THE NATURE AND THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION
IN AFRICA AND ITS U.S. INFLUENCE:
THE CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIBERIA

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1. **Introduction**

Martin Carnoy states:

A 20 year effort to expand schooling in the Third World has largely succeeded: in 1960, there were 144 million pupils in developing country (excluding the People's Republic of China and Korea) primary and secondary schools, and in 1976, 335 million; University-level enrollment increased from 2.6 million to 12.5 million in the same period. Even in relative terms, the figures are impressive: 46.8 percent of 6-11 year olds in developing countries attended school in 1960 and 61.8 percent in 1975. Yet schooling was supposed to do much more than expand (Carnoy, 1982, p. 160).

This statement speaks for itself. Formal education in all its levels is producing an important number of educated people who are needed for the development of the new nations. The assumption that manpower itself can bring "structural change" in a given country is debatable. The qualitative aspects of formal education need to be well examined before selecting any type of education to be developed in any new nation. The important questions in this endeavor are: What is the nature of the higher education in Africa? What are its goals and structures? Who benefits from it? Why does it function the way it does? Some of these questions will be explored in this paper.

Burton Clark deals with some of these questions in using an internal organizational approach with the assumption that, if education is well managed, it may become more beneficial to the majority of its consumers. Although some aspects of how higher education is organized and governed internally are important to see how the system itself determines action and change (Clark, 1983, p. 2), it is our view that action and change should be treated within the "global system" in which they are made. It is within this system (or social system) that we will try to understand the dynamics of higher education, its organization, its self-reproduction mechanisms, its relationship to the state and the dominant mode of production in
Africa.

Generally higher education, in terms of its internal organization and financial management, has developed its own massive structure and bounded procedures (Clark, 1983, p. 3) that give it an impression of being autonomous, but this autonomy, especially in Africa, can always be challenged by the ideology and actions of the ruling class. In Liberia, there is no department of higher education at the ministerial level, though there is a ministry of education. Higher education depends directly on the head of state who is officially visitor to the university. In this regard, its autonomy, its nature and its organizational aspects may be well understood in relationship to the interest of the ruling class.

In this study higher education comprises two levels of education: junior college and all the levels of learning at the university, including technological institutes. The boundaries between them are clearly set up by special bodies of knowledge given at each level, the different certification, curriculum, goals and age limit. We will deal specifically with the university-level. This choice is due to the values and role that Liberian people and the government give to the University of Liberia.

The majority of Liberian people and the university community do believe strongly that higher education in their society is an important factor in the development of the society as it can produce engineers, doctors, lawyers, social scientists, etcetera, who can, with their skills and knowledge, manage well the society. In Liberia, the illiteracy rate ranges from eighty to ninety percent (Kroma, 1983, p. 3).

Many observers and social scientists may agree that the quantitative manpower approach used by many African governments in the 1960s and 1970s, and which seems to consider education as the most important solution to socio-economic and political problems of a given country, is considered incomplete. Since 1960, many African governments with their "education experts" have generally assumed that the more schools are built, the fewer scarce resources are wasted. Education may
reduce the illiteracy rate and contribute to the improvement of socio-economic and political conditions by providing "specialists and technicians" that are probably needed for the nation-building. The Ivory Coast was one of the leaders in this direction (Assie, 1982) and, in almost all the countries, including Tanzania and the Marxist-oriented countries, the government expenditure in education grew up to over 25 percent. In Liberia over 20 percent of the government expenditure went to education (Mehmet, 1978). And over 20 percent of the educational budget was allocated to support the University of Liberia, and a further 10 percent to subsidize a foreign scholarship fund for the selected few (Mehmet, 1978).

We are not basically analyzing the nature of higher education from this quantitative manpower approach. The structuralist approach will guide our inquiry as mainly it views higher education as part of a given social formation. Its outputs can also be evaluated on the basis of its relationships to economy, politics and other social forces in Liberia. That is to say that we are inclined to deal with and to evaluate higher education from the reasoning of a social theory of history, which is in the center of structuralist analysis (Chilcote, 1982, p. 39). This reasoning can be summarized in what Cardoso and Faletto have said:

We attempt to reestablish the intellectual tradition based on a comprehensive social science. We seek a global and dynamic understanding of social structures instead of looking only at specific dimensions of the social process. We oppose the academic tradition which conceived of domination and socio-cultural relations as "dimensions," analytically independent of one another and together independent of the economy, as if each of these dimensions correspond to separate spheres of reality. In that sense, we stress the socio-political nature of the economic relations of production, thus following the nineteenth-century tradition of treating economy as political economy (Cardoso and Faletto, 1979, p. Xi).

It is from this historical and structural perspective that the United States influence is viewed in this study.
Various forms of the U.S. influence in African higher education are growing as many African countries are becoming peripheral and dependent on the U.S. economic, military and technical aid. As compared to Belgium, France, England and Portugal, the U.S. did not have formal colonies in Africa. Its involvement in technical and educational assistance has been gradually and considerably increasing.

