domestic debts - £7,000 ($35,000) retained by Liberia Development Company (LDC) for pressing obligations - £36,000 ($180,000) to constitute a loan from GoL to LDC for the establishment of a bank and road construction project. Liberian finances would for the first time come under direct British receivership.	D'Erlanger Brothers Company of London, via influence of Sir. Harry Johnson, on behalf of the Liberian Company, a British interest.	Loan successfully contracted but failed to bring full and permanent fiscal relief.
1870	Total loan amount of £100,000 (US$500,000), discounted by 30% at 7% interest; 2 ½ % sinking fund; payable over 15 years.		Loan successfully contracted but mismanaged; resulting to the overthrow of President Roye.
1866	Amount unknown.	British financier	For GoL 'financial aid'.

Table 7
Trends in GoL Revenue, Expenditure & Deficit [208]
1940 – 1951

Year	GoL Revenue (Jan.-Dec.) $ Million	GoL Expenditure $Million	Deficit $Million
1971	69.9	71.8	-1.9
1970	66.5	67.0	-0.5
1969	61.8	63.2	-1.4
1968	56.1	55.2	0.9
1953-1967	-	-	-
1952	8.9	10.0	-1.1
1951	12.8	10.3	2.5
1950	3.9	5.0	-1.1
1949	3.8	4.0	-0.2
1948	3.4	3.0	0.4
1947	3.2	3.5	-0.3
1946	2.3	2.3	0.0
1945	1.9	2.0	-0.1
1944	1.6	1.5	0.1
1943	1.4	1.0	0.4
1942	1.0	1.0	0.0
1941	1.0	0.7	0.3
1940	0.7	0.6	0.1

[208] Author's compilation: Steadman *Report* (1952); GoL *Economic Survey* (1968); GoL *Report* 'Public Foreign Assistance & Development Expenditure' (Jan. 4, 1974).

Table 8
Trends in GoL Customs Revenue [209]
1940 – 1951

Year	Total Export Duties ($)	Total Import Duties ($000)	Surtax	Produce Inspection	Others ***	Total Customs Revenue ($000)
1951	12.9	2,621.90	393.3	70.2	25.0	3,123.3
1950	47.4	1,737.70	260.7	67.7	18.8	2,132.3
1949	55.8	1,926.40	288.8	34.7	10.1	2,315.8
1948	54.5	1,830.50	274.3	n/a	22.0	2,181.3
1947	71.8	1632.9	244.9	n/a	13.0	1,962.6
1946	67.1	976.8	146.8	n/a	6.5	1,197.2
1945	50.9	765.0	115.2	n/a	3.2	934.3
1944	81.1	746.6	103.2	n/a	1.8	932.7
1943	40.9	681.0	n/a	n/a	2.3	724.2
1942	28.0	458.8	n/a	n/a	11.8	498.6
1941	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1940	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

[209] For Customs and Internal Revenues, see Steadman's *Report* (1952, C-1, C-14, C-28, C-36). Also, Kraaij (1983, 307). Customs figure for 1963-1978 are calculated from %s and figures provided in Kraaij, p. 328, 331. Income Tax, Maritime, Real estate, Hut tax, Tax on sales and export of rubber, are compiled from GoL *Reports* 1945, 1950, 1954. See also Kraaij (1983, 310).

