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**British Colonial Education in West Africa in
the 19th Century: The Case of Sierra Leone**

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Dedication

To my parents for their love and trust,

To my brother Mohamed and beloved sisters Fatima, Radia, and Nabila, who believed
in me

To the “apples of my eyes” Oussama and Abir

Acknowledgements

I would like first to express my gratitude and sincere thanks to my teacher and supervisor Prof. Aziz Mostefaoui for his precious help, guidance, and support, without which this work would not have been achieved. I wish to express my delight and honor to be his student and to the teachers of the department of English who believed in my potentials and have encouraged me along the two years of my Master degree studies.

Thank you.

Abstract

British colonial education in Sierra Leone in 19th century started with a group of British humanitarian philanthropists and abolitionists, who transported the first groups of liberated slaves in Britain to settle in Sierra Leone Peninsula. There, they established churches and schools under the control of Church Mission Society (CMS). The CMS's missionaries wanted to spread Christianity and the ethos of western civilization, culture, and education because they considered Sierra Leoneans as 'heathen' and 'illiterate'.

This study adopts the descriptive and analytical research to trace back the establishment and evolution of mission's education in Sierra Leone in the 19th century and analyses its impact on the Sierra Leonean children. The first chapter deals with the description of the pre-colonial education whereas the second chapters attempts to analyze mission education and its major impacts disregarding the existence of any education such as the indigenous and Islamic education. British colonial education which is considered a mission education proved to be a corner stone and turning point in Sierra Leone history it acquired her name 'Athens of Africa', as it benefited the country in becoming the African 'Gate' to western education and resulted in reshaping the country in terms of culture religions and social restructure.

Keywords: British colonial education, West Africa, 19th century Sierra Leone, Christianity, Church Mission Society

Résumé

L'éducation Coloniale Britannique à Sierra Leone au 19ème siècle commença avec un groupe humanitaire de philanthrope et abolitionnistes Britannique, qui transportèrent les premiers groupes d'esclaves libérés en Angleterre et les installèrent dans la péninsule de Sierra Leone. Sous le control de la Société Mission de l'Église (SME), ce groupe de philanthrope (missionnaires) ouvrirent des écoles pour propager le christianisme ainsi que la culture, la civilisation, et l'éducation occidentale toute en considérant les Sierra léonins comme étant païens et illettrés. Ce travail adopte une recherche descriptive et analytique pour retracer l'ouverture des écoles missionnaires à Sierra Leone au 19eme siècle et analyser ces conséquences sur le peuple Sierra Léonins. Le premier chapitre est consacré a la description de l'éducation présente à Sierra Leone bien avant l'arrivée des Européens. Le 2eme chapitre tente d'analyser l'évolution des écoles primaires des missionnaires au 19eme siècle et quels était les impactes les plus pertinent sur la société. Cette éducation était considéré une éducation de missionnaires, elle représenta un point cruciale dans l'histoire de l'éducation occidentale à Sierra Leone puisque elle était le 'portail ouvert' des Africains pour une éducation occidentale, d'où elle a acquis l'appellation 'Athènes de l'Afrique' en captivant les étudiants des quartes coins du continent africain.et contribua massivement a la reforme culturelle, religieuse ainsi qu'a la recomposition social du pays.

Mots clés : L'éducation coloniale Britannique, Afrique de l'ouest, Sierra Leone au 19emSiècle, Christianisme, La Société de mission de l'Eglise

نبذة مختصرة

بدأ التعليم الاستعماري البريطاني في سيراليون في القرن التاسع عشر ميلادي بمجموعة من محبي الخير والإنسانيين البريطانيين الذين قاموا بنقل المجموعات الأولى من العبيد المحررين في بريطانيا لتستقر في شبه جزيرة سيراليون. وهناك أسسوا الكنائس والمدارس الخاضعة لسيطرة جمعية بعثة الكنيسة (CMS). أراد المبشرون في CMS نشر المسيحية وروح الحضارة والثقافة والتعليم الغربيين لأنهم اعتبروا السيراليونيين "وثنيين" و "أميين".

تعتمد هذه الدراسة البحوث الوصفية والتحليلية لتتبع تأسيس وتطور تعليم البعثة في سيراليون في القرن التاسع عشر وتحليل تأثيرها على سكان سيراليون. يتناول الفصل الأول وصف التعليم ما قبل الاستعماري ، بينما يحاول الفصل الثاني تحليل التعليم الذي نشرته جمعية بعثة الكنيسة (CMS) وتأثيراته الرئيسية في المنطقة مع إنكارهم وجود أي نوع من التعليم رغم أن سيراليون شهدت وجود تعليم أصلي من خلال الجمعيات السرية إضافة إلى التعليم الاسلامي . أثبت التعليم الاستعماري البريطاني الذي يعتبر تعليمًا تبشيريًا أنه حجر الزاوية ونقطة تحول في تاريخ سيراليون ، حيث اكتسبت كنية "أثينا إفريقيا" ، التي استفاد البلد من خلالها من أن أصبح "بوابة" أفريقيا للتعليم الغربي وأدى إلى إعادة تشكيل البلاد من حيث الثقافة والأديان وإعادة الهيكلة الاجتماعية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التعليم الاستعماري البريطاني، غرب إفريقيا، سيراليون في القرن التاسع عشر ميلادي ، المسيحية جمعية بعثة الكنيسة.

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List of Acronyms

CFRBP	Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor
CMS	Church Mission Society
FBC	Fourah Bay College
HGF	Holy Gost Fathers
RCM	Roman Catholic Church
UBC	United Brethren in Christ
WAMC	West African Methodist Church

General Introduction

Education is an instrumental and a crucial tool in determining both the success and the development of any society and in implementing new identity to a targeted one through the constant contact with the culture of the 'stranger'. As far as colonialism is concerned, history had shown that it was through educating people that it was easy to colonize them as it can be used as an efficient means to overthrow the colonizer. If a colonizer, for instance, wanted to control his subjects, it could have effectively and efficiently been achieved through the educational process. In the West African colony of Sierra Leone, for example, the British introduced Western education in the 19th century. At first it was an attempt by a group of philanthropists and missionaries so as to Christianize those 'illiterate' Africans, and provide them with Western Knowledge. Missionaries sought to spread their 'civilization' among the Sierra Leonean population because they thought of its people as being savages and illiterate, and that they had no education of their own. So missionaries built up churches and schools and enrolled children of liberated slaves along with local children.

Education in Sierra Leone, however, had existed long before the arrival of Europeans, and the establishment of the British Crown Colony in 1808. Muslim immigration to West Africa brought Quranic schools and Islamic education to the region. Most importantly the secret societies, such as the Poro and the Bundo organizations that were considered disciplinary educational institutions, these society initiated trainings to adulthood and social life.

Soon after the British abolition of slave trade in 1778, about four hundred liberated slaves were transported by Christian philanthropists to settle in Sierra Leone Peninsula, hence, founding the first settlements along with the first European model schools in the country.

Sierra Leone stands as an important example and a cornerstone in the history of Western education in Africa. It was known as ‘the Athens of Africa’, analogically compared to the European center for knowledge. It pioneered the other Colonies in being the first center for learning and the gate of Western Education to Africa. The greatest number of primary schools was established there during the British Colonial era, in addition to the first university in Africa, the famous *Fourah Bay College*.

The research starts with an introduction to the pre-colonial education which existed in Sierra Leone preceding European educational style. It discusses the different types of education and institutions which had existed before the 19th century, and then it tackles the historical evolution of the British Colonial education introduced in Sierra Leone for the first time thanks to the philanthropic works and efforts of missionaries. The research focuses on the Christian Missionary Society (CMS) which played a pivotal role in spreading Western Education in Africa and the words of the gospel, which means preaching and spreading Christianity. It also sheds light on primary schools at the beginning of the 19th Century.

This research is concerned with Mission Education at the beginning and during the 19th century. The period chosen holds a considerable historical significance in the history of education in Sierra Leone and West Africa as well. It constitutes the pioneering Western Education to Sierra Leone, ‘the Gate to West Africa’. This education resulted in changing the cultural and socio-dynamic composition of the country. The changes crystallized in the emergence of a melting pot called Creoles with new Afro-European culture, Language, belief and, way of life along with the birth of a new educated class of African Elite which served the Western Civilization. The educated elites contributed to the spread of Christianity, and Western Education style throughout the African continent.

The approach used in this research is descriptive and analytical. It investigates the history of the first missionaries in Sierra Leone in the 19th Century. The focus is laid on the study of the Christian Mission Society (CMS) work and the early primary schools the society had established. This research attempts to answer a number of questions. The first one is whether there existed any kind of education in Sierra Leone before the introduction of Western education. The second question is to identify the pioneering agents who imparted Western education in Sierra Leone. What the intention had been behind missionary education. What the schools had been like, the system of education applied, and who the children enrolled had been. Finally, what the most relevant outcomes had been of the British colonial education in Sierra Leone.

To answer the aforesaid questions, a variety of resources were consulted to insure the objectivity and accuracy of the research data. The dissertation is composed of two chapters. The first chapter provides a brief introduction to the country with a historical background to colonial education.

The second chapter depicts the course led by the first missionaries of the Christian Mission Society (CMS) to establish churches and schools in Sierra Leone. It describes the hard circumstances, and the efforts of the missionaries to keep the schools open despite the austerities they faced. The chapter also exposes a brief view about the first mission schools and their evolution. Furthermore it explains the system applied for teaching 'the monitorial system'.

Chapter One

**Historical Background
to and Pre-Colonial
Education in Sierra Leone in
the 19th century**

Introduction

When the British introduced western education in Sierra Leone in the 19th century, they did not acknowledge the existence of any kind or any system of education. They opened their first schools as an attempted to suppress what they judged being secular practices and impart European style of knowledge to the indigenous population. The British claimed having brought enlightenment and knowledge to the inhabitants of Sierra Leone because they regarded them as illiterate and heathen. However, this claim stood in contradiction to reality because, though ‘different’ from European educational style, there was a sort of ‘training’ or ‘education’ that belonged to the local people. It shares, in its very essence, a significant role in building up a generation of elite that accomplished the needs of its society. The existing education in Sierra Leone fulfilled what an education is really intended for. Therefore, introducing a brief view of what education was like in Sierra Leone in the pre-colonial period would provide important insights and a better perception to the colonial scene, and a description of the underground to the British colonial education.

1. Introduction to Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a small country situated on the west coast of Africa. It shares borders with Guinea and Liberia, overlooking the Atlantic Ocean to the West. The capital city is Freetown situated in its peninsula. Sierra Leone owes its name to the Portuguese explorer Pedro Da Cintra (died in 1484). When he saw the mountainous peninsula for the first time in 1462 “posed like lions” as he described it, he called it ‘Serra Lyoa’ meaning lions’ mountains. Progressively, the name acquired the present form ‘Sierra Leone’ (Fyle xvii; Oliosio 456).

Sierra Leone comprises about fifteen different ethnic groups such as the Mende, Sussu, Limba, Kono, and Temnes. Each tribe lived in isolation from the other until the coming of Europeans (Oyètádé and Luke 122-23). The founded colony of Freetown was inhabited by the Creoles who were the descendants of former slaves, liberated slaves from Nova Scotia and Jamaican Maroons while the native tribes occupied the hinterlands.