Starting with Presidents Eisenhower, Kennedy and up to Reagan, the U.S. influence has become more visible in cultural, educational and political areas. The private foundations such as Ford, Carnegie, Rockefeller and others are also contributing to advance this influence. Though they may not represent the U.S. government, they advance and support similar political ideology. Thus, they all work toward the advancement of U.S. culture and political philosophy. Through scholarships, foundations, aids and other specific projects, the U.S. influence is likely to increase in many parts of Africa. Although specific studies are needed to understand the type of influence that is being transmitted in Africa, it can generally be agreed that U.S. involvement has impact on many aspects of higher education in Africa.

In Liberia, however, the channel of influence has been through a longer term historical connection as it was formed (as a modern state) by the American Colonization Society. It is therefore assumed that the U.S. influence can be greater here than elsewhere in Africa.

This paper discusses specifically the structures, goals and the role of the University of Liberia. Liberia being considered unique in its relationship with the U.S., some generalizations and observations will be made as to the nature of this relationship with specific emphasis on higher education. The effort is to search for whatever the university has inherited from the U.S. higher education system. Since Liberian higher education was created by the Americo-Liberian elite, we will, though briefly, look at the question whether or not there is any specific or formal relationship between the university and some black universities in the U.S. A discussion of this kind is philosophically and historically oriented in
terms of the general interpretation and its scope will also be generally flexible to allow some generalizations based on our intuition and experience.

2. A Brief Historical Review of the Liberian Formal Education

Many scholars, colonialists and missionaries believe that without formal education, the so-called civilizing and Christianizing mission of the West would not have been easily actualized. But the colonial administration in many African countries was not interested generally in the development of an "adequate" educational system in the colonies. It did not intend to develop any system that could challenge its own raison d'être. Even with the assimilationist policy of the French, for instance, education as it was organized in the metropolis was perceived as a dangerous instrument to be utilized in the colonies.

When the black settlers landed in the territory now called Liberia, their first objective was not the establishment of an educational system. The struggle for survival (as Dr. Amos Sawyer put it)¹ was preoccupying the mind of the Americos (the term used to characterize the class or ethnic group of the black settlers who came from the U.S.A.). Many settlers themselves were not educated. Only a few of them did have a college education. The majority of them had only semi-skills or education in technico-vocational and agricultural fields. And without a strong educational background especially in liberal arts and humanities, the free black men were to have a great challenge to master their environment with its customs, traditions and languages (Hoff, 1962, p. 4). How could these immigrants have created and sponsored any "autonomous" educational system without having some adequate resources and strong educational background? But despite some difficulties as already mentioned, they used formal education as a force of integration, of enlarging and legitimizing their power. That is why an analysis of higher education is important in understanding some aspects of development of the Liberian society.

The American Colonization Society and some churches did contribute to the development of formal education. Among them, some people supported the idea of
religious education as being the appropriate type of education needed for Liberia while others felt that the idea of technical and vocational training was the best idea to foster change in the habits of both Americos and natives.

Hoff's view is that if settlers had to survive in their environment, education was one of the channels by which they could learn and dominate nature. So, in addition to the Sunday and a few day schools existing in the country, the education acts of 1839, 1841 and 1843 provided supervision and regulation for common schools of the Commonwealth of Liberia (Hoff, 1962). English was the language of the instruction and the structures and the content of the courses were somewhat similar in design to those of the southern schools in the United States. Most of those schools were church-oriented in terms of their ethics and curriculum. Many teachers were recruited as U.S. missionaries. Even after the Declaration of Independence (1847), many private schools (especially church-owned schools) were sponsored by various U.S. denominations and institutions.

The industrial vocational school system was built after the image of Tuskegee and Hampton Institutes. Booker T. Washington in Kakata is one of the examples of these schools. It was opened on March 17, 1929 under the principalship of James L. Sibley, a man in whom the American Crusaders for industrial education in Africa had a profound faith. The Institute was sponsored by the U.S. State Department, the Phelps-Stokeses, the Rockefellers and the Firestones (Sibley, 1962; and Spivey, 1978, pp. 1-17). In the curriculum and the organization, they reflected or resembled the Negro rural schools in Alabama and Virginia. Until the middle of the 1950s the principals were all U.S. citizens. Intellectualism and research were not part of their curricula. Discipline, manual-labor techniques and respect to authority characterize the nature of learning in those institutions.

Popular sympathy for higher education was lacking in the beginning of the nation-building in Liberia. Political maneuvers of those days created some great obstacles for the development of higher education. But very few people who believed in higher education were convinced that a "universal" education was
essential for the welfare of the constitutional Republic. Dr. Joseph J. Roberts was among those Liberians who supported the idea of higher education as a force that could change the country. Joseph Tracy, the secretary of the Massachusetts Colonization Society, some churches and a few immigrants started to think pragmatically about the foundation of Liberia College in 1862. This college is the forerunner of the University of Liberia. It created the infrastructure and philosophy on which the University of Liberia was finally founded by an act of legislature in 1951. Its structures and goals should be clarified within the scheme of the Liberian political economy.