Table 9
General Trends in GoL Internal Revenue[210]
1940 – 1951

Year	Hut Tax, Centennial Tax, Dev. Tax ($000)	Mercantile Sales & Profit Tax ($000)	Motor Vehicle License Fee ($000)	Health Tax ($000)	Public Utility Revenue ($000)	Income Tax (Million$)	Real Estate Tax (000)	Total Internal Revenue ($000)
1971	972.0	n/a	781.0	n/a	3,308.0	30.491	1,173.0	41,658
1970	1,800.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	25.700	1,200.0	n/a
1969	900.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	22.8	900.0	n/a
1968	1,333.0	n/a	546.0	n/a	n/a	18.7	1,100.0	n/a
1967	n/a	n/a	520.0	n/a	n/a	17.4	1,200.0	n/a
1966	400.0	n/a	500.0	n/a	n/a	21.6	600.0	n/a
1965	400.0	n/a	500.0	n/a	n/a	19.7	400.0	n/a
1964	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	18.0	300.0	n/a
1963	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16.6	300.0	n/a
1962	520.0	n/a	n/a	104.0	543.0	7.0	442.0	n/a
1961	551.0	n/a	n/a	216.0	483.0	6.9	103.0	n/a
1960	510.0	n/a	n/a	191.0	447.0	8.9	158.0	n/a
1959	533.0	n/a	n/a	208.0	316.0	6.8	65.0	n/a
1958	524.0	n/a	n/a	183.0	642.0	4.2	37.0	n/a
1957	538.0	n/a	n/a	209.0	636.0	5.0	41.0	n/a
1956	496.0	n/a	n/a	173.0	556.0	5.6	31.0	n/a
1955	498.0	n/a	n/a	163.0	445.0	5.2	17.0	n/a
1954	527.0	n/a	n/a	180.0	384.0	3.0	52.0	n/a
1953	465.0	n/a	n/a	195.0	308.0	3.3	24.0	n/a
1952	503.0	n/a	n/a	-	248.0	3.5	16.0	n/a
1951	478.0	253.2	214.0	-	206.0	7.8	13.0	1,299.3
1950	489.2	253.9	190.8	-	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,297.0
1949	455.9	186.5	175.7	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,108.8
1948	460.0	66.4	160.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,040.7
1947	469.9	89.7	120.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1,012.9

[210] Author's analysis and compilation from the following sources: GoL *Annual Report* 1960; Steadman (1952) *Report*; Banks-Henries (1969), See also Clower et al. (1966), McLaughlin (1966).

1946	477.1	70.1	117.1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	988.8
1945	466.9	45.5	106.4	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	896.2
1944	288.7	0.0	84.0	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	592.9
1943	232.4	0.0	61.6	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	629.8
1942	231.0	0.0	59.1	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	444.3
1941	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1940	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	468.0

Table 10
Trends in Rubber & Iron Ore Export [211]
1940 – 1951

Year	Total Export ($Million)	Total Rubber Export (Qty. million of lb of DRC)	Total Rubber Export ($millions)	Total Iron Ore Export (Qty., Million)	Total Iron Ore Export ($Million))
1971	224.0	186.5	32.5	20.89	160.60
1970	213.7	183.9	36.2	23.19	150.70
1969	195.9	142.2	30.3	20.27	137.10
1968	169.0	142.6	25.6	18.89	118.00
1967	158.8	138.0	26.6	17.20	115.10
1966	150.5	121.9	27.0	16.30	106.30
1965	135.4	116.1	29.0	15.10	96.00
1964	125.7	95.5	29.9	12.00	80.60
1963	81.1	91.1	23.9	6.40	45.00
1962	67.2	100.1	25.7	2.70	32.40
1961	61.9	90.8	25.5	3.10	29.40
1960	82.6	95.6	37.6	2.90	34.60
1959	66.9	96.2	31.7	2.60	28.20
1958	53.8	94.8	26.3	1.51	21.60
1957	40.4	82.2	26.8	1.34	23.10
1956	44.5	88.5	31.4	1.41	21.50
1955	42.9	87.5	31.7	1.72	16.40
1954	26.4	82.8	19.2	1.24	11.20
1953	31.0	78.8	21.3	1.43	14.50
1952	37.2	78.0	30.2	0.67	3.07

[211] Figures are cued from the following GoL reports and independent studies. For DRC value of total rubber exports, the Northwestern study appears to provide two sets of conflicting figures, believed to be cued from Firestone. I use the higher of these figures. See GoL *Report* (19608, 1971, 1982, 1984), Clower et al. (1966, 146, 154, 170). Firestone's total tax in 1951 of $7.8 million includes an additional $2.2 million in new Income Tax at 35% (Steadman 1952, C-3).