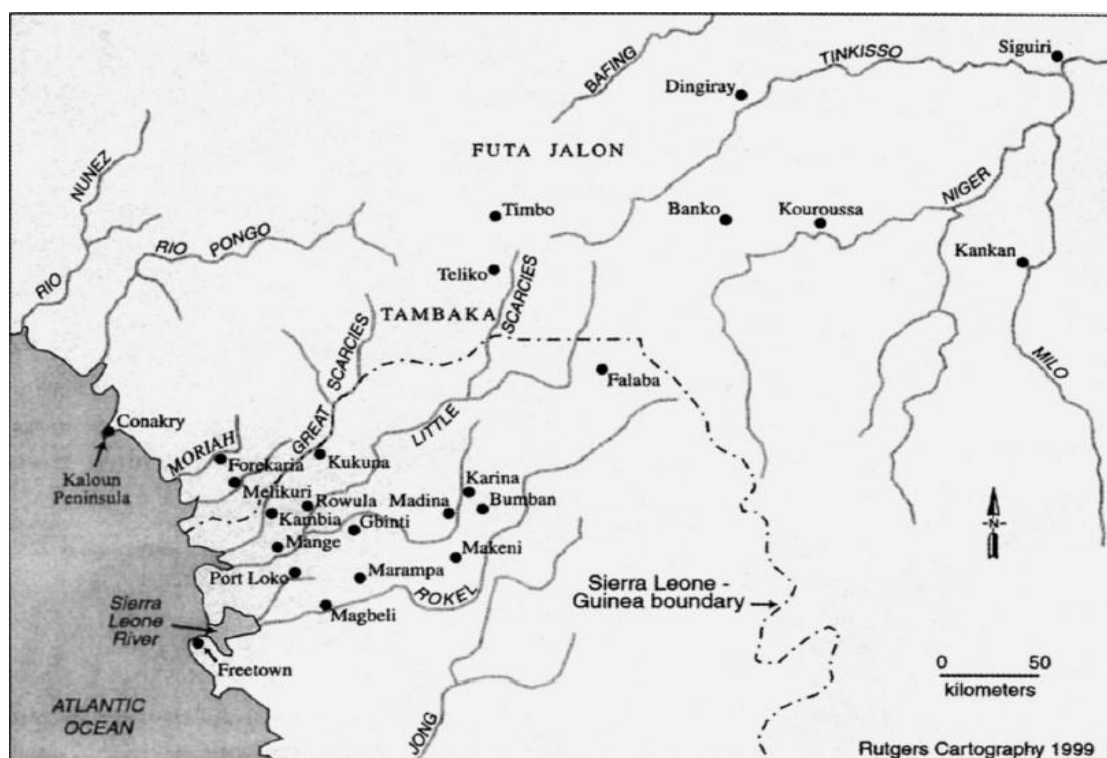
2 . Ethnic Groups in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is among the richest countries with regard to ethnicity in Africa. It counts more than fourteen ethnic groups, the largest of which is the Mende, followed by the Temne. Before the coming of the Europeans, all these ethnic groups lived in isolation from one another for fear of war (Oyètádé and Luke 123). In the northern part lived the Limba, Kono, Karanko, Yalunka, Loko, Sussu, Mandingo and Fula. The Bullom and Sherbro occupied the northern and southern coastal areas. A smaller number of ethnic groups were found in the eastern province, these were the Krim, Vai, Gola, and Kissi. The inhabitants of the western part were a mixed population of Krio(Oyètádé and Luke 123).

Each ethnic group had its own language, customs and culture. There were distinctive differences concerning specific customs and practices between each ethnic group, but they shared similarities concerning the organization of politics, economy, and the family. Another common characteristic was the strong belief in spirits, witchcraft, magic, and sorcery. They were geographically organized into tribal areas under the form of chiefdoms, under the leadership of one chief who settled disputes and punished infractions (Windham 115).

Today these ethnic groups are divided into four predominant language categories distributed geographically around the country. The first group is the Temne, and it includes Temne, Limba, Koranka, Sussu, Fula, Loko, Mandingo and Yalunka. These ethnic groups live in the Northern Province of Sierra Leone. The second language category is called the Mende. The Mende group consists of Mende, Sherbro, Krim, Vai, Gola, and Gallinas. It is found through the Southern Province of the country. The Eastern province constitutes the third language category group consisting of the Kno and Kissi, while the western part comprises the Krio, an English based Creole language. Although the Temne and Mende constitute the highest proportion of the Sierra Leonean population, Krio is considered the lingua franca of Sierra Leoneans (Kanunp). Table 1 on page 9 indicates the geographical location of ethnic groups in Sierra Leone

Map 1: Sierra Leone (19th Century)



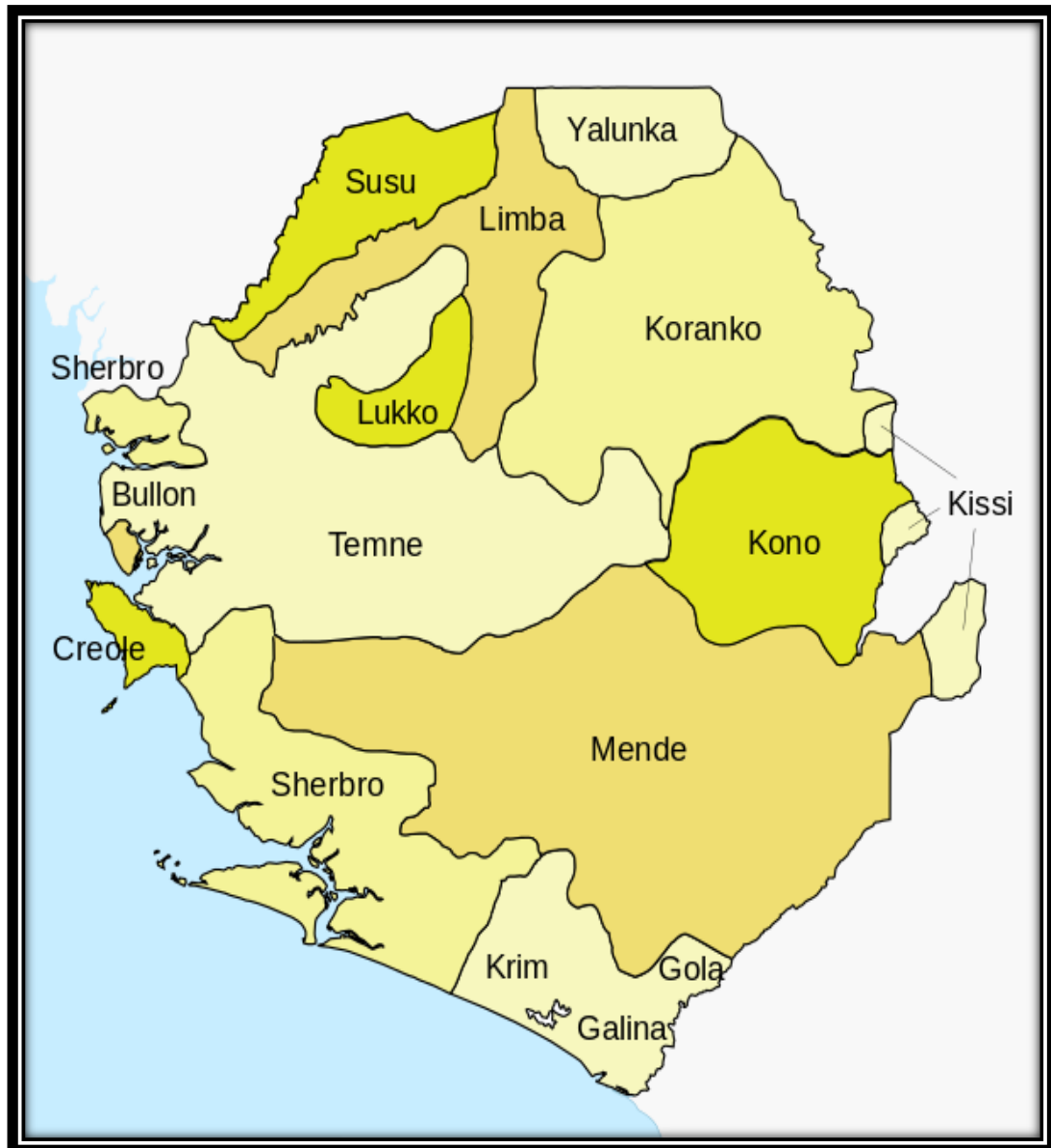
Source: www.ilo.org/africa/countries-covered/sierra-leone/lang--en/index.htm

Table 1: Location of Language Groups in Sierra Leone

Predominant Language Group(s)	Province	Percentage
Temne, Limba, Koranka, Susu, Fula, Loko, Mandingo, Yalunka	Northern	30.9%
Mende, Sherbro, Krim, Vai, Gola, Gallinas	Southern	29.8%
Kono, Kissi	Eastern	8.4%
Krio	Western area	1.9%

Source: “language at risk, a case study from Sierra Leone” (Sullay M. Kanu)n.p.

Map 2: Sierra Leone in Ethnic Groups



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethnic_groups_in_Sierra_Leone

3. Early European Contact with Sierra Leone

The area where Sierra Leone was established had had connections with Europeans before the British arrival. This had been through trade and economic interests. A trade based upon the exchange of European goods and utensils for African gold, ivory, palm oil, and other raw materials. It was the Portuguese' quest for gold and resources of wealth, that set the path to the exploration of the West African coasts (White12).

The Portuguese were the first to explore the 'dark' continent since the mid 16th century. They established trading posts on the area that is today Sierra Leone and were the first to introduce western style of education in the country by opening schools there. However not much is known about Portuguese education in Sierra Leone because of the paucity of records about that period (White 12).

The thriving Portuguese trade with Africa made the other European nations competing jealously to build trade relations with Africa. Later, this trade was replaced by a more lucrative trade: the slave trade. Therefore, by 1800 a transatlantic slave trade developed between Europe, the New World, and the area that is today Freetown, the Capital of Sierra Leone (Fyle xxxiii).

4. The Origins of the British Contact with Sierra Leone

The British contact with Sierra Leone goes back to the religious revival of the 18th century in Europe. It was fueled by the European missionaries' zeal to Christianize the 'heathen' inhabitants of the African continent, to 'enlighten', and to 'civilize' its 'savage' people. The Europeans considered Africans as pagans, whose religious practices and rituals were judged to be uncivilized and satanic (Deveneaux 45-46). Some British believed that slave trade was not morally accepted by any universal law.

They strived against the atrocities committed towards the black people, and led campaigns to abolish slavery. These groups of British, who were involved in the antislavery issue, founded organizations for philanthropic and humanitarian work to help and support the blacks (Deveneaux 45-46).

The British philanthropists sought to find a land where slaves could be protected. The practical solution was to purchase a land in West Africa where the freed slaves would live as freemen. The designed land was precisely in the Sierra Leonean Peninsula. The area had already been familiar with the British because it was the transitory port for slave traders (Kup 203).

The British choice of Sierra Leone as a land for repatriated slaves was not haphazardly made but intentionally selected. The area used to be the transitory point for international trade of African raw materials as palm oil, gold and ivory, and the focal center for the transatlantic slave trade. The geographical location of Sierra Leone's natural harbor in its peninsula was the potential landing port for European trading ships during the era of slave trade. The area around the harbor, which was later called Freetown by the British, used to attract European explorers and traders. It was the open gate for Europeans to the Western African countries in the profoundly 'dark' interior.

Philanthropists fought to grant the Blacks their rights for liberty. It was thanks to humanitarians' efforts, such as Granville Sharp (1735-1813)¹ and William Wilberforce (1795-1833)², that the British Parliament was convinced and passed an

¹ Granville Sharp (1735-1813) was an English civil servant and a political reformer. He believed that slavery was the evil "itself" and fought for its abolition, he defended Africans in London .he was the head of "the society for effecting the abolition of slave trade" which he founded with the help of Thomas Clarkson, and nine Quakers in 1787.Sharp formulated the plan to settle black people in the province of freedom that later became known as Freetown in sierra Leone. Many times his help to black people was done on his own expense

²William Wilberforce (1759-1833) was the spokesman for the abolition movement and worked his entire life to pass a law for the abolition of the British slave trade .a devoted religious man. He became

Act in 1778 which forbade a slave owner to forcibly transport his slave from England to America. Therefore, slaves of England became free (Kup 203). The British government helped philanthropists to organize and finance the first expedition to Sierra Leone for the new freed slaves. Thereafter, they established settlement in the area around Sierra Leone's Peninsula. This part of land was conceived as the new homeland for the liberated slaves. It was Sharp who named the land where the first expedition was made up of four hundred slaves landed, 'The Province of Freedom' (kup 203; Everill 18).

Granville Sharp and William Wilberforce founded the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor in 1786. The Committee helped the Black Poor of Britain and purchased land in West Africa to establish the 'Province of Freedom' as a first settlement in 1787, and they called it Granville town. The settlement was conceived as the land of freedom, but it was unfortunate and fell within a period of two years and six month. Firstly, because of the hostility of the Temne tribe who did not accept the European 'intruders'. Secondly, starvation and the harsh tropical climate in the region caused diseases and death of the majority of settlers (Fyle 33-34). Lastly, European slave traders attacked and burned the settlement (Kup203).

A few years later, a second attempt to rebuild the settlement in the area that became the Capital of Sierra Leone was undertaken by the blacks from Nova Scotia in Canada (a British colony). They had fought by the side of the British during the American War of Independence (1775-1783), and won their liberty (Fyfe 411; keefer 52). These liberated slaves were transported to Sierra Leone and founded Freetown in

an evangelical Christian and founded the Clapham sect, which supported the antislavery abolitionist. He was the first MP member to raise the problem of slavery in the House of Commons. in 1807 his bill to abolish slavery was passed, yet he didn't stop the fight for his cause until the bill to abolish slavery and slave trade in Britain and in all its colonies was passed in 1833, just days before he died (Piper 19).