3. Liberia Political Economy

Since its foundation in 1822, Liberia had always some economic problems. The founding fathers did not have either sufficient capital or other resources (including formal education) to start or to advance any type of autonomous political economy. They had to rely heavily on U.S. protection and financial assistance as well stated by Ozay Mehmet:

In 1847, faced with the threat of British colonial expansion in West Africa, Liberia declared herself a republic and the first president, J. J. Roberts, sought U.S.A. independent protection and financial assistance. Since then, Liberian dependence on American aid has been crucial to her survival, especially during the European "scramble for Africa" prior to 1914. . . . In fact, American influence was so great, that [the] country was effectively a U.S.A. colony. Its constitution is virtually an exact copy of the American model; the Liberian flag is identical to the American except that it has only one star; and the American dollar is the national currency (Mehmet, 1979, p. 124).

The political economy of Liberia can be, generally, described as political economy of dependency. The role of Liberia in international division of labor is the classic one: producer of raw material (natural rubber and iron ore), cheap labor, and in the international market, it is consumer of the goods manufactured
mainly in Europe, Japan and the United States.

Since the introduction and implementation of President Tubman's open-door policy in 1944, Liberia has been controlled economically by the foreign corporations such as Liberian American-Swedish Minerals (LAMCO), German Liberia Mining Company, the Firestone Rubber and Tire Company, etcetera. Since 1950, its gross domestic product increased from less than $36 million to over $450 million in 1972 and the government revenue rose from under $4 million to about $80 million, including $13.9 million gross capital formation (Mehmet, 1979, p. 125). By 1967, there were over forty major foreign concerns operating in Liberia with a total investment capital of $750 million (Mehmet, 1979, p. 125). And more than 50 percent of the wage workers have been employed by the foreign corporations, of which the most important is the American private company, Firestone Rubber and Tire (Clower, et al., 1966). The U.S. private investment (though now decreasing because of the political instability of the military regime) is about $430 million as of 1983.2

It should also be said that the rural economy has been mainly undeveloped, although since the 1960s many efforts have been made by the United States (Clower, et al., 1966, p. 236), the United Nations Aid program and some members of the European Economic Community to help develop rural resources. More than 70 percent of the Liberians (known as country people) are still living in the rural area depending generally on the subsistence economy. The typical unit of cultivation is the family farm, based on the participation of both men and women in agricultural tasks, determined by customary rules of division of labor (Currens, 1976). They contribute to the national revenue by taxes, part-time and unskilled jobs. For more than 120 years they have been subjected to forced and/or free labor by the ruling class. Though their lifestyle is traditionally rural, they depend also on the periphery capitalist economy for clothing, salt, soap and other essential elements.

In addition to the above characteristics, we should also mention that
Liberia depends heavily on foreign manpower (despite the slogan of Liberianization from the ruling class). The importation of the "foreign experts and technicians" is an important characteristic of the Liberia political economy. At the University of Liberia, though, the foreign professors do not occupy the top administrative positions where the political situation of the university is usually informally discussed; they occupy many important positions in the academic hierarchy such as chairpersons and/or coordinators of the programme(s) and they are also members of the University Senate and Council as well.

In the Liberian modes of production,\(^3\) the mechanisms of the appropriation of the surplus value by the private corporations is facilitated by the governing class which owns land, estates, and so forth, and which also benefits from technology, innovation and taxes of the private corporations to advance its own business arrangements. Most of the members of the ruling class, especially in the cabinet ministers and general directors of governmental agencies did and/or do have some private businesses besides their official jobs. And, they depended also on the managerial skills and financial resources of the multi-national corporations and/or foreign personnel to advance their own businesses.

Although many elements of the traditional African modes of production co-exist in Liberia, they also have been incorporated into the world economy where they have to survive either as dependent units of capitalism or as an undeveloped part of it. But, in general, those modes of production are not autonomous in Liberia. They function within the state apparatus scope which regulates the nature of the interactions between them and the dominant mode of production of the urban economy. The state is a watch-dog of capitalism in Liberia and as such it does not have any true autonomy of itself. Its partial autonomy is affected by its defense of the institutions, apparatuses, processes, and ideology of the world capitalist order.

This dependent peripheral state fits Samir Amin's categorization of most of the peripheral formations. Four main characteristics of the categorization are:
the predominance of agrarian capitalism in the national sector; the creation of a local, mainly merchant bourgeoisie in the wake of the dominant capital; a tendency toward a peculiar bureaucratic development, specific to the contemporary periphery; and the incomplete, specific character of the phenomena of proletarianization (Amin, 1976, p. 333).