1951	52.1	79.3	48.5	0.06	0.22
1950	27.6	66.7	18.8	-	-
1949	15.5	59.3	n/a	-	-
1948	15.8	55.0	n/a	-	-
1947	13.1	48.0	n/a	-	-
1946	12.3	49.2	n/a	-	-
1945	11.3	43.8	11.6	-	-
1944	10.3	35.4	9.2	-	-
1943	9.0	32.1	8.4	-	-
1942	6.8	n/a	n/a	-	-
1941	5.0	n/a	n/a	-	-
1940	3.3	n/a	n/a	-	-

Table 11
U.S. Government Loans, Military Aid & Other Selected Assistance Projects Assistance to Liberia,
1944 – 1971[212]

Year	LOANS & SELECTED PROJECT ASSISTANCE	$ million
1944	USG Land-Lease for Port of Monrovia (USG)	19.3
1951-55	USG Export-Import Bank for roads, ports, water works	22.7
1959-61	USG Export-Import Bank for electrical power (USA)	12.1
1959	USG Development Loan Fund for telecommunication	3.0
1959	German Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau loan for Sinoe County harbour	3.2
1962	USG Export-Import Bank for hydro-electric project	4.8
1962	USG Public Law 480, Title IV (Port) Improvement, Livestock Development	8.6
1962	USG Monrovia Medical Center	6.0
1962	USG Monrovia Consolidated School System	4.1
1962	USG Monrovia Water Supply and Sewage Disposal	15.0
1964	World Bank Loan for roads construction	4.3
1963-66	USAID loans for National Medical Center ($6.8 mil), Mt. Coffee Hydroelectric ($24.26 mil), Monrovia Jr.-Sr. High Schools ($1.9 mil), Monrovia Elementary Schools ($0.46 mil), Monrovia Water Supply ($6.99 mil), Monrovia Sewage ($7.2 mil), Technical Equipment & Services ($1.15 mil),	48.7
1967-71	USAID loans for Monrovia Capital By-Pass road ($0.09 mil), Technical Assistance & Equipment ($0.44 mil), Roberts Int'l Airport (RIA) Improvement ($0.25 mil), Mineral Resources Survey ($0.72), Technical Assistance Commodities ($0.40), Two (2) Rural Access Road Construction: Kolahum-Kamatahum and Zwedru-Ziatown ($0.98 mil), RIA Phase II Construction ($4.0 mil), Technical Assistance ($0.58).	7.46

[212] For USA loans and grants, see Clower et al. (1966, 363); also GoL Min. of Finance *Report* (Dec. 31, 1973, 129). Author's summary of USG military assistance is cued from Dunn (2009,204). For World Bank, author's summary of USAID and German loans, see GoL Min. of Finance *Report* (Dec. 31, 1973, 126-130, 138-139). See also GoL, BoERS *Report* (Oct. 30, 1962, 19)

1966	German Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau loan for Capital By-Pass road construction.	0.625
1966	German Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau loan for road construction projects: Harbel-Buchanan and Greenville-Juarzon-Tchien	14.3
1969	World Bank loan for port dredging	3.6
1970	World Bank loan for power production and distribution	7.4
1970	African Development Bank (AfDB) loan for power	1.35
1971	World Bank loan for power production and distribution	4.7

LOANS TO PRIVATE ENTERPRISES

1948	Export-Import Bank for railroads for Liberia Mining Company (LMC)	4.0
1958-59	Export-Import Bank to Liberia Tractor Co. (asphalt plant)	0.1
1959	Development Loan Fund to Liberian-American Agricultural and Industrial Co. (lumber company)	0.2
1959	Export-Import Bank to National Iron Ore Company (NIOC)	6.0
1960	USG Development Loan Fund Guaranty for $1 million	1.0
1960	USG Export-Import Bank to LAMCO (Iron Ore)	30.0
1960	USG Export-Import Bank to Viannini Construction Co. (road machinery)	0.5

MILITARY AID

1953-61	USG Military Assistance Program (MAP), Foreign Military Sale (FMS), Int’t Military Education and Training (IMET)	2.3
1961-62	USG Military Assistance Program (MAP), Foreign Military Sale (FMS), Int’t Military Education and Training (IMET)	1.5
1963-71	USG Military Assistance Program (MAP), Foreign Military Sale (FMS), Int’t Military Education and Training (IMET)	5.4

Table 12
U.S. Government Grants to Liberia [213]
1944 – 1970

Year	Description	$ million
1964-71	N/A	N/A
1963	Aid allocation	est. 11.0
1962	Aid allocation	10.7
1949-61	P.L. 480, Title Commodities, Technical Assistance, Special Assistance Grants	27.5
1944-50	Services U.S. Economic Mission and Public Health Services	3.2
1944-45	Roberts Field and interior roads (incl. Monrovia-Ganta Highway)	4.3