1792. A third group of freed slaves, the Jamaican Maroons³, joined the settlement in 1800. The last group to join the settlement of Freetown was the liberated slaves from slave ships recaptured by the British Naval Squadron (Fyfe 411; Keefer 52).

5. Indigenous Education in Pre-European Sierra Leone

Education in Sierra Leone had existed long before the coming of Europeans. It was instilled in the same way as in all primitive societies, that is to say it was imparted naturally by direct contact of the children with their community. Indigenous education in Sierra Leone was an 'education for living' (Forde 65). It is labeled 'indigenous' or 'primitive' as opposed to western education. Indigenous education is defined by Yatta Kanu as a term referring to "locally developed forms of teaching the young, based on the traditions and values of African societies" (68).

One aspect of the indigenous education is that it could be either vocational or traditional. The vocational education was concerned with the training in the use of tools, handicrafts, building, hunting and how to get a living. The traditional one focused on the spiritual side of the human being, the divine and religious issues, such as celebrating the coming of age⁴, religious ceremonies, and rituals (Sawyer 16). The difference between the two was that vocational education was exercised in the village, the clan, or the community site while the traditional education was carried out in specific settings: a place far away from the village inside the bushes or the forest, for example, where only the concerned members were allowed to go (Sawyer 16).

³Jamaican Maroons were a group of determined freedom fighters in Jamaica who rebelled against the British, and fought for independence; in 1795 Maroons were exiled to Nova Scotia Canada because of breaking the peace treaty of 1739. But life was unbearable to these maroons there, and in 1800 they were transported to Sierra Leone (Henry 3).

⁴Coming of age, is a term to describe transition from the stage of childhood to adulthood.

Sometimes masks were used to signal that a specific area was taboo and forbidden for entrance until the end of the training. The training might take up to four years, and it was performed under the supervision of diviners or the secret societies' members, in this case the Poro⁵ chiefs (Sawyer 16). Indigenous education was instructed either in the village as part of an everyday ordinary activity, or in specific areas meticulously selected to serve the obscure aspect of the secret societies' practices and rituals. It could, then, be described in terms of informal or formal.

5.1. Informal Indigenous Education

The informal indigenous education did not need a specific setting as classrooms or laboratories. It was rather an everyday natural performance and practice. Informal indigenous education was a kind of training of young people to penetrate the realm of adulthood through daily activities, and imitating the constantly surrounding adults. Therefore, the child received education by words of mouth and absorption of life around him 'learning by osmosis' (Sawyer 15). Though today indigenous education in Sierra Leone is considered 'informal', it was fitting to the society in which the child grew up

Informal indigenous education did not necessarily need a person to have a qualification to impart knowledge, so any adult could provide education. It started at home where a child learned respect towards the other family members and the community hierarchy. It continued with every adult in the society. Learning was all about how to be self-reliant, and how to contribute to achieve an effective role as a

⁵Poro society as defined in Oxford dictionary means a secret society for men with rites of initiations, widespread in Sierra Leone and Liberia and exercising social and political power

member of the community. The community might be the small family circle, the clan, the village, or the tribe (Forde 65).

5.2. Formal Indigenous Education

Indigenous education which was considered to be formal was concerned with the learning of rituals, law, the chieftom system of governing, and religious practices. Sierra Leone comprised several indigenous educational 'systems' organized into secret societies⁶ that taught initiates so as to enter adulthood. Rites and customs of these kinds of societies were kept secret, because they were considered sacred (Keefer 71). It was only the initiators who had full knowledge of the subject matter. They were the only ones who had the prerogatives of choosing the specific places where the secret society achieved its tasks and practices (Keefer 71).

The most impressive secret societies which existed in Sierra Leone were the traditional Poroh or Poro society for educating boys and the Bundo or Bondo society for educating girls. They were found among the Temnes, Mendes, and even among many other ethnic groups in West Africa.

The purpose of these societies was to provide an education to young people as a way to prepare them for participating efficiently in building their community, and to contribute to its flourishing. Once the initiates completed their training in these secret 'bush schools' they were supposed to be ready to act as adults. The power of the secret societies was in the variety of functions that it accomplished educationally, religiously, medically, and politically. Secret societies are summarized in the following passage:

⁶ Secret societies are ancient cultural institutions in the Upper Guinea Coast of West Africa. They aim to control and canalize the world of spirits; they believe the spirits are captured in masks and other special artifacts which they use during their initiation ceremonies.

All sacrifices and ceremonies are held within the "sacred grove" of the Poro society; only the "bush school" of the Poro is visible [.....] The "schools" are conducted to teach men and women[.....] farming, cooking, herb techniques, sex education, hunting, and rules of the culture not already assimilated[.....]In short, anything that a person needs to know in order to survive in this culture. It is not hard to comprehend the power of the Poro when we realize the variety of functions that it performs, educationally, religiously, medically, and politically. (qtd. In Keefer 120)

The Poro and the Bundo could preserve their "indigenous character" and were not influenced by the western interference in those territories.

5.2.1. The Poro Society for Boys

The Poro society was considered a powerful system of education for generations which emphasized the importance of respecting the authority structure. It was meant to teach boys how to rely on themselves since they would grow to become responsible for families, and had to provide homes, food, and security. It was the traditional educational organization in which individuals learned and understood laws, morality, medicine, and social behavior for the first time in their lives (Fanthrope 2).

During the training the initiates were restricted to the bushes, where they should build their huts by themselves. They underwent a series of strenuous physical exercises as a preparation to become guardians of their tribes against enemy threat (Forde 76; Mills 67). During the training period, a series of professional skills was taught to the initiates, such as farming, fishing, hunting, house building, carving, along with learning tribal songs, dancing, drumming, storytelling, and playing musical instruments. This process was considered the educational system that would introduce the young boys into their new life as adults and responsible about their families. The

indigenous cultural heritage was used to instill values of respect, justice, and honesty (Forde 76-77).

It was the task of the senior members of the society to introduce ceremonies of rituals. These practices were held in extreme secrecy, and they were kept taboo for individuals who were not members of the secret society. Once initiates learned the rites, they swore an oath to secrecy. Any revelation cost a severe punishment which might be death by poisoning and so was the outcome of an outsider's spying (Wallis 184). The training period could take up to four years (Forde 78).

The Poro society was a very powerful system of education which had a strong impact on the local people. It was compulsory for all boys; however, not all males could stay for the complete period of training. Many of them were returned just after the acquisition of the most basic rank of the Poro. The minority which could fulfill the entire period of training were generally sons and relatives of local chief and headmen (Keefer 120).

Despite the fact that the Poro society was actually considered a gender specific society, there were some exceptions in which specific females were to be initiated, because they were wives of chiefs and head of clans. Some common women were initiated too, owing to their infertility, or in case some might have accidentally witnessed secret rituals meant strictly and specifically for males (Keefer 119).

5.2.2. The Bundo Society for Girls

Unlike boys of the Poro society, girls' training in the Bundo society was not too rigorous. Girls underwent sacred rites too; however, the focus in their education was to prepare them for their future role as wives mothers and housekeepers (Forde 70). In the sacred grove reserved as school, young females learned how to clean, cook meals,

and behave with grace and kindness. They were instructed how to grow vegetables to socially help their male counterparts in their lives as housewives and mothers (Forde 70).

At the end of their initiation to adulthood which included genital circumcision, they are considered ready for marriage. The Bundo society was a complementary institution for men that encouraged cooperation with the Poro society, and it was the unique wooden face mask institution which was exclusively controlled by women (Forde 70). Moreover, “graduation of female members from these institutions was the visible indication of sexual maturity” (Richards 106). The Bundo society initiation was enormously important because it participated greatly to the initiates’ efforts to secure husbands who in pre-colonial times would not marry a woman or girl who had not been initiated into the Bundo Society (Richards 106).

Fig.1. Wooden Helmet Mask ‘*ndolijowei*’ for Sande Society (Late 19th C.-Early 20th C.)



Source : www.imodara.com/discover/sierra-leone-mende-ndoli-jowei-sande-sowei-helmet-mask/

6. The Creoles and Education

Unlike the Temnes and Mendes, who had specialized educational institutions of their own, and which were rooted from a long chain of ancestral inheritance, the Creoles or Krio did not have their own educational institutions. Instead, they were introduced directly to western knowledge and education. While the Temnes and Mendes were indigenous to the land, the Creoles originated from pretty much everywhere in Africa. Creoles were the descendent of former slaves brought to Sierra Leone (Forde 71).

The Creoles had 'different' kind of indigenous or local education, partly because of the fact that they were descendants of a hybrid admixture of various tribal origins from different areas all along the western African coasts. They were brought to Sierra Leone as liberated slaves. Secondly, once these liberated slaves settled in the country, Mission schools were immediately established to enroll them (Forde 71).

These new settlers had been involved in direct contact with the Europeans when they were slaves. They had been exposed to and influenced by the western way of life and culture. They were stranger to the land and therefore, built up their own language, tradition, and culture. They had some secret societies in which secrecy, rites and ceremonies were performed in their funerals, for instance, or initiation ceremonies (Forde 72).

The most exceptional were the Agugu(or the Agun) and 'Hunting' (or Ojeh) societies. The members of these societies were sworn to secrecy and ceremonies were meticulous and severe, but the training program was not as that of the Bundoor the Poro. It focused more on ceremonial ritual aspects (Forde 72).

7. Islamic Education in Sierra Leone in the 18th Century

Islam in Sierra Leone can be traced back to the tenth century. Thanks to Muslim traders from the Mende Empire in the West African Savanna, Islam was brought to Sierra Leone. These Muslims started to trade with people from Sierra Leone, and they moved and settled there and established keen relations with local people through marriages and friendships. The Muslim traders carried a spirit of missionaries, and fervor to spread the Islamic faith in the region through the establishment of Islamic education (Cole 5).

7.1. Tracing Muslims' Course to Sierra Leone in the mid-18th Century

In the period around the mid 18th century, Muslim migrants and traders established communities along the trade route of Guinea and Sierra Leonean coast and rivers, beginning in Futa Jalon (Fyfe 411). This resulted in the emergence of Muslim dominated small states, such as Sumbuyah, Kisi-Kisi, Benna, Musaia, and Port Loko, in which control of territory and trade interests connected each state with the other (Skinner 499). Representatives from these states developed commercial relations and trade activities with European slavers and merchants. When the Sierra Leone Company established its colony for repatriated slaves in 1787, the British, who had already built up strong relations with African traders from southern Guinea coast down to the Sherbro coast of Sierra Leone, started serious exploration of the hinterlands (Skinner 499-501).

After 1807, the Colony became a Crown Colony and trade activities thrived in the settlement of Freetown and neighboring territories. Trade and political delegation from the Muslim states became permanently present in Freetown. Muslim influence spread throughout the region from Freetown centers to North of the Colony (Skinner 501).

The first Muslim traders in Sierra Leone who founded Muslim centers were the Mandingo, the Serakuli, the Sussu, the Bunduka, and the Fula migrants. They were for the great majority teachers, warriors, and traders who settled among the local people and tended to spread their influence and religious faith (Skinner 501).

By the 19th century a great number of Islamic institutions and particularly religious' institutions were built up in towns and villages of the north hinterlands and in the colony wherever a Muslim community existed. These institutions were meant to convert the indigenous population to Islam and to teach Islamic faith (Skinner 501). Thanks to the migration of thousands of Muslim teachers, warriors, and merchants, Islam spread in Sierra Leone during the seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. These people were trained as scholars and were zealous to spread Islamic faith among the indigenous population.

Muslims were rich and powerful and possessed resources such as precious stones, Indian spices, and silk which were highly appreciated by the local people. So they used these resources in order to gain political influence, to acquire titles, territory, and social position through commerce and marriage alliances with the local notable families. As a result, Muslims had a strong economic, political, military, and religious influence.

7.2. Islamic Schools and Education

Many influential Muslim families in Sierra Leone brought teachers to establish mosques and schools for the Muslim communities in the region. Islam had a strong influence on local people who converted to Islam and even on non Muslims. Indigenous population regarded rituals of Islam, and the Arabic language as having

spiritual powers. They used the Arabic charms written by *Karamokos* to gain influence and wealth, or cure diseases without necessarily converting to Islam (Skinner 503).

Muslim migration to Sierra Leone gave birth to three distinctive types of educational institutions. The first institution was the primary school: the *Karanthe*. The latter was directed by a 'learned man' called the *Karamoko*. The learner was the *Alfa*, and was instructed the Arabic alphabet, recognition of the Arabic words, recitation of the Quran, and the fundamental concepts and principles of Islam. Other activities were integrated in learning, such as farming, gathering firewood, drawing water, or cleaning rice (Skinner 504).