As a peripheral formation, the goals of its university reflect the role of the state (especially its ruling class) in the national as well as in international economic systems. Formal education works mainly toward the maintenance and development of the ruling class interests. That is to say (as Althusser indicated in terms of the ideological base of formal education) that school be characterized as an ideological state apparatus of the ruling class. Thus, education's fundamental objective is the reproduction of social relationships of production (Althusser, 1970, p. 13). As such, education has been used as a means through which the ruling class diffuses its ideology and also gets its social supportive forces needed for its own self-reproduction.

The Liberian dependent peripheral state did not have either sufficient resources or a political will to structure an autonomous university in an "unstable society." If it had to function and survive, its mission had to advance the Liberian dependency on the United States. It had to teach the values that would maintain status quo and the dominance of the Americo-Liberian elite over the natives.

Despite the slowness of the system to change its labour and wage policies and production activities, etcetera, the number of children of the peasants’/natives' enrollment to the university is tremendously increasing. Though these students tend to replace by their behaviour and values, the Americo-Liberian elite, they still have their roots and social connections in the suffering of most of the Liberian people. Thus, they are trying to use the university as the basis for struggle against the ruling class. The changes or reforms in the modes of production may affect admission policy, tuition and political control of the university. Internal organizational approach alone may be incomplete to help understand the
structure of the university.

4. Structure of the University

Structure is a set of relationships among all the elements of a given system, be they social or biological. Marx sees the disposition of all elements of any system not as being randomly set up where they are. They must relate or be used to advance a dominant system. A mode of production, which is also a system, is formed always by a combination of elements which are only notional elements unless they are put into relation with each other according to a determinate mode (Althusser and Balibar, 1977, p. 225). One may not understand the nature of a social element of a given system as part of infrastructure and of superstructure alone. That element functions within the scheme of a given mode of production which tends to regulate by its own laws the behavior of all elements. There is a dialectic relationship between all the elements. Isolated from the dominant structure, the elements are vague and socially meaningless. Clark also indicates that every system has boundaries, actors and structures. Although boundaries of the system are problematic, especially in higher education (Clark, 1983, p. 7), any institution does have a role to play only within a set of relationships or communications that determines its capacity to function and survive. In short, we all function, reproduce and transform ourselves socially within some kinds of social relationships to nature and to other human beings.

All the universities are communities with goals and structures. Knowledge at the universities is organized, refined and transmitted within a social system composed of students, faculties, staffs, buildings, and so on. There are general and specific rules used to regulate the behavior of all the forces that compose a college or university. This means that there is a division of labor and division of what should be learned (disciplines). This division of labor in the academic world, as elsewhere, is a division of human commitment. Commitment and orientation, work and belief, compose interests, a composite of material and ideal (Clark, 1983,
p. 10). This division of labor also implies specializations.

The University of Liberia is composed mainly of the undergraduate programmes divided in colleges of social sciences and humanities, agriculture and forestry, science and technology, teachers and two schools: law and medicine. The graduate programme in planning seems to be autonomous in its functioning, but it is associated somewhat with the college of social sciences and humanities. There are more interactions between them in the administrative matter than in the academic area. The academic interaction is more promoted by the students as they try to complete the general university requirements. They must take courses in the various departments as required by the university. At the faculty level, the college, school and programme seem to be isolated from each other. Clark argues that the behavior of the isolation is one of the characteristics of higher education (autonomy). There are some linkages among the various disciplines but each college or department may not necessarily need another one for its development (Clark, 1983, p. 15). At the University of Liberia this isolation is more manifest in that there is a limited interdisciplinary course offering.

One should make a distinction between autonomy and isolation. The lack of exchange of research information and communication isolates the departments or colleges from each other, though they may be autonomous (which, in fact, they are not). If the university will have to function as an "organic" system, this question of communication must be addressed and solved. This may not destroy the autonomy Clark is referring to.

He also sees authority or distribution of power at the university as being an important element of higher education (Clark, 1983, p. 7). Although he does not discuss how this power is distributed and its ideology, we agree with him that in the heart of the university, there is an interest-group struggle, academicians and administrators competing to acquire more resources for the development of their areas, or they struggle to maintain the status-quo for their own survival.
At the University of Liberia, this kind of struggle seems not to be between administrators and teachers but rather among the administrators (who are mainly Liberians).

On the top of the University of Liberia there is a board of trustees with its members coming from the various sectors of society such as chambers of representatives, private businesses, government officials, and academicians. It used to elect a president of the university who was responsible for the entire functioning of the institution. The board was, in principle, the highest power system at the university. It delegated an important part of this power to the president who has an office on campus to conduct business on a daily basis. Since 1980's coup d'état, the board of trustees has not properly functioned (though President Doe had nominated its members at the end of 1984). The office of the president is still in the center of all the decision-making.