[213] GoL *Report on Public Assistance* (1974), *Annual Report* (1968). See also Clower et al. (1966, 363)

Table 13
Trend Maritime Revenue [214]
1949-1961

Year	GoL Revenue (in $ million)
1971	6.1
1970	5.0
1969	4.4
1968	3.6
1967	3.4
1966	2.5
1965	3.5
1964	2.7
1963	2.1
1962	0.9
1961	1.0
1960	1.1
1959	1.5
1958	1.7
1957	2.0
1956	1.3
1955	0.8
1954	1.1
1953	0.5
1952	0.3
1951	0.2
1950	0.1
1949	0.2

[214] Total receipt comprises (a) Initial Regr, Fees & Tonnage Tax, (b) Annual Tonnage Tax, (c) Addit'l Regr. Fees & Tonnage Tax, and (d) Change in Name Fees. See Bureau of Maritime Affairs *Report* (Apr. 16, 1979, II-12); McLaughlin (1966, 81-82).

Table 14
Selected Industries/Manufacturing Operations in Liberia[215]
By 1969

	Names and Description
1	West Africa Shoes and Rubber Industry
2	Vicente Munarriz Industrial Works Corporation
3	Firestone Recap Plant
4	Ghosn Brothers Recap Plan]t
5	JETCO Clothing
6	Giraudi Metal Industrial Corporation
7	Monrovia Industrial Company (MIC)
8	Metalloplasticia Liberia, Ltd.
9	Tripoli Industrial Corporation
10	Monrovia Breweries
11	Montserrado Oxygen Supply Company
12	Parker Paint Industries, Inc.
13	Buccimazza Industrial Works Incorporated
14	Liberia Milling and Processing Corporation
15	Depest Control Services
16	Liberian Industrial Manufacturing Corporation
17	Bolado Sawmill
18	Abirachid Tayar Company
19	Bharwaneys International
20	Bushrow Industrial Works
21	Dodani Block Factory
22	Farah Soap Company
23	Liberia Industrial Centre
24	Liberia Industrial Corporation

[215] Banks-Henries, ed. (1969, 119-20)

25	Liberian Industrial Forestry
26	Liberian Industrial Production Corporation
27	Liberia Metal Company
28	MIM Timber Company
29	A Sirleaf & Sons Block Factory
30	Culvarts Concrete Products Factory
31	Vic's Bakery
32	Dry Gin Distillary
33	Jean Cole Wines-and Spirits

Table 15
Key Indices of Economic Activities/Growth[216]
1950 – 1961

Year	GDMI (mil.$)	GoL Rev. ($mil.)	Total Imports (1000 long tons)	Rubber Exports (mil. of lbs)	Iron Ore Export (mil. long tons)	Tribal Sector Net Money Income ($mil)	Money Sector Labour Force	All-Weather Road Mileage
1967	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,200
1961	165.1	32.4	465	90.8	3.1	8.2	-	1,200
1960	154	32.4	396	95.4	2.9	7.3	82,000	1,150
1959	130.1	24.6	305	96.2	2.8	6.3	-	-
1958	97.1	18.1	241	94.8	2.1	5.5	68,000	-
1957	90.9	20.0	254	83.9	2.1	4.8	-	470
1956	89.7	17.9	213	88.5	2.0	4.5	-	-
1955	79.1	15.3	191	87.5	1.8	3.9	56,000	-
1954	60.5	11.9	165	82.8	1.2	3.4	-	300
1953	58.4	11.2	155	78.8	1.3	3.0	-	-
1952	52.6	8.9	143	78.0	0.9	2.7	-	250
1951	45.8	12.8	161	79.3	0.2	2.2	-	-
1950	35.8	3.9	120	66.7	-	1.8	30,000	220