Transmitting knowledge in the *Karanthe* included reading, writing, and lectures on the meaning of copied passages of the Quran. It started at the age of six and lasted for a period of four to six years. Quranic School began in the early morning with lessons in Arabic and recitation of the Quran. In the evening, after achieving the day's work, the *Alfas* (learners) started writing passages of the Quran on a wooden board with pen and ink, and then reciting the passages aloud (Skinner 503).

Though learning law, doctrines, and rituals could continue all along a Muslim's lifetime, not all scholars could do so. The great majority marked the end of their education at the level of the *karanthe*. The *Alfas* who went further in education were generally those whose relatives had a long tradition with scholarship (Skinner 503). The *Alfas* who got the chance to pursue Quranic studies were provided with personal instruction, or could continue their studies in specialized learning centers elsewhere. Specialized learning could take more than eight years of formal study in two or more Islamic sciences, under the tutorial of a number of specialists. After this had been

achieved, a scholar could be entitled to become *karamoko* and to open his own *karanthe* (Skinner 503).

The second type of educational institution was the places of worship, such as mosques and prayer fields called *Sallekene*, in which continuing education for young and adult Muslims was imparted through sermons and rituals. Sometimes, the *karanthe* was built in the *Sallekene* yard (Skinner 503). The third kind of Islamic educational institution that existed in Sierra Leone was specialized religious schools to train scholars in law, theology, and Arabic literature (Skinner 503).

7.3. Christianity and Islam in Sierra Leone

Freetown became the focal point for settlement of the liberated Africans from slave ships especially after 1808. The Sierra Leone Company and the Church Mission Society (CMS) perceived these liberated slaves as important agents for the spread of Christianity (Skinner503).

Since 1804 the Church Missionary Society (CMS) began sending white clerics to Freetown. The CMS decided on teaching the liberated Africans the “civilizing” benefits of Christianity, with the help of Christian Nova Scotians. Nevertheless, most of the liberated Yorubas refused to abandon the Islamic faith and the liberated Africans who became Christians did not completely give up their traditional customs and rites (Daniel J. P. Jr. 20).

Muslim Mandingo traders who had dwelled in Freetown gained more influence among the settlers, Christian missionaries regarded Islam as threat to the evangelical mission of the CMS because mosques and *karanthes* were established in almost every spot of the region and even among the Sussu. The Sussu were the first ethnic group in

contact with Christian missionaries and supposed to be converted to Christianity (Skinner 503).

It was in the 1829 and 1833 CMS reports that the Christian missionaries were alarmed about the presence of Muslims. They viewed ‘Mohammedanism’⁷ as restricting the influence of the CMS missionaries. They reported that *karanthes* were present in almost every large village and town and that Muslim faith was gaining great spheres of influence in converting Africans (Skinner 511). As a reaction to Muslim growth in the region, the colonial government prohibited Muslim priests to settle in the liberated Africans’ villages in 1830. And in 1840 the colonial Governor ordered the destruction of two mosques (skinner 511).

This attitude towards the Muslims was not shared by all the colonial officials and many traders in Freetown. In 1841 the British Government sent a delegate named Dr Madden to the colony to investigate the issue, and his recommendations were in favor of the Muslims and were eventually taken into consideration. Islam was then tolerated though relations between the colonial government and the Muslims of Freetown were still fragile. By 1871 tension eased and the relation between the two sides became quite good (Skinner 513).

8. Pre-Colonial Education Abroad(in Europe)

Before the colonization of Africa in the 19th century, many Africans along the Upper Guinea coasts were involved in contact with Europeans through trade exchanges. They were profoundly fascinated by all that was ‘European’: the culture, the manners, and the way of living. Therefore, those who could afford the passage to

⁷**Mohammedanism**, (also spelled Muhammadan, Mahomedan, Mahomedan or Mahometan) is a term to describe the followers of Muhammad the Islamic prophet belonging or relating to, either Muhammad or the religion, doctrines, institutions and practices that he established.

and education in Europe sent their children with traders for an education which would promote their role in the coastal trade (Keefer 124).

These opportune children traveled to study in Europe along with sons of European traders stationed at slave factories, such as the Isles de Los. Those who benefited from European education were advantageous over their fellow countrymen since they could speak, write and read English, and this facilitated their business with European traders (Keefer 124).

Many Sierra Leonean elites sent their children (sons and daughters) to Europe for education, but not all arrived safely. There were many cases in which ship captains sold the passengers as slaves. The safe arrival of a future pupil necessitated the parents to be from the elite and wealthy to 'buy' a friendship with the ship's captain (Keefer 124).

Conclusion

Long before the arrival of Europeans to Sierra Leone, there existed a kind of education among the indigenous population. It strongly and sufficiently served the needs of the society in which the children grew up. It was ranging from a daily learning through the child's direct contact with the community members, to specific trainings in Bushes or Forests under the supervision of Poro, Bundo or other similar secret societies. In contrast to western education, this education was labeled 'indigenous' as it belonged to the local people.

Muslim or Islamic Education is the second kind of education which was present in Sierra Leone before the British established their Christian Mission Schools in the early 19th century. Though the Islamic education was there before Christian education it is not indigenous to Sierra Leone. It had been brought to the land thanks to the Muslim traders and warriors who used to travel along the Upper Guinea coasts for

trade. When the British founded a settlement in Sierra Leone for the liberated slaves in 1798, they opened mission schools to spread the Christian faith and convert the indigenous population. After the declaration of Freetown a British Crown Colony in 1808, Primary colonial education started to become intensified and well established, and therefore altered the political, socio-cultural and ethnic structure of the population in the whole country.

Chapter Two

The British Colonial Education in the 19th Century

Introduction

During the second half of the 18th century, when the Industrial Revolution spread in Europe, spirits of enlightenment influenced people's views. It raised awareness towards humanitarian ideas and voices against the horrors and immorality of slave trade. In Britain philanthropists founded the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor in 1786, to help the blacks of Britain. After the abolition of slave trade in Britain in 1778 the new freed slaves, called the 'Black Poor', were transported to Sierra Leone's peninsula where they settle in a land which Sharp purchased from a Temne king, with the help of the British Government. The land was called 'The Province of Freedom' (Seddall 37).

1. Foundation of the Settlements and Schools (1787- 1789)

In 1787, the first group of the Black Poor, in addition to a few white women from the working class and a group of white officials, clergy, and craftsmen, all seeking their personal fortunes, set sail to the Province of Freedom. They established the first settlement and called it Granville Town. The Sierra Leone Company, born out of the Committee for the Relief of the Black Poor and the St George Company took control over the settlement which collapsed within a period of two years and six months (Seddall 37-38).

A second attempt of the missionaries to found a settlement was achieved with blacks from Nova Scotia (Canada) who founded Freetown in 1789. The first school in Freetown was established by the Sierra Leone Company in 1792. It concerned the children of settlers only while the indigenous community was not yet interested in western education. The local population was in constant conflicts with the new settler (Seddall 38).

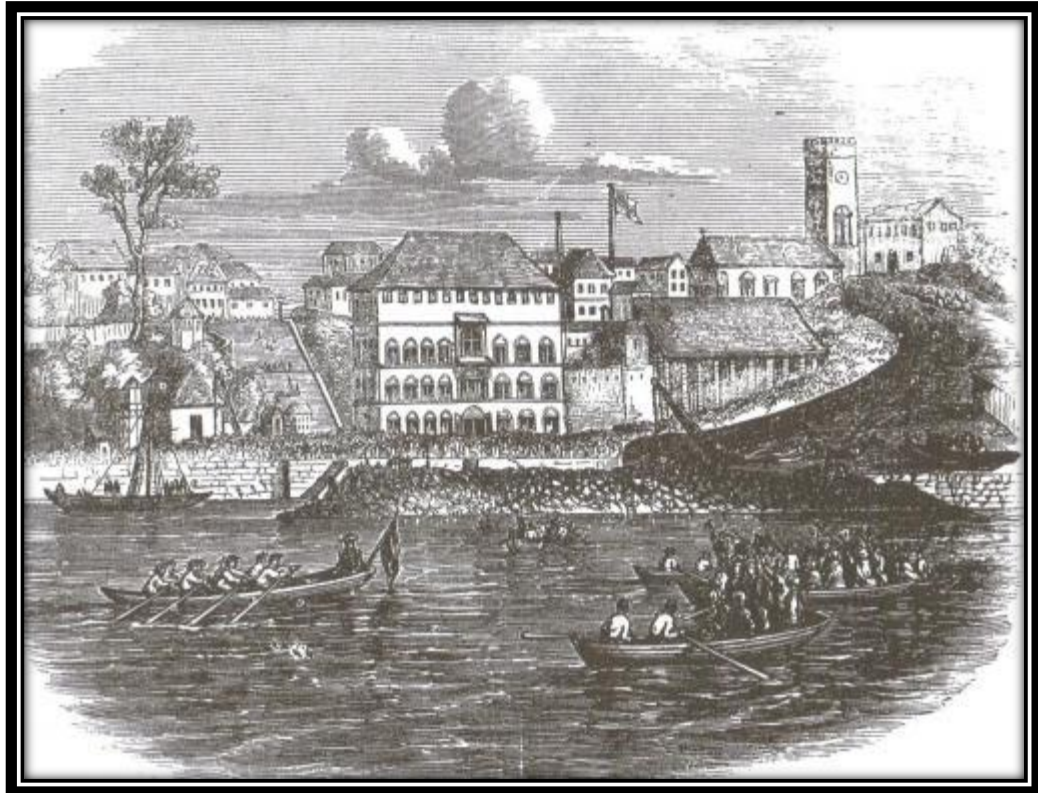
The year 1793 witnessed the opening of many mission schools in Freetown. According to Reverend Henry Seddall that year proved to be “more favorable than the preceding one” (41). Because the colonists grew accustomed to the climate and settled more comfortably in their dwellings and schools started to become more stable(41).In 1800 Jamaican Maroons joined the settlement of Freetown, and together with the other settlers formed a new mixed population called the Creoles (Fyfe 411).

Granville Sharp saw in education a cornerstone and the principal means to rectify the horrors of slavery. He was a religious man full of ambition to spread the words of God. He believed that education was the sole way to ‘Christianize’ Africans, and to ‘civilize’ them, too. Sierra Leone was “the utopian land for the mind and the soul” (Bledsoe 186).

2. The First Settlers and the First Missions to Sierra Leone

The Society of Mission to Africa and the East established in 1799 to spread the Gospel in Africa became the Christian Mission Society (CMS) under Wilberforce leadership. The first CMS members were engaged in commerce with West Africans to get raw materials, such as palm oil, ground nuts cocoa, gold, and rubber (Nichimuka 64). The CMS was a branch of the Anglican Church⁸. It was the first mission to become strongly established among the settlers in Sierra Leone. The CMS representatives started to arrive in Sierra Leone from 1804 to 1880 (Seddall 59).

⁸The Anglican Church, it stems from the protestant reformation, is one of the largest Christian tradition in the world and had a tremendous social and cultural influence especially in English speaking countries from Christianity.com

Fig.2. On the Founding of Sierra Leone

Source : www.blackpast.org/global-african-history/founding-sierra-leone

Among the pioneering missionaries were Peter Hartwing, a German; Gustavus Nylander, a Pole; Leopold Butscher, a Suabian; and John Prasse, a native from Lusatia. They were later followed by Wilhelm Johnson, an Irish; and the German Malchior Renner. As the mission could not recruit British missionary volunteers to move to Sierra Leone, it encouraged and sponsored Lutheran⁹ German missionaries' services (Seddall 59).

The main interest of the CMS was to spread evangelical beliefs among the native people. When slavery was abolished in 1807, the Black Poor were transported from

⁹Lutheranism is one of the major branches of Protestantism, organized as autonomous regional or national churches; it owes name and the interpretation of the Christian religion to Martin Luther and his 16th century movement that issued from his for reforms.

the streets of London to Sierra Leone. They were followed by the liberated blacks from Nova Scotia, a British colony in Canada, and the Jamaican Maroons (Pederson 11).

The British Navy recaptured slave ships and transported the slaves to the settlement of Freetown. These mixtures of freed slaves living in Freetown and their descendants were referred to as the Creole population. They formed the first settlement of the British Colony while the native tribes such as the Temne, Mende, Limba, Kono and others, lived in the hinterlands that became a protectorate in 1896 (Pederson 11-12).