There are two vice-presidents: one for academic affairs and another for administration. Though they seem to have a certain autonomy in the decision-making, they work closely with the president. One would call them strong ministers in a presidency system. The senate and the university council are both chaired by the president. The executive committee also is presided over by the president. At the college level, there is a dean who works closely with the vice-presidents and the heads of the departments or programmes. In principle, no major decision can be made at the college or university level without the involvement of the faculty members. In fact, in some universities in the United States, the faculty practically run the university. But in the Liberian case, it may not be mistaken to say that "power" and "privilege" are within the administration. In a political analysis, one would call this presidential system. As the president or his/her representative is the chairperson of most of the top committees, how can his/her decisions be challenged? In principle, it can be challenged through the senate and the university council, but in reality, this requires a lot of courage because of how the system was set up. One of the difficulties to challenge the leader
comes also from how the leadership is viewed within the society. In Liberian society (maybe in many other African countries, too), the leader is "everything." This is tradition in the socio-political history of modern Liberia (Sawyer, 1983).

A general and an acceptable observation is that, with an exception of the recent development of the self-assessment exercise, the university has been and is still in many aspects a "centralized" institution. As a colleague who has been with the university more than ten years put it, "my man . . . I never have participated in this budget proposal exercise before. The first time I heard about this kind of exercise was in the 1960s." As in any centralized system, in principle, there is little or no autonomous power lodged at the bottom level. The lowest level, department or programme, can be considered as a place where problems are accumulated, but they are not often solved at that level. It means that department or programme is just a problem-access structure (Clark, 1983, pp. 110-112). It is at the central authority either at the office of the president or the dean that most of the decisions are made. It may be an exaggeration to say that all the problems are solved at the center. The point is that this system functions mainly as a centralized one but some problems may be discussed at the departmental level.

Some examples of this centralization are, for instance: to solve problems regarding faculty housing, to apply for an emergency loan, to travel outside the country (especially for the expatriate faculty), to ask for any leave of absence from the school, etcetera, the president must intervene directly if any solution may be found for all these demands. Some of the centralist tendencies as we see them within the structure of the university tend to limit the participation of the faculty into other activities than classic teaching routine.

Historically, any centralized system, either a communist party or any other social organization, may function efficiently if the rules of the game are clearly stated and respected. In many respects, the university tries to respect some of its bureaucratic rules in the decision-making and the implementation of its policies, but, in general, the social environment does not allow the proper functioning of
these rules. The university's centralization is supported in many ways by African primordial values or social relations.

In Liberia, as perhaps in other African countries, social interactions are conceived within the broader framework of the African extended family system. The consciousness of belonging to a larger social unit is more important than just an atomistic view of man. In this kind of consciousness, interdependence is a vital force and it is through it that many people survive in Liberia.

Family connections and friendship seem to be sources for advancement, promotion and getting social benefits in Liberian society. By and large, bureaucracy, hierarchy and social structure in the Liberian society are strongly influenced by primordial attachment, personalism, and African family relations. In Monrovia, one can go beyond the law if one has the right family connections and friendships. As a taxi driver once said to someone who probably refused to pay his due: "My man, Liberia is too small, make friend." It is difficult to apply impersonal bureaucratic rules in Liberia. Most things are done at the level of family connections and personal relations. The University of Liberia is not an exception to the above social norms.

The university centralization is also influenced by how, generally, Liberian people see the chief, head of state or authority. Dr. Sawyer once told me that in Liberia, "chief is everything." He is in the center of social life in the community. This kind of concept has been translated by the ruling class to maintain its own power. Generally, in many traditions of Liberian society, the central authority of the chief cannot be challenged or questioned. The modern ruling class took advantage of this to exploit the natives with the collaboration of foreign corporations.

One of the dangers of this centralization is that power is given unchecked to one individual only and in an environment where attitude of challenge is not well developed, the concentration of power tends to create autocracy, especially if the rules of the game are not clearly stated.
Unless these elements of the African social relations are legitimized, rationalized, revised and/or re-adapted to meet the requirements of autonomy, specialization, scientific and international character of the university's knowledge, they may threaten efficiency and destroy discipline, the very important factors for the modern management of knowledge.

5. The Goals and Norms of the African Universities

A university, as any other social system, is a goal-oriented institution. The general and specific goals may reflect the behavior of such an institution. A system determines action and change only if it has goals and perceptions. In this sense, goals are the function of any given social institution.

For Burton Clark, higher education, which includes university, has goals to teach bodies of advanced knowledge: ideas and related skills. At the university or college, professors teach knowledge, general or specific, and they also try to preserve and augment it (Clark, 1983, pp. 11-13). In general, the university is concerned about organizing, researching and transmitting some advanced forms of knowledge. Clark deals with how this advanced knowledge is organized, integrated and transmitted, but he does not seem to deal systematically with how goals and structures reflect political objectives. In relating goals to the political history, it should be said that Liberia was never formally colonized as was the Ivory Coast or Nigeria. On this basis, one may expect the goals of its university to be different from those of the colonized societies.