216 GoL *Research & Statistics Report* (Oct. 30, 1962, 15); GoL Eco. Recovery Program (1968,65).

Table 16
Growth in Vehicle Population and Public Roads Mileage[217]
1949-1961

Year	Total Vehicle Registered (or in operation)	Est. Major Road Mileage (Primary & Secondary All Weather)
1967	17,021	2,200
1966	11,712	n/a
1965	14,334	n/a
1964	10,137	n/a
1961	7,900	1,200
1960	n/a	1,150
1957	n/a	470
1954	1,450	300
1952	n/a	250
1949	650	220

[217] GoL, Bureau of Research & Stats, *Annual Report* (Oct. 30, 1962, 24), GoL *Recovery Program* (1986-89, p. 66), RL, *Planning* (1986). From 1964-1967, figures represent vehicle registration

Table 17
Investments According to Sectors[218]
1944-1960
(in millions)

Industry		**Amount (millions of $)**
Rubber and other Agricultural Projects		49
Iron Ore Mining		382
Timber		1.3
Others		4.3
	Total	$ 436.6

[218] GoL *Report* 'Economic Survey' (1968); GoL *Public Sector Account* (1969). See McLaughlin (1966, 65).

Table 18
Comparative Trends in GoL Revenue & Trade, 1952-60[219]
(in $ millions)

Year	GoL Revenue	Total Export	Total Import	Trade Balance
1971	69.9	224.0	162.4	61.6
1970	66.5	213.7	149.7	64.0
1969	61.8	195.9	114.7	81.2
1968	56.1	169.0	108.5	60.5
1967	48.8	158.8	125.6	33.2
1966	46.7	150.5	113.7	36.8
1965	42.4	135.4	104.8	30.6
1964	40.1	125.7	111.2	14.5
1963	37.2	81.1	108.0	-26.9
1962	33.6	67.6	131.6	-64.0
1961	32.4	61.9	91.0	-28.8
1960	32.4	82.6	69.2	13.4
1959	24.6	66.9	42.9	24.0
1958	18.1	53.8	38.5	15.3
1957	20.1	40.4	38.3	2.1
1956	17.9	44.5	26.8	17.7
1955	15.3	42.9	26.0	16.9
1954	11.9	26.4	22.7	3.7
1953	11.2	31.0	18.7	12.3
1952	8.9	37.2	18.2	19.0
1951*	12.8	52.1	17.1	35.0
1950	3.9	27.6	10.6	17.0
1949	3.8	15.5	8.2	7.3
1948	3.4	15.8	8.8	7.0
1947	3.2	13.1	8.8	4.3

[219] Author's analysis and tabulation from the following sources: GoL Bureau of Economic Research & Statistics *Annual Report* (1962, 82), GoL Planning & Eco. Affairs *Economic Survey* (1967, 6 - publ. June 1968). For GoL Expenditure, which includes expenses under the Development Budget, see Carlsson (1983, Table 15). *Figure of $12.8 M includes the total amount of $7.8 million from the newly introduced (1951) income tax.

1946	2.3	12.3	4.7	7.6
1945	1.9	11.3	3.5	7.8
1944	1.6	10.3	3.0	7.3
1943	1.4	9.0	4.0	5.0
1942	1.0	6.8	3.9	2.9
1941	1.0	5.0	3.3	1.7
1940	0.7	3.3	2.2	1.1

Table 19
Trends in GoL Bureaucracy[220]
1950-60

Year	# Departments/ Ministries	# Bureau, Commissions, Agencies
1961-68	Public Works & Utilities	Special Comm. Of GoL Operations
	Agriculture	Natural Resources & Survey
	Health	Public Utilities Authorities
	Commerce, Industry, Shipping & Aviation.	
	Information & Cultural Affairs	
	Planning & Economic Affairs	
1952-60	Same as below	
1944-51	State	
	Treasury	
	Justice	
	Post	
	Defence	
	Internal Affairs	
	Education	

[220] GoL *Year book* (1940, 1956, 1965), Banks-Henries, ed. (1969, i); Steadman *Report* (1952), GoL *National Budget* (1971)

Table 20
Selected Years of GoL External Debt [221]
1949-1961
(millions of dollars)