Sierra Leone was considered as a center for the conversion of Africans from the neighboring countries too. Its harbor had been a strategic station for slave trade ships. And missions from different denominations arrived to Sierra Leone later, the Methodists¹⁰ in 1811, known as the *Wesleyan* missionaries moved to Freetown and gathered an increasing number of converts until the year 1821, when a section broke from the mission to found the first independent Christian church in Africa ‘the West African Methodist Church’ (WAMC).

The third most important mission to Sierra Leone was the Society of African Mission known as the Roman Catholic Mission (RCM). The RCM members did not succeed to firmly establish in Sierra Leone and moved to other West African countries.

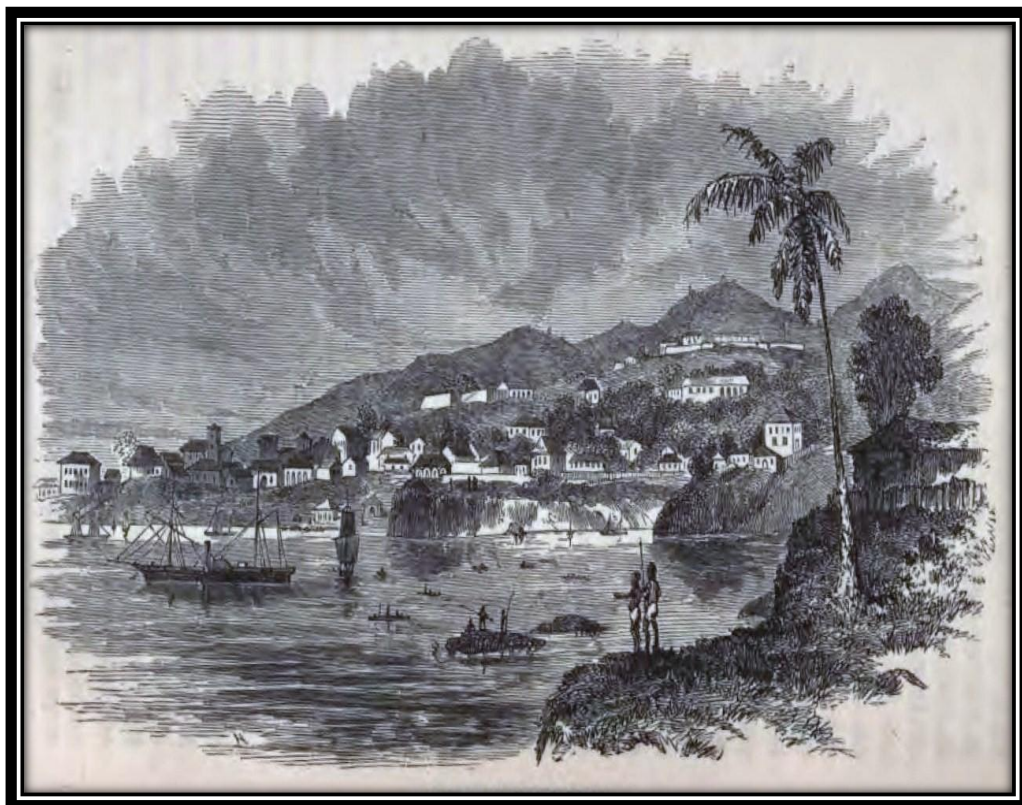
The Holy Ghost’s Fathers (HGF) replaced the Roman Catholic Church in 1864. In their trajectory they succeeded to convert not only Africans but even members from

¹⁰Methodists as defined in Collins COBUILD dictionary are Christians who follow the teachings of John Wesley and who have their own branch of the Christian church and their own form of worship.

other competing Christian churches, such as the Methodists and the Roman Catholic. The Holy Ghost Fathers were active in the Protectorate while the CMS presence was widespread in the Colony.

In 1808, after the declaration of Sierra Leone as a British Crown Colony, education responsibility was handed to the colonial government. Yet, the government's financial assistance was minor and limited. It was the missionaries who took over the development of education because they believed it was as an essential means for the conversion of Africans to Christianity. The CMS established missionary schools and benefited from financial support of the British upper and ruling classes, because some CMS's members had close ties and good relation with the Sierra Leone Company members (Machimuto 64)

Fig. 3. Freetown, Sierra Leone 1856



Source: afrolegends.com/2012/11/14/sierra-leone-why-the-name

3. Education in the Colony versus the Protectorate in the 19th Century

During the two periods between the year 1821 to 1828 and from 1866 to 1874, the Governor of Sierra Leone was designated both as governor in chief to Sierra Leone and all British West African colonies. The settlers of Freetown Colony originating from various African diasporas and different ethnic groups gave birth to a Christian, English-speaking community. This community was called Creoles, it was the first to make a commercial penetration to the hinterland and it provided the central growing point for Christian missionary and educational work (Jones 225).

When Sierra Leone was under the British control, it was divided into colony and protectorate. The Colony represented the first entity and included the colonial capital of Freetown with its Creole inhabitants. The area of Freetown and its immediate surroundings on the western peninsula constituted the British Crown Colony. The second entity was called the Protectorate. It covered a much larger part of provincial territories or hinterland.

The two entities had been developed separately and unequally by the colonial government. The local chiefs and the indigenous population of the protectorate in the interior cooperated with the British. They welcomed the freed slaves in their territories along with the colonists and sometimes even granted them lands to settle, and to build schools and churches.

Despite the hospitality of tribal chiefs in the interior, the British regarded local people with an inferior view, and they underestimated their culture, their system of life and their belief. The inhabitants of the protectorate were considered “protected inhabitants” and were commonly coined ‘natives’ as a sign of lower status, in contrast

to the inhabitants of the Crown Colony who were declared direct British subjects or ‘non-natives’.

This division was not just a simple description but implied political, economic, as well as social considerations. While the Crown Colony of Freetown was governed by the Monarch, as part of the British Empire, the protectorate was subjected to the British indirect rule being considered a British ‘protected territory’.

As a result of this policy, the Colony benefited more from colonial education than did the Protectorate. The number of schools established in the Colony by the missionaries was higher. One evidence about the Colony’s privilege in education was the opening of Fourah Bay College (FBC) in 1827 for the training of clerks, teachers, missionaries and alike. The college became affiliated to Durham University in Britain. Thereafter the FBC became the first university in Africa and attracted scholars from all the other sub-Saharan African countries.

Map 3: The British Crown Colony of Sierra Leone and the Koya Chiefdom



Source: [www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-the-Sierra-Leonean-Crown-Colony-andthe-Koya-Chiefdom](http://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-the-Sierra-Leonean-Crown-Colony-and-the-Koya-Chiefdom)

4. Early Mission Schools (1792-1816)

The CMS's most important mission in Africa was to convert people to Christianity, and in order to achieve its evangelical goals, the mission had to engage in education. The latter was seen as the most efficient means to provide Africans with civilization, enlightenment and knowledge, and to impart the Christian religion's teachings to the children of new settlers and the inhabitants of Sierra Leone. The new settlers were already in contact with Christianity before moving to the Colony. These three groups of immigrants to Sierra Leone were of Methodist affiliation (Sawyer 36).

The missionaries started opening schools in and around the Colony to spread the 'words of the Gospel'. They taught children how to read religious scripts and the Bible. Teaching consisted of the simplest basic knowledge of reading. Instructing writing skills was done on very rare occasions, as mission schools' primary focus was of an evangelical endeavor. The missionaries sought to convert as many local people as they could, and along the process of spreading Christianity schools grew to become a crucial means and a cornerstone in the missionaries' relation with the local people (Sawyer 36).

Both the religious fervor and the desire to teach were decisive factors in the establishment of the first churches and schools in Sierra Leone, with the participation of the local people. The very first effort of missionaries to achieve and bring advancement to the new settlement was the founding of a mission station in the area around the Guinean Rio Pongos River (Sawyer 36). Some local people belonging to the higher ranks of the Sierra Leonean society spoke a 'broken English' which they had acquired as a result of a constant intercourse with vessels' members that came for the slave trade. These people were eager to give European style of education to their

children, they wanted their children to “Read book, and learn to be *rogue* so well as white man” (Falcombridge 46).

The missionaries decided to use the Susu¹¹ language as a means of converting local people to Christianity. The purpose was to prepare a group of African catechists and missionaries to carry on the evangelical message in the Susu language. In 1817 the Susu mission was abandoned in the Rio Pongos in favor of Freetown, owing to several reasons. The most prominent were the fact that the Rio Pongos and the surrounding areas were under Islamic dominance and were therefore unfriendly with missionaries. In addition to this, the death rate among missionaries was so high because of the harsh climate, to an extreme point that the region acquired the reputation of being the ‘white man’s grave’ (Mouser 2).

The process of converting Africans to Christianity was believed to be best achieved through local indigenous languages as had been the case with the Susu in the Rio Pongos. ‘Transforming Africa by the Africans’ was the formula introduced by the famous Cardinal Lavigerie¹²(1825-1892) and adopted by missionaries of all denominations (Vilhanova 254).

The missionaries had to learn local languages so as to overcome the difficulties of cultural misunderstanding. They were asked to adapt themselves to Africans and play the role of initiators. It was the Africans who had to achieve the work by themselves (Vilhanova 254).

¹¹Susu also called Soso, Sosoo, or Soussou are a Mende ethnic group in West Africa. They live in Guinea and North West Sierra Leone.

¹²Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie (1825-1892) was a French cardinal, archbishop of Carthage and Algiers he established French Catholic mission and founded the white fathers working across Africa as a Christian missionary.

In the early 19th century in Sierra Leone, there were a considerable widespread of adoption of European names by children who were liberated from slavery. For instance, the school register of the Church Mission Society from the early 1820's pointed out that the recaptive children were named after European donors (Schwarz 185).

5. The CMS Schools and the German Lutherans

Among the early Mission Schools recorded under CMS supervision were Bashia, Canofee, Kakaroo, Isles of Los, and Goree schools. The schools were held by German Lutherans¹³ because the British missionaries did not accept to move to Africa, and more specifically to the western African region (Keefer 142; Seddall 57). When the CMS Committee to Africa selected a land in Sierra Leone to operate among the indigenous 'heathen' population, and once these 'pagans' approved the idea to embrace Christianity, it was difficult and challenging to find English clergymen to accomplish the job of missionaries there.

The task was strenuous because it required the devoted men to work the field. Secondly, the West African climate was known to be fatal for Europeans. Thirdly, the idea that circulated in Europe about the inhabitants of West Africa was that they were "by nature so nearly allied to brute beasts" (Seddall 56), along with the European belief that any effort to civilize the 'pagan' African were worthless, or any attempts to convert them to Christianity would result in a terrible frustration.

For those reasons the CMS turned its attention to the Berlin institution. It was an institution which educated young men who intended to devote their lives to mission

¹³ Lutheranism is liturgical sect of Christianity just as Anglicanism, based upon formalized rituals which are codified into a script. Anglicanism relies upon Lutheran liturgical developments; it borrows many aspects from the earlier Protestant sect. While the Church of England relies upon the Book of Common Prayer, Lutherans derive their liturgy from the Catholic rite set out by Martin Luther, and Methodism from John Wesley vision taking many elements of the Book of Common Prayer.

work, living for the services of the Christ as ‘soldiers of the Cross’. The Berlin institution provided the CMS with a group of German Lutherans, but before going to Sierra Leone they were sent to Mr Greave’s School at Clapham, England. There they studied the Susu language and made contact with Susu boys, present in the school, to become familiarized with the Susu language as a pragmatic solution to succeed converting the ‘heathens’ once in Sierra Leone (Seddall 56-57).

Since 1806, the CMS had started sending German missionaries to Sierra Leone. It dispatched them first along the Rio Pongos where the Susu was the local language. A short period after opening schools, the missionaries in charge of these schools sent reports to London. The reports displayed the diversity of students’ origins, their numbers in each school, racial description as ‘Mulatto’¹⁴ or ‘Natives’, and socio-cultural affiliations. In addition to this, the missionaries divided their students according to various categorizations, varying from one mission school to another, such as ‘liberated children’, ‘redeemed’ or ‘ransomed’, and ‘sons of slave traders’ (Keefer 182).

This categorization was occasionally in connection with the financial support of the schools. For instance, the schools where the majority of students were ‘children of slave traders’ benefited from the slave traders’ assistance, such as the case in Bashia School. In the Yongroo Pomoh School, it was the Bullom chief who was in charge, and he promoted the school financially because the majority of the enrolled pupils came from Bullom origins. The ‘redeemed’ or ‘ransomed’ category described the freed children who were bought by the missionaries to gain their freedom. The ‘liberated children’ was another category for the freed slaves (Keefer 182).

¹⁴A Mulatto is a person of mixed white and black ancestry, especially a person with one white and one black parent.