Theoretically, the goals of Liberia College and then those of the University of Liberia are not different from those described by Clark. Free black Americans opted for their college to diffuse the "Universal Knowledge" and this was intended to promote the national virtue (Allen, 1923), growth and change in the environment.

Did they think about searching for a new model of college different from the United States? Blyden's view on this issue seems to be an interesting one. Edward Blyden, one of the most respected presidents of Liberia College, believed strongly
that college should build moral character, personality and supply a cultural identity needed for a new African civilization. It should be a place where different cultures meet in the classroom as well as in other intellectual and social activities. Africa cannot afford isolation in his logic. Thus, its college should be a center for learning to study histories, ideas and cultures of others and in this way, Africans should be able to adapt some foreign ideas into their social setting. The college should open up the mind of students toward the "universe" and all this should lead toward the development of a strong African personality. In short, a new African culture will be strongly influenced by the West. The college therefore should play the role of mediator.

During his tenure, the studies of classics (Homer, Plato, Greek, Latin, mathematics and natural sciences) did occupy a central place in the college curriculum. He made some efforts to adapt parts of the curriculum into the conditions and the needs of the country as he encouraged and introduced the study of some African languages such as Kpelle, Vai, Kru and Arabic (Hoff, 1962, p. 326), but, in general, he advocated a deep and broad understanding of the world in the W. E. DuBois reasoning.

The modifications that occurred in the curriculum were not structural. In social studies, political economy, history and so forth, African realities were not represented. In political economy, for instance, they were mostly dealing with federalist economic concepts; and in history, the emphasis was put on general history, the Old Testament history and the history of the United States (Board of Trustees, 1884, p. 4).

Blyden believed that Africa should open itself up to the outside world. The background of the faculty members during his tenure indicates that most of the instructors were either U.S. citizens or associated with the U.S. culture or higher education system. The University of Liberia, which inherited its history, foundation and philosophy from Liberia College, has attempted to pursue the goals set up by the college in a broader way.
President Tubman is the most respected chief executive in the old generation of the ruling class in Liberia. His view about the university may not be totally accurate, but it may be authoritative and a strong source of reference. In fact, the university was created by decree while he was the president of the country. For him, the university is an institution where groups and individuals may enjoy freedom of religion, freedom of speech and freedom of action (The Bulletin of the University of Liberia, 1957).

This freedom should be expressed in research and communication. The university should teach and work itself within the framework of liberal democratic principles (a reflection of his heritage from U.S. liberal philosophy). He also believed that this institution should provide the basis for equal opportunities to learn and achieve; these two must be evaluated purely on the basis of merit. No one should be discriminated, in principle, from entering into the university on the basis of race, class, religion or nationality. This view reflects his integrationist and foreign-policies orientation. Though, in principle, the university was open to all, in reality only a few could afford it or be qualified to be admitted. Then the question of who were those who could afford and qualify to go to the university is important, although it will not be systematically discussed here. In general, up to the 1960s, the university was considered as a political base for the ruling class, and most of its students came from either the Americo-Liberian families or the integrated ones.

It is also a place of learning where one learns for the sake of learning or knowledge itself, where books are written, where research is carried forward and scholarship is applied practically to solve the problems of the country. This view of the university is "classic."

As a state university, it played the role of supporting the ideas of the government or at least supporting some principles of the government. Open-door policy was reflected in his philosophy of university. This open-door option based on the principles of laissez-faire is another expression of his government to be
associated with liberal political ideas. But what is not clear is whether or not his normative goals of the university were reflected in his formulation of the domestic economic policy as well as in the political organization of the society. How much social justice, competence, liberty and loyalty (Clark, 1983, pp. 240-250) were provided or secured by his open-door policy?

Tubman's conception of the university was "intellectualistic" and "elitist" and did not seem to take into account the rigidity of the modern Liberian social structures. But it is closer or similar, to some extent, to the picture of a U.S. university.

It is difficult to discuss specifically the goals of the U.S. universities given their number, differences in specializations and goals to reach. But for the sake of this analysis, some generalizations based on some aspects of the philosophy of the U.S. universities will be discussed.

The United States is a liberal democratic, industrialized and capitalist country. To a certain extent, the goals of the university would embody the aspects of the characteristics just mentioned.

Clark views a U.S. university or college as an institution where a knowledge-group is organized. It is an enterprise specializing in various disciplines; it is autonomous and decentralized. It has power to determine its own actions from the inside because it has all the inputs to foster change. But this way of looking at the university does not question why the institution behaves or functions the way it does. Although he discusses the growth of professionalism (as it is becoming fragmented), efficiency and the need for democratization (Clark, 1983, pp. 240-260), he does not clearly analyze the goals and class-power relations behind the universities as being one of the important factors to understand là raison d' être of most of the universités.

Robert M. Hutchins sees the university as a place to pursue both the truth for its own sake and to prepare men and women for their work (Hutchins, 1967, p. 3). It should be opened to anyone who has interests and abilities. But he did not seem
large. Although the expression of this view varies from one country to another, this view is manifested in many urban movements in Africa.