Type of Debt	1949	1953	1955	1956	1957	1958	1989	1960	1961
Bank of Monrovia (a subsidiary of Firestone)	-	1.0	4.7	3.5	2.4	5.0	5.5	9.5	10.0
U.S. Exim Bank	-	1.5	2.5	2.7	5.9	11.3	17.8	20.3	30.0
Refinanced Loans, mainly in construction	-	-	.9	2.7	4.4	6.4	14.3	16.4	43.9
Others	.6	-	.6	.4	.2	-	-	-	2.3
Total	.6	2.5	8.7	9.3	12.9	22.7	37.6	46.2	86.2

[221] GoL *Annual Report* 1974, 1964. See also Clower (1966, 26)

Table 21
U.S. Assistance to Liberia, 1951-1961[222]
(in millions of dollars)

Type of Assistance	Amount ($)
Loans to GoL (1951-1962)	51
Grants to GoL (1951-1961)	28
Loans to private enterprises (1958-1961)	37
U.S. Aid program (1951-1961)	30
	$146

[222] Author's compilation for the following sources: GoL *Report* 'Public Foreign Assistance', 1968-72 (1974); GoL *Report* 'Public Sector Accounts' (1969).

Table 22
Trend in GoL Revenue to Debt Payment [223]
1961-1965

Year	Revenue	Payments of fixed Commitments (in $Millions)	Available for Development Projects ($Million)
1971	69.9	-	-
1970	66.5	-	-
1969	61.8	-	-
1968	56.1	-	-
1967	48.8	-	-
1966	46.7	-	-
1965	42.4	15.4	15.6
1964	40.1	14.0	14.0
1963	37.2	14.2	11.0
1962	33.6	15.1	5.4
1961	32.4	11.2	6.5

[223] Bureau of Economic Research & Statistics (Nov. 15, 1961, 49-50); GoL *Economic Survey* (1967, viii); Routine GoL expenditure takes about half of total revenue (projected to be $15 million in 1961, $16 million in 1962, $19 in 1963, $22 million in 1964, $25 million in 1965), after which the rest is committed to debt repayment and development initiatives. Revenue figures are actual. Payments are projections as at Nov. 1961.

Table 23
Selected List of Institutional & Bureaucratic Reforms[224]
1944-1971

Year	Studies, Reviews & Proposals for Reform
1966	Tax Mission on the Reform of the Tax System of Liberia
1963	IMF/IBRD Austerity Program and Reforms
1963	Economic Survey of Liberia
1961, July	*Report by Special Commission on GOL Operations*
1960	Special Comm. On Government Ops. (SCOGOL)
1952	The Steadman Study on the Fiscal Affairs of Liberia
1949	The Government Revamp Commission

[224] Author's analysis

Table 24
Selected Years Gross Domestic Product
at Market Prices[225]
1950-1967

Years	Millions of Dollars
1967	287
1966	266
1964	248
1960	191
1959	161
1958	120
1957	113
1956	112
1955	98
1954	78
1953	72
1952	66
1951	57
1950	48

[225] For GDP 1964-1966, see GoL *Economic Survey* (1967, 1). Figures for 1966-1970, CBL Report (1971, 3-4). See also GoL MoPEA *Report* (June 1969, 2), and Public Sector Accounts of Liberia, 1968.

Table 25
Selected Years Labour Distribution[226]

Year	Firestone	GoL	Others	Total Money Sector	Estimated Labour Force
1966	21,600	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1964	n/a	n/a	n/a	90, 000	260,000
1955	n/a	n/a	n/a	55,000	n/a
1950	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
1944	23,000	n/a	n/a	40,000	n/a
1940	18,000	2,000	n/a	20,000	150,000

[226] McLaughlin (1966, 183). Figure for Firestone 1966 is estimated in GoL Plan. & Econs Affairs *Report* 1962, p. 32.