Fig. 4. Civilization, Christianity, and Commerce



Source: <https://scholarblogs.emory.edu/violenceinafrica/sample-page/the-philosophy-of-colonialism-civilization-christianity-and-commerce/>

5.1. The School at Bashia (1808-1817)

In 1808 three missionaries were sent to the Susu region in the north of Sierra Leone. The purpose was to convert Susu people to Christianity. The three missionaries were Rev Leopold Butscher, Johann Prasse and Malchior Renner. They were invited by Monge Fantimanti, the nearby chief of Canofee, to settle in Kakara on the eastern bank of the Pongo River. Meanwhile, in Bashia an area three miles down Kakara,

these missionaries were granted an empty building that used to be a slave factory where they established their settlement and school (Keefer 180; Winslow 392).

The building in which the church and the school were built, was a property of Benjamin Curtis, a wealthy American slave trader. Curtis's offer to the missionaries was not for free. In return, he asked the missionaries to teach his Mulatto children. As the missionaries felt it would be an offence to turn down Fantimani's offer in favor of Curtis's, they decided on considering the school at Bashia as the principle branch and Karaka a secondary one (Leach 157; Winslow 390). As soon as the school was well established and prepared to receive pupils, the missionaries drew and adopted a plan for a Christian religious instruction. They were eager and zealous to spread the 'word of God'¹⁵.

The plan consisted of a divine service, and restrain from dealing with the natives on Sundays, in addition to performance of morning as well as evening family prayers. The missionaries' plan insisted on the compulsory presence of all family members of the pupils, who could understand English, to the prayer sessions. Furthermore, the missionaries agreed to organize a prayer meeting in German every first Monday of each month. This was because missionaries shared common origins which were German, and ultimately they accepted the admission of the children of traders in the school in return these parents had to supply the mission school with food and clothes (Seddall 64).

The first child arrived into the settlement at Bashia in July 1808. A second child who was a son of a native chief came a few days later starting; therefore, the school at

¹⁵ The expression 'words of God' in this dissertation is referred to the Christian religion and Christian religious scripts

Bashia. The two children were both taught in English and not in Susu language as it was the desire of the parents, explained Butscher in his report to London,

The majority of the Missionaries however thought it proper to keep friendship with the traders as far as expediency would allow, and by taking their children under our care would be the only means to keep it up[.....] and to teach them English that they soon might learn the English language, manners & fashion... And when some of the traders & of the Susoo heard that we had begone [sic] to take children, & had opened an English School, they requested us to take their children, which of course we could not deny. (Keefer167)

In the same year the school received 31 children(keefer 172). The number of children attending Bashia School continued to increase up to forty four boys and thirty seven girls by the year 1811(172). The enrolled children were categorized in the official reports as 'Native' Mulatto, children belonging to traders, or freed slave children who were labeled 'ransomed'. 'Ransomed' was an indication that these children were purchased by missionaries to get their freedom (keefer 167-73). In 1813 the children number attending Bashia School reached its peak with fifty one boys. By the midsummer of the next year the number of children enrolled decreased to forty three boys and twenty two girls. The 1814 reports recorded new skills accomplished by girls including reading, writing, and sewing (Keefer 174).

In the year 1815, Bashia School reported the enrollment of many children with different social status, the description of the school children was in term of being sons of traders. The description gave the details about the fact that the pupil was a son of a

‘Trader’ in general, or a ‘Trader’ involved in ‘the slave trade’ business. The diversity present at Bashia School introduced a change in the social structure in the region. In 1816 the school witnessed an increase in students’ enrollment as the number registered reached sixty-one male and thirty female students (Keefer 179). However, that was the final year for the school which was burned in 1817. The Missionary Register Report indicated that Bashia was burned four weeks before Christmas, and that the “fires were willful” which happened to be another reason why Bashia was abandoned, and many of its students were relocated with their teachers (Missionary Register 103).

5.2 Kakara (Cacara)/ Canoffee School (1809-1816)

Canoffee School was located in Karaka, in Fatala branch, on the Rio Pongos. It was opened before Bashia School but it did not evolve as quickly as the latter. Canoffee operated in collaboration with Bashia School under the supervision of Butscher and Renner in 1809. Later in the same year two other missionaries arrived to Sierra Leone, Rev Charles Barneth and Christian Wenzel. They were sent to work in Canoffee School. Wenzel reported that the number of the pupils enrolled in his school between the years 1814 and 1816 was eight children classified as ‘liberated’, with three boys and five girls. Among the boys only one was described as ‘ransomed’ (Keefer 179-183)

5.3 Yongroo Pomoh School 1809

In 1809, under the CMS board, the missionary Reinhold Nylander established a settlement upon the shore opposite to Freetown. He opened a school there and named it ‘Yongroo Pomoh’ after the area where it was built. In his 1814 report to London, Nylander stated that the school enrolled more females than males. With a total number of twenty, there were sixteen girls and four boys. These pupils were for the great majority ‘liberated children originating from different parts of Africa, from

Congo, Sherbro, Cosso (Mende), and Ebo (Igbo). The children enrolled in Nyalander's mission school were not recorded being sons of slave traders as was the case in Bashia and Canofee (Keefer 184).

In 1815 Nyalander reported that the school received forty six pupils from different ethnic groups, with thirteen Bulloms, two Sherbros, three Cossos, all speaking Bullom. The others were three Ebos, seven Timanees, four from Congo, six from Sierra Leone, seven from Cameroon River, and one Jaloft. As the majority spoke Bullom, Nyalander decided on the use of either English or Bullom to be used in the school. The Yongroo Pomoh School was specifically founded by Nyalander with the financial assistance of the local chief King George as an encouragement to Bullom children who were abundantly present in the school (Keefer 184-186).

5.4. The School in the Isles de Los (1815)

On 6th July 1818, when Charles McCarthy, governor of Sierra Leone since 1814, signed a treaty with the chief of the Isles de Los, Mongé Dembaon, the isles de Los became under British control. The Isles de Los are a group of islands situated on the western coast of Guinea. A mission school then was built on one of the islands and a slave factory on the other. The slave traders living in the isles de Los turned to trade with the passing American ships. They bought untaxed goods then smuggled them to the Colony. When the land was ceded to the British Crown, the mission school established there was under the supervision of the missionary Jonathan Solomon Klein who had arrived at Freetown as part of the Susu mission in 1811, and moved to the Isles de Los (Keefer 187).

In 1815, in his school report to London, Klein stated that the number of children enrolled reached thirty five, with twenty boys and fourteen girls. The children in the

Isles de Los report were categorized into three groups; the first group included children who belonged to the island in which the school was built. The second group concerned children coming from the island on which the slave factory was built. The third group indicated the presence of two ‘mulatto’ and four ‘redeemed’. In the report there were no records about liberated children (Keefer 187).

Map 4 :19th Century Map of Locations through Sierra Leone under the Influence of Various Mission Groups



Source: www.sierra-leone.org/Postcards/MAP212.jpg

5.5. Kaparoo School

As the school of Isles de Los was closed, Klein was invited to resettle in Kaparoo town. He started a new school in the town, where he taught the boys while his wife was in charge of teaching girls. In 1816 they sent a report in which they explained that the children who were enrolled in the Isles de Los followed them to Kaparoo School. The total number of students was thirty two. The report indicated the important presence of Muslim students there (Keefer 188-89).

5.6. Goree School (1815)

In 1815, the CMS invited Sir Robert Hughes a schoolmaster and his wife, also a school mistress, to promote education and contribute to the mission's endeavor to spread their belief through teaching in Sierra Leone. The couple accepted and traveled to Sierra Leone, but they could not resist the austerity of the tropical climate and Mrs. Hughes fell seriously sick. Therefore they decided to travel back to England. On their sail home they reached the island of Goree in the upper Guinea. There they were well received by the colonial authority and offered to settle and open a school (Keefer 191-193).

The Hughes accepted the offer and opened a school which enrolled eighty children. Mrs. Hughes gradually regained strength and started teaching as well. In 1816 the students' number increased to sixty one males and fifty one females. Data about the origins of the enrolled students was not mentioned in Hughes' report to London as he listed only names and ages of his students with notes of belonging to the Goree island or not. The school report recorded some exceptionally enrolled students. Concerning girls there were four English students while for the boys two Irish, two Mandingos, and four English. There was no mention of the students'

categories such as liberated, redeemed, or settlers, as in mission reports of Bashia, and Canoffee schools (Keefer 191-193).

The following table summarizes the characteristics of the early mission school mentioned above

Table 2: Church Mission Society (CMS) Schools in the early 19th Century

The School / the year	Location	CMS Missionaries in charge	Number of children recorded	Observations
Bashia (1808)	(The Susu area) Built on a slave factory on the eastern bank of Pongo River	Malchior Renner 1808 Leopold Butscher 1808 Johann Prass 1809 Wilhem (1811-1817)	Started with 2 and reached 31 in 1808 40 boys and 37 girls in 1811 51 boys 37 girls in 1813 43 boys 22 girls in 1814 61 boys 30 girls in 1816	Used English for instruction -The first to introduce the monitorial system known as Bell Lancaster Method Reading writing and sewing were new skills for girls in 1814 Destructed by fire in 1817 -
Canoffee (1809)	Karaka settlement On the Rio Pongo	Under supervision of Butscher and Renner in 1809 from Bashia Joined later in the same year by Christian wenzel and	3 boys and 5 girls (1814-1816)	Operated in collaboration with Bashia school English used for teaching

		Charles Barneth Wenzel only after Barnethdeath in 1809		
YongrooPomoh (1809)	Bullom Shore opposite to Freetown	Reinhold Nylander	Started with 2 boys and 2 girls 16 girls and 4 boys in 1814 46 pupils in 1815	Use of English and Bullom language for instruction Exceptional help of Bullom Chief king George Closed in 1818
Isles de Los (1815)	Western coasts of Guinea	Jonathan Klein	20 boys and 14 girls in 1815	Closed in 1816
Kaparoo	Western area	Klein and his wife were invited there after the School in Isles de Los was closed	32 children in 1816	Presence of Muslim pupils in the school
Goree (1815)	The Upper Guinea	Sir Robert Hughes a school master and his wife a school mistress	61 males and 51 females in 1815	Exceptional enrollment of 4 English girls , 2 Irish boys, and 4 English boys

6. The Mission Schools after 1816

The majority of the mission schools that existed before 1816 were either closed definitively, or destroyed by slaves traders who were active in areas such as the Bullom Shore for instance, or attacked by the hostile ethnic groups in the region. After 1816 all schools of primary or elementary nature existed and acted around the western area of Sierra Leone, in Freetown itself and the surrounding villages of Gloucester, Charlotte, York, and Ken (Sawyer 38; Stock 163).

Fig.5. Christian Missionaries to Sierra Leone in the 19th Century



Source : www.google.com/search?q=images+precolonial+education+sierra+leone&client

6.1. Leicester Mountain School (1814)

In 1814, the CMS was granted a piece of land in Leicester Mountain, part of a long range of hills behind Freetown. Three houses were built by Rev Butscher in which he

pioneered the opening of the Christian Institution. He started teaching liberated children. They were 37 males and 6 females (Keefer 136). The Institution was meant to teach receptive children vocational education or professional skills such as trade and farming and the most promising students were taught to become teachers or missionaries themselves (Keefer 193). The British Government gave significant financial aid to the central boarding school of Leicester while the Church Mission Society was in charge of providing ministers and schoolmasters to the parishes dispatched around the Peninsula (Stock163).

Rev Butscher's first report to London in 1819 stated a total number of 250 and fifty children were enrolled and taught under his instruction. Two registered pupils were coming from Bashia School along the Rio Pongo. The report did not mention the position of children as being 'ransomed' or 'liberated' which was the case in Bashia and Canoffee schools. But for the first time in a CMS report the remark 'Mulatto' was deleted. Besides it was in this Institution that children from new ethnic groups' members appeared for the first time in the CMS Christian institution, such as Fullah, Jaloff, Kissi, and Ebo (Keefer 193-200).

After the death of Rev Butscher in 1819, it was John Bull who became the principal at the Christian institution. He sent a report to London in which he referred to the ethnic groups to which the children originated from as well as the description of their behavior and character according to his view (Keefer 193-200).

6.2 The School at Kissi Town (1816)

Kissi Town was founded above Granville Town by recaptives in 1812. The governor MacCarthy ordered Rev Wenzel of Canoffee School to move to the Kissi Settlement and to establish a mission school there in 1816. Two years later Wenzel

died. He had been replaced by Nylander who took control over the church and school there, Nylander was in the service of the educational institution of Kissi from 1818 to 1825 after closing the settlement at the Bullom shore in 1818.