Most of the movements against policies of the repressive regimes start at the universities. The University of Liberia, for instance, has always opposed those policies, including apartheid in South Africa. Doe angrily accused the entire university of being all MOJA\(^4\) (Movement For Justice in Africa) following students' arrest of Dr. Sawyer, political scientist and the dean of the college of social sciences and humanities.

The norms and values that Clark is dealing with are constantly attacked or destroyed by the ruling classes in Africa. Competence, justice and liberty are considered as the values that can threaten the ruling class operations. As a result of this, institutions and individuals associated with these values are punished\(^5\) even if this may lead to some social unrests.

In addition to the values already mentioned, Clark shows also that equality of access is another great achievement in the promotion of those values. The criteria of the entry into the university are not necessarily based on race, class, creed, or political affiliation (Clark, 1983, p. 241). This view seems to be too optimistic. We tend to see the equality of access in the United States as a reflection of its domestic national policies and its social formation. Although, in principle, all the high school graduates who have a good educational background, may get their admission, for instance, to Harvard, only a few of them who can afford to, may go there.

In many African universities, a considerable number of students can get to the universities through the back doors. The introduction of quota systems and other manipulative policies (like in Zaire) do eliminate the chance of the equality of access. The view that "even modern authoritarian and totalitarian regimes are hardly able to ignore the claims for equality of access" (Clark, 1983, p. 242) seems to be too general. Most of the African regimes, especially military ones, try to suppress the claims in either closing the universities down, politicizing
them or destroying the basis of their functions.

Most of the African universities were founded to support the interests and norms of the ruling classes. Professor Ake shows that Colonial Social Science Research established by the British government, the Office de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique d'Outre-Mer (ORSTROM), Institut Fondamental d' Afrique Noire, established by the French and the Nigerian Institute of Social Science, all were intended to study and understand the culture of the colonized society (Ake, 1985) and not its advancement. African universities were founded for different social objectives from those developed by Clark. Although competence has always been part of the goals of the African universities, its social purpose seems to have been different from the metropolitan universities. Knowledge, research methods and storage techniques, all must come from the metropolitan countries. All this presents also some epistemological problems in the learning process in the African universities; this creates, for instance, dependency.

Freedom of learning and researching is another normative characteristic of the U.S. higher education. On most of the U.S. campuses, students have rights to express themselves freely and have rights to challenge the system in which they live. This central idea is connected to the traditional values expressed in the Western political thought which emphasizes freedom of action as the basic condition for exercising choice, encouraging initiative, engaging in innovative behavior, sustaining criticism and inducing variety (Clark, 1985, p. 247).

Most of the African universities, from the time of their foundation up to the time of neo-colonialism, are not autonomous institutions. In many cases even the disciplines and scope for research are restricted. The research on some aspects of the state formations are not encouraged, especially in the military regimes. In short, the idea of campus as a sanctuary for student expression (Clark, 1985, p. 248) has not been developed yet in many African universities although students are always struggling to promote it. These universities seem to reflect the internal contradictions of their social settings.
6. The University as a National Institution

It is assumed that every institution of higher learning plays its role in the framework or orientation of national development objectives. Its curriculum should be relevant to the national objectives. These should be carried out in research projects, seminars, colloquia and even in teaching.

The University of Liberia is not an exception to the above reasoning. It is perceived as "the light" of the society. Whatever this may mean, people seem to assign the leadership role to this institution. Its geographical or physical location is quite unique: on the capitol hill and just on the opposite side of the ministries. Symbolically, it is associated with power. In fact, knowledge itself is power. As the only state university in the country, it enjoys some privileges associated with the state and also with the fact that it is located in Monrovia, the capital city of Liberia.

Drs. Tubman and Tolbert, both former presidents of Liberia, were visitors of the university. The current head of the state, Doe, is also visitor of the university. Since 1982, the head of the state has been traveling with some university students to attend some international meetings such as those of the Organization of African Unity and United Nations. Whatever the real motivation of this move may be, the symbolism we are referring to is reinforced by that fact. Dr. M. A. Brown-Sherman, said often that the university is for the nation and it will remain so for many years to come.

The University's long-range development plan (1976-87), as it was well elaborated by the planning unit in 1975, gives us an idea of what the role of the university should be in the nation. The late Dr. Tolbert articulated also about this role as he said:

Our institutions of higher learning should be strengthened so that they become fully involved in training Liberians to meet the manpower requirements of the nation.... They should verily be made second to none and our people develop the consciousness of appreciating their own and earnestly and consistently
strive to make same what they should be (Planning Unit, 1975).

The statement underlines the need for manpower. It is also assumed that without it, society may not be able to develop consciousness for appreciating its own culture and resources. This seems to be an important step toward socio-economic development of the nation. The role of the school as stipulated by the planning unit is not quite different from Tolbert's provision.