Table 26
Direct Taxes by Household [227]
1967-1968
(in Thousands of dollars)

Title	1967	1968
Income Tax	1,450	1,656
Austerity Tax	1,221	2,549
Hut Tax	287	500
Water Tax	26	24
Development Tax	654	751
Emergency Relief Tax	966	995

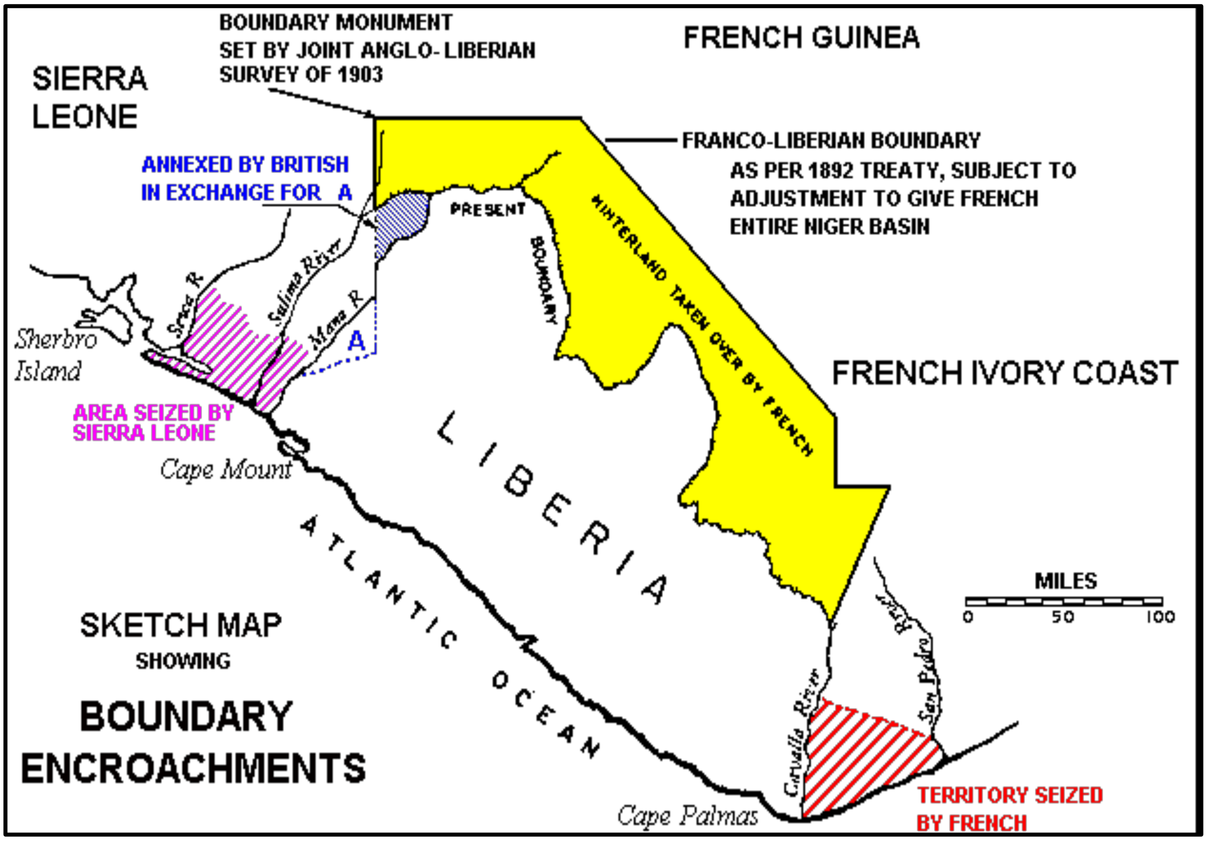
[227] Source: GoL *Economic Survey* (1968, 6)

APPENDIX B

<u>Map 1</u>: Present Day Liberia

<u>Figure 1</u>: Map of Liberia. Courtesy of United Nations Cartographic Section (map number 3775, revised January 2004). Accessed at <u>https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Un-liberia.png</u>.

<u>Map 2</u>: Extent of Liberia's Territorial Claims



<u>Figure 2</u>: Extent of Liberia's territorial claims prior to 1900. Sketch and interactive image is courtesy of (author unknown). Accessed at http://personal.denison.edu/~waite/liberia/history/map2.htm

Map 3: Territorial Distribution of Ethnic Communities in Liberia

Figure 3: Territorial distribution of ethnic and language groups in Liberia by 1980. Courtesy of GlobalSecurity.org. Accessed at https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/liberia/maps.htm

Map 4: Political Boundaries and Hinterland Provinces before 1964

Figure 4: County boundaries and Hinterland Provinces (Western, Central and Eastern) before 1964. Copied from Liebenow (1987, 64). Liberia: The Quest for Democracy.