In 1819 Nylander's report to London about the enrolled children displayed names, ages, dates of birth, and their origins along with school achievements of each pupil. The list of children enrolled did not mention the presence of girls. The report list of the Kissi School of 1819 mentioned names of pupils that were registered in the report list of Leicester School from of 1816. New children representing new ethnic groups were registered at Kissi School, such as Cosso, Kissy, Tagba, Bossa, Okoo, Jaloff, Sherbro, and Mandingo.

6.3 The School at Charlotte Town (1817)

Located in a mountainous western area above Freetown, Charlotte Town was founded in 1817 by the liberated Africans. The CMS sent a schoolmaster named Christopher Taylor to Charlotte town. He started the school there, stating in his report to London of the year 1819 the enrollment of only fifteen females. The report mentioned names, ages, ethnic groups, and books or lessons in which each pupil was engaged (Keefer 230)

6.4 The School at Gloucester Town (1819)

Gloucester town is located in the peaks of the south of Freetown along one of the sides of Leicester Mountain. In 1819 Henry During was sent to Gloucester to teach the gospel. His school report to London indicated names, ages, ethnic groups, origins, and academic achievements of each child with personal remarks about each ones' character, with no references to children's states as being redeemed, settlers, or traders. He died at sea in 1823 when sailing to England (Keefer 204).

7. Running the First Schools in the first half of the 19th Century

In the British colony of Sierra Leone, missionaries were granted full administrative freedom and the government did not interfere with their work but helped them with some grants from time to time. Britain's 'Laissez faire'¹⁶ policy made the missions assume responsibility for financing the schools, establishing educational administration, and forming policy (White 13).

From the very beginning, the British government did not have the intention to spend a penny on a colony which was actually established to gain economic and political interests. Therefore, schools had to be financed through the missionaries' own effort. They collected donations and funds from some rich people in Britain who sympathized with the slave issue, and then in the colony from the help of the indigenous population. Sometimes even the building of the school was achieved with the participation of all the member of the local inhabitants. In other cases, it was a building, such as a former slave factory or a personal property of local people, donated to the mission to be transformed into a school. In return, the missionaries provided teachers and education (Brown 366).

Sierra Leone was an exception in benefitting from a small grant of the government's exchequer in 1809, well before a State financial help was granted to schools in England itself. It was not until the Colonial welfare and Development Act of 1940 and 1945, that is to say, during and after the Second World War that Britain started to change her educational attitude and policy in Africa and made a real financial contribution (Brown 366).

Table 3 on the next page is a summary of CMS schools reports after 1816

¹⁶Laissez faire policy (allow to do), is a policy adopted by the British during the 18th 19th century in which the government's financial and economic interference with individuals and society is reduced to the minimum.

Table 3: CMS Schools after 1816

Schools/ year	Location	CMS missionaries in charge	Children enrolled	Remarks
Leicester Mountain's Christian Institution (1814)	A range of hills behind Freetown	Rev Butscher 1814-1819 John Bull in 1819	37 males and 6 females in 1814 250 children in 1819 (among them 2 former pupils at Bashia school)	Vocational teaching ,trade , farming Forming teachers and missionaries
Kissi Town (1816)	Above Granville Town I the Province of Freedom	Wenzel moved from Canoffee but died in 1818 Nylander from 1818 to 1825	No records	
Charlotte Town (1817)	West Freetown	Christopher Taylor	Only 15 females in 1819	Academic achievements were recorded for the first time
Gloucester Town (1819)	In the peaks of the south of Freetown	Henry During	No records	Records of academic achievements of children

8. Characteristics of the First Mission Schools in Sierra Leone

Owing to the high rate of death among the missionaries and the settlers at the beginning of the settlement, the extreme callousness of the climate and uncertainty of life, schooling was limited, undeveloped and disorganized. It consisted of learning to read scriptures and to sing hymns in addition to the activity of sewing for girls. The

lingua franca was the English language and there were very rare opportunities to learn writing (Leach 9).

By 1813 the Methodist, in Sierra Leone established a school which comprised about 90 pupils. Every day, the school started with praying in the morning and reading a chapter from the Bible. In the afternoon, after a recess, the course was devoted to a hymn-singing. The school day ended with singing and praying at night. In addition an attempt to impart spiritual meaning in the minds of the local people was done (Sawyer 35).

The first missionaries reported that poverty prevailed among pupils, which drove teachers to ask the British Government for support. The latter sent a teacher and a teacher's salary in response. Nevertheless, it was the CMS who was in charge of education and took responsibility for social and educational welfare of the liberated Africans from 1815 to 1827 (Sawyer 35)

From 1827 to 1840 Western Education was promoted with an intensified educational program imparted in day, evening, as well as Sunday schools. Education reached its peak of influence in the colony of Freetown by 1840. The CMS was aware of the importance of the printing words to spread and extend Christianity, European culture, and civilization to the farthest areas where missionaries would not be admitted. Therefore, it engaged in teaching different useful branches of European culture, in translating the Bible to African languages such as the Susu and most importantly in printing. Printing contributed powerfully to the spread of the gospel throughout Sierra Leone (Sawyer 35).

The period from 1840 to 1868 witnessed the development of education and opening of different schools by different missionaries in competition with the

dominant CMS which held a favored position with the British government, due to its previous associations with the Sierra Leone Company. In the Colony the Baptist, Countess of Huntingdon, United Methodist Free Church, and Roman Catholic Mission all competed to spread as much influence as possible (Sawyerr 36).

In 1841, the British Government sent a commissioner to the colony of Sierra Leone to report on education. In the report it was mentioned that the CMS had established 22 schools in which boys and girls were enrolled and reached a number of 2821 pupils (Sawyerr 37). In addition there was a number of 2267 youth and adults enrolled in Sunday schools to learn reading, writing, and religious instructions. The Wesleyan Methodists on the other hand, had 13 schools with a total number of 1541 boys and girls enrolled (Sawyerr 37).

While the CMS was the dominant agent of education and evangelization in the western area, the United Brethren in Christ (UBC) proved to be the dominant one in the hinterland. The UBC first arrived in 1855. They amalgamated with the Mende Mission of the American Missionary Association in 1882. They had a different educational system from that of the CMS, as it focused more on industrial academic training. Teaching then, children specific skills and knowledge they needed to know to perform a particular job work (Sawyerr 37).

The education commonly provided by missionaries was basic only, it was managed as such, in order to ensure the inculcation of the Christian principles and enable the children attending mission schools to become good Christians. Missionaries dominated the education system and imposed their habits and ethos of the western Christian civilization on the natives (Vilhanova 257)

9. Vernacular Languages versus English in Education

The first missionaries faced the problems of vernacular language. Though they started to study the Susu and Bulloms among the Creoles, they taught in English at the beginning. Missionaries received the government's instruction to learn the Susu language, but to teach in English. Therefore, children were not allowed to speak Susu during the school hours. Instead, they were encouraged to use it outside schools to the benefit of the missionaries, who would learn the Susu accurately from their pupils, because they were engaged in translation works.

Missionaries involved directly in the educational process believed that teaching African children in their own languages would benefit the nation more, since it would facilitate the transmission of Christian faith more effectively. One CMS missionary named Rev. E. Bickerstech, for example, argued that teaching children in vernacular language would make them more useful for converting their parents and old relatives who could not attend schools.

In 1824 and 1827 an English Quaker from London named Hannah Kilham paid a visit to Sierra Leone. She developed an interest in teaching children in their vernacular languages through images and ideas to which they were familiar. In 1830 she opened a school for girls in the mountain valley of Charlotte village where she put her theory into practice, teaching girls in Mende and Aku languages (Sawyerr 47).

The problem of vernacular raised tension between the missionaries who favored teaching Africans in their own languages, and the government which considered the vernacular languages a 'necessary evil' to be suppressed from schools as quickly as possible. A report issued in 1894 as a response to the mission desire to teach in vernacular languages argued that the vernacular languages would neither benefit the

British interests in any way, nor become of any particular importance to civilization, and hence must be replaced in schools by English which was the language of commerce and which must be the language of the nation (Sawyer 47-48).

10. The Monitorial System of Education

The monitorial system of education was first introduced in 1789 by Andrew Bell, a priest of the Church of England who became chaplain in Madras, India. He taught the illegitimate children of European soldiers. On the one hand, he believed that education would rescue them from being 'corrupted' by their Indian mothers. On the other hand, it would assist them in serving their communities. He introduced a new system of formal elementary education which organized schools into classes monitored by students under the supervision and instructions of one single master. The system consisted of the idea that a strong student could teach weak less skilled students if the most brilliant students were given the authority and responsibility over their peers. It benefited both the brilliant students and the less capable ones and allowed the teacher to supervise a larger number of students in a shorter period of time and at low expenses (Tschurennev 247). This approach permitted an easier and less expensive education, producing good educators and good students.

When Bell returned to London, he published an account about his experiment in Madras. A few years later a young English Quaker called Joseph Lancaster who was also a school master published a report to promote education of the poor and the less privileged in London. His method was similar to Bell's system though each developed separately. It encouraged the idea of large scale education system. Lancaster and Bell's experiences were combined into a comprehensive system of elementary schooling known as 'the Monitorial System of Education' or 'The Bell-Lancaster Monitorial System'.

The system interestingly was so promising that one school master could teach a large group of pupils at the same time in the same room. It consisted of one master instructing a certain number of the best students, labeled 'monitors' by Lancaster, who taught and supervised the less skilled students (Tschurenev 248). The system was applied in England and proved to be successful partly because it encouraged large size classes with lesser expenses. The sole difference between the two was that Bell's method implied a more religious formal system of education while Lancaster's encouraged a non-sectarian approach which renounced the English catechism (Keefer 133).

The system was known as the Dual-system, the Monitorial system, or the 'Madras system'. The students were then classified according to their achievement, and the evaluation implied proficiency in reading, ciphering, and religious rehearsal. The system discouraged but did not suppress physical punishment, and recommended replacing it by the solitary confinement, which was less painful and degrading but more efficient (Keefer 134). In Sierra Leone Missionaries applied the system in educating, but did not adopt the recommendation of avoiding flagellation and physical pain. The system permitted larger class size in Freetown (Keefer 135).

11. Secondary Education in Sierra Leone in the 19th Century

The missionaries played a significant role in the establishment of educational institutions in Sierra Leone, such as schools and colleges. Their first objective was the promotion of the English Language, European traditions, and most importantly the spread of the Christian faith among the liberated slaves in Freetown, as well as among the indigenous population in the adjacent areas, and later on in the hinterlands of Sierra Leone. The CMS's missionaries made considerable efforts to convince the local population to renounce their secular practices, pagan beliefs and satanic witchcraft

rites. They encouraged and promoted literacy for local Sierra Leoneans so as to enable them to read the Bible and the relevant English literature (Myovella 5).

During the first half of the 19 Century, the CMS sent 127 European missionaries to Sierra Leone alone, and 39 of them died within the first two years there as a consequence of Malaria fever and other diseases. 50 missionaries then returned back home, and the remaining 38 missionaries lived in Africa for the rest of their lives. As a consequence of the European fragility towards the climate of Sierra Leone, death toll among missionaries was seriously alarming and reached a climax in the yellow fever epidemic of 1823. It was this fact that made the British authorities recognize the need and importance to train Africans so that they could administer the colonies. Africans were accustomed to the harsh climate, and they resisted many illnesses. Therefore, they could serve the British economy by promoting western education and spread the gospel (Paracka, D .J 24). It was the increasing mortality affecting Europeans which led the society to “deep conviction of the paramount importance of Native Agency” (Stock 336).

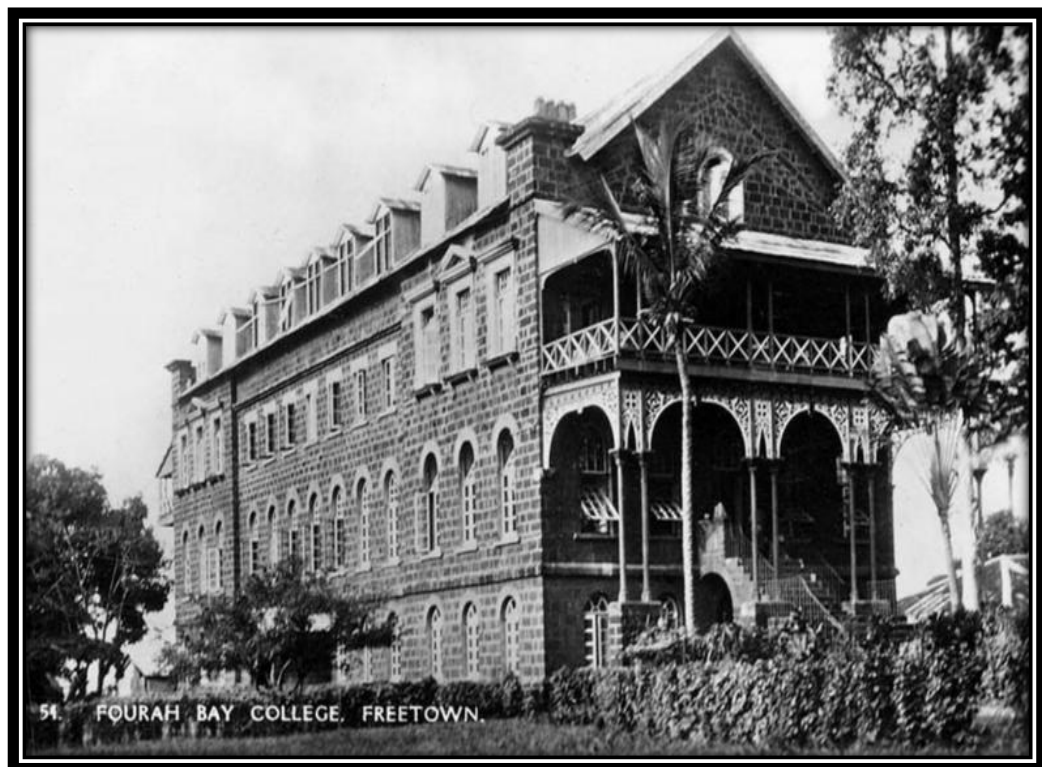
By the year 1841 the Church Missionary Society (CMS) had 21 elementary schools established in Sierra Leone, with the society's complete control of 42 primary schools. 67 percent of schools in the western area were under the responsibility of the CMS according to the first inspectorial report of Sierra Leone schools of 1841 (Myovella 5; Sawyerr 95). By the year 1879 the CMS controlled 96 percent of primary schools and founded 60 percent of the secondary schools which were operating in Sierra Leone

11.1. Fourah Bay College 1827

The recognition of both the British Government and the CMS of the necessity for the help of native Africans to accomplish their evangelical endeavor were materialized through the foundation of schools. In 1827, for example, Fourah Bay College was opened in Freetown as a practical solution to replace the European missionaries who died at an increasing number due to the harsh climate. The College began under the direction of Reverend C. L. F Hansel and ordained by the London Bishop. The college trained Africans to become clergymen, priests and teachers. After graduation these educated Africans would serve the Christians' objective to spread the Gospel and to perpetuate western education throughout the neighboring West African countries. The college started with 6 youth; the first one of them was Samuel Ajay Crowther (1806-1891), a liberated African, who later contributed to the spread of Christianity in other West African countries (Stock 336).

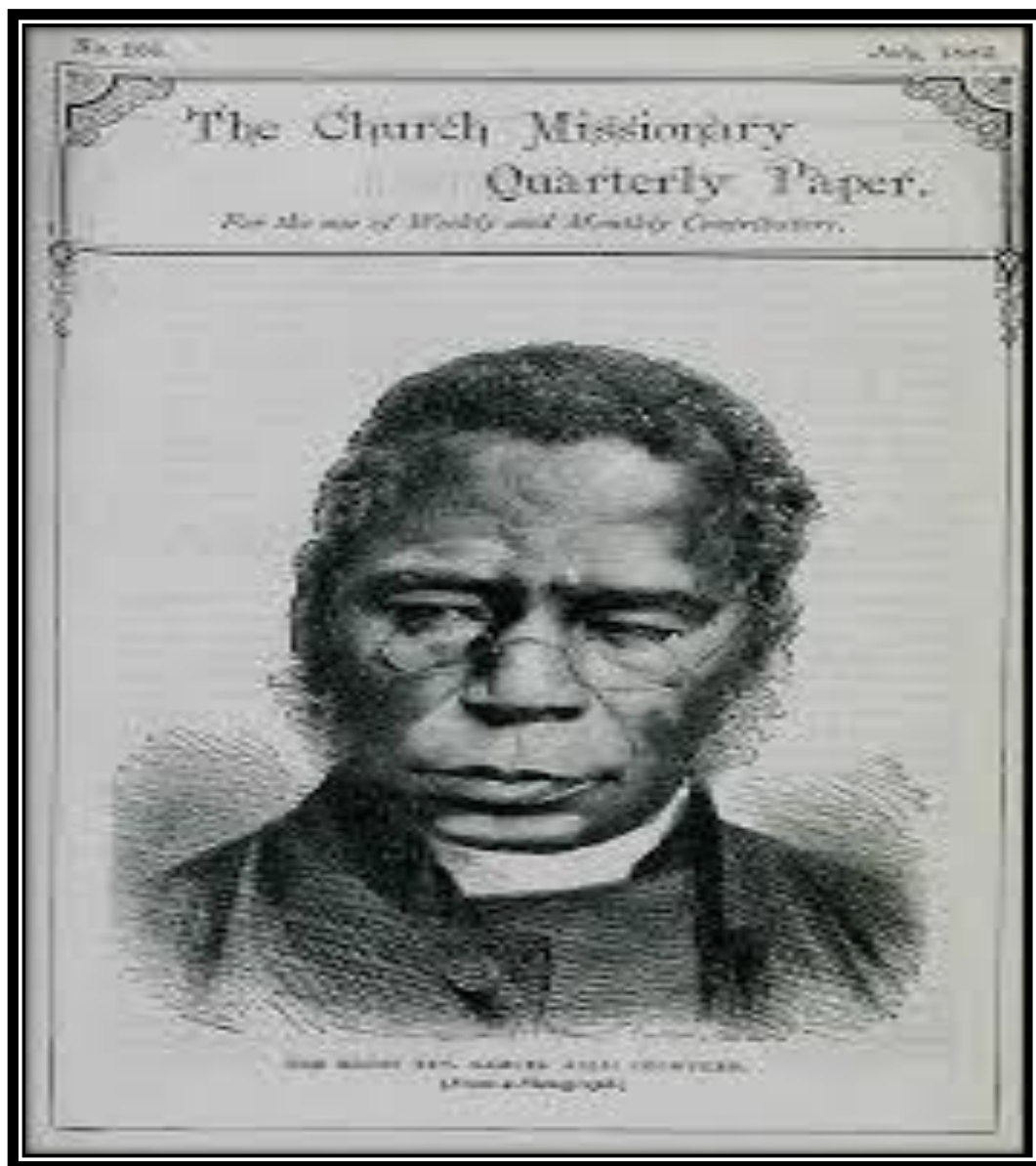
The college faced many problems during its 70 years of work as all the other departments of the mission. Sometimes it had to close for a period of time, as its members suffered from sickness or exclusions. However, from the year 1840 the college did not close for more than 20 years, when an American colored clergyman, Reverend Edward Jones, became the director. The college educated a great majority of the African clergymen (Stock 335). Fourah Bay College was an important educational center which attracted scholars from different African territories, and later in 1876 became affiliated with Durham University in England.

Fig 5: Fourah Bay College, Freetown



Source: [.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SierraLeoneHofstra2.2.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:SierraLeoneHofstra2.2.jpg)

Fig 6: Fourah Bay College Graduate Samuel Ajay Crowther



Source: www.alamy.com/stock-photo/missionary-society.html

11.2. The Grammar and the Annie Walsh Schools (1845)

The year 1845 witnessed the founding of two secondary schools in Freetown: the first one was Grammar School for Boys, it was under native management. The school prospered to become self-supporting. It provided the learning of the Christian religion and general education to boys, and another successful school was founded in the Colony of Freetown too in 1845. The school was established for the education of girls. It was called the Annie Walsh Memorial Female Institution in 1849 (Stock 336).

In both the Grammar and the Annie Walsh Schools education was provided by the CMS. The latter offered a highly academic curriculum, however mission education was criticized for being too bookish especially in the western areas of Sierra Leone. The curriculum taught in the Grammar School and the Annie Walsh School was almost the same with exception of needle work, domestic science and drawing for girls in the Annie Walsh School, and Ancient history, Greek, Algebra Geometry and Trigonometry for Grammar School's boys (Sawyer 96-97). Table 4 displays the subjects that were provided by the CMS in both schools in 1845, the first year of their operation.

Table 4: Curriculum of Older Secondary Schools of 1845 in Sierra Leone

The Subjects	CMS Grammar School For boys 1845	Annie Walsh Memorial School for girls 1845
English, Grammar, Composition	*	*
English Literature	*	*
Reading	*	*
Writing	*	
Ancient History	*	*

Modern World History	*	*
Geography	*	*
Religious Knowledge	*	
Greek	*	*
Latin	*	*
French	*	*
Arithmetic	*	
Algebra	*	
Geometry	*	
Trigonometry	*	*
General science		*
Needle work		*
Domestic science		*
Drawing	*	*
Music		

Source: Adapted from E. D. Baker, *Development of Secondary Education in Sierra Leone*, university of Michigan, 1963. (* refers to the subjects taught)

The Grammar School, the Anna Walsh School, and Fourah Bay College used English as the language of instruction and the school syllabuses were based upon the British syllabus structure. These three famous institutions proved that the African was quite able to succeed if he had equal opportunities as those given to Europeans (Stock 337). Between the year 1843 and 1899 the Church Mission Society (CMS) had formed 111 native clergymen in its schools, 70 of them were born in Sierra Leone and 55 of them were trained at and graduated from Fourah Bay College (FBC) (Daniel, J. 24). Before 1900, 11 Sierra Leone-born sons of Creoles received degrees. They represented the first generation of native educated elite in Sierra Leone (Daniel, J. 24). Mission education in Sierra Leone enormously contributed to the birth of a significant number of educated elite classes. By 1880 graduates from the Mission colleges were in charge of education and the spread of the Christian faith throughout West Africa, however, it

was argued that mission education was too 'bookish' it did not provide the necessary portion to technical and manual education (Sawyers 93)

During the late quarter of the 19th century, the CMS and the other missions became the channel of colonization of Africa and West Africa. Graduates from Missionaries' schools in Sierra Leone, such as Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther, Samuel Lewis, Broughton Davis and others were used as tools in the hands of the British government and the missionaries. They served as missionaries, teachers, and translators of the Bible to many African languages. For example, Crowther translated the Bible to Yoruba language and published various books in English. The graduate elite helped perpetuate the colonial exploitation of Sierra Leonean and African resources and in the construction of a physical infrastructure which caused the underdevelopment of West Africa (Myovella 16). At the same time, the returned Diasporas Africans who were taught in Fourah Bay College (FBC) developed a critical mind and an international critical perspective. They asked for equal rights for Africans and all people of African descent with Europeans.

Conclusion

British colonial education in Sierra Leone in the 19th century was an education of mission. It emerged during the period of the Christian revival in Europe to spread the 'words of God' around the world. The area that was conceived as home of liberated slaves witnessed the establishments of parishes, churches, and schools, especially under the Church Mission Society. The purpose was to convert the local people besides the liberated slaves, whom the British considered pagan and uncivilized.

In the second half of the 19th century education thrived and secondary schooling produced a group of educated elite who became clergymen, teachers, and missionaries and continued to work for the service of Christianity. Missionary education significantly benefited Sierra Leone as it became the focal center of knowledge in West Africa, the 'Athens of Africa', which attracted African scholars from all around the continent.

General Conclusion

The British colonial education in the West African country of Sierra Leone proved to be a double edged sword. It is true that it enormously benefited the country and the indigenous population by introducing schooling, new religion, and establishing institutions for western education, in addition to teaching the local inhabitants modern agricultural techniques to improve cash crops production, as well as providing modern health services. However, it did more harm to the country than good. Firstly, the missionaries' desire to impart education to Africans was biased since from the beginning it was meant to serve the economic interests of the mother country, Britain.

The first missionaries' endeavor to spread Christianity in Sierra Leone began before the abolition of slave trade. Missionaries wanted to achieve the 'Three C's' which implied to spread Christianity, civilization and commerce in Africa. Their fight to abolish slavery and spread the words of the Gospel for saving the 'heathen' as humanitarian activities was soon altered by the intervention of the British Government which wanted to exploit the natural resources of Sierra Leone like in all the other African territories. This was the result of the fact that legitimate trade was more lucrative for Britain than the slave trade.

Sierra Leone was the first county in West Africa to produce the first significant number of missionary educational institution students. Some of the graduate student's elite hastened the colonization process as they served the British Government to spread the Christian faith and western knowledge throughout Sierra Leone and West Africa.

The most significant effect of the British colonial education in Sierra Leone was the birth of a new educated elite class asking for equality of rights with the Europeans and fighting for their independence.

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