The report states that the university should provide a center of learning with high academic standard, to prepare well the personnel to meet the leadership and high-level manpower needs, to provide facilities and professional personnel for research activities to the needs of a developing and growing country and to inculcate moral values in students which will prepare them for leadership and high responsibility and national world citizenship (Planning Unit, 1975, p. 25). This role is academic and moral (or civic).

How will the objectives discussed by the planning unit be realized as part of the national development? It was planned that the total enrollment of the full-time first degree students will increase from 1,713 in 1975 to 4,131 by 1987 with the share of priority programmes rising from 42 percent to 54 percent. In twelve years from 1975, the total number of the university graduates was accordingly projected to reach 4,496 graduates (Planning Unit, 1975, p. 26). As the number of students is yearly increasing, the financial contribution of the government and outside donors is expected also to increase.

But President Sherman's report on September 2, 1982, as a preliminary agenda for discussion with the government, after the school was closed down because of the unrest caused by students requesting more buses for transportation to the Fendall campus (this new campus for science is situated about eighteen miles from Monrovia), is somewhat "skeptical" about the realization of the long-range development plan. Although some objectives have been already realized, the financial constraints should be taken seriously. She said regarding this matter:
The university has had a considerable increase in enrollment over the past five years. Its long-range development plan, accepted by the government in 1976, calls for enrollment of 2,617 full-time equivalent students by 1982 and a recurrent budget of $9,260,000. With an enrollment of 3,372 in 1982 which far exceeds the projected enrollment, the budget for the fiscal year 1982/83 was expected to be at least the 1981/82 approved recurrent budget figure of $7,222,562. But the fifteen percent governmental policy across-the-board cut, which in the case of the University of Liberia was 15.6%, brought to the figure of $6,096,508.00. Governmental support to the university declined between 1979 and 1981, even as enrollment increased (Brown-Sherman, 1982, pp. 1-2).

The statement is self-explanatory. The relocation of students and faculty in the Fendall campus was not possible because the government does not have sufficient funds to support the project. The transportation to take students and faculty daily to the Fendall campus is very costly. For instance, one gallon of gas was about $3.00 (1982-84); the maintenance of the buses and the salaries of the personnel also require a permanent budget allocation.

The first question that comes in our mind is: will the government be able to support fully or 80% of the university's objectives and projects as part of the national development given the economic constraints in the country? We are not in a good position to provide a satisfactory answer to this question because of the lack of data in this area. But a general observation that can be made is that the multinational corporations such as LAMCO and Firestone are threatening the government to reduce some of their operations because of the decline in the benefits expected. The international marketing situation of iron ore and rubber is not very encouraging. Not only that their price is becoming low but also the demand is decreasing as well. It means that the government is not going to receive as much money as it did in the past. In this situation, the government may want to develop other projects that can generate capital as well as reduce public expenditure. An
open-door policy of investment is an option that was chosen by the state. It hopes that this will attract the investors in the country and that this may contribute to finance the university's projects. We tend to believe that the current budgetary allocation trends may continue for many years to come unless economic policies of the country change or are qualitatively reformed.

In those conditions, will the university be able to achieve the manpower demand as planned? It may if it has some outside financial resources or if it increases tuition and other fees at the university. But if this is done, who will have access to school and what will be the reactions of those who will be unable to attend school?

Two major problems seem to slow down the mission of this university as a national institution: economic and political. Since the coup d'état (of April 1980) up to the last year's (1984) invasion of the university campus by the soldiers (where many students were killed, and many university properties were either stolen or destroyed), the university has faced tremendous economic problems. A short report of the former president of the university reflects what we are referring to. There is a considerable decreasing of the government support and as a result of this, it is leaving deficits in many areas at the institution. In 1982-83, for instance, the government subsidized books with contributions of $75,000 yearly while the total cost of books was approximately $375,000. The cost of food and lodging for 550 resident students (for 300 academic days) is $1,320,000. Students paid a total of $192,500 and the government's contribution is $461,367. The deficit is, then, $666,133 (Brown-Sherman, 1982). As the cost of education is yearly increasing (about 10%) and government is continuously decreasing its financial support, (10-20%), the university faces either "total collapse" or mismanagement and corruption.

Given the above conditions, Clark's thesis that sees the university as being generally capable of providing the appropriate knowledge and needed skills autonomously seems not to be correct. The argument of manpower and expansionism may be
considered unrealistic and idealistic in the economic conditions of this country.

This university is a national school, the state supports it financially and all its employees also are paid by the government. This legitimizes the intervention of the head of the state into the "internal problems of the university." In August 1984, all the university senate including the president, two vice-presidents, and all the deans and heads of departments were fired by the head of state Doe as students protested against the "unjustifiable" arrest of two political scientists. Later on Doe named the new top administrators and new board of trustees. The university, therefore, is becoming apparently a political organ of Doe's regime though many internal forces of the school have not been loyal to this move, especially students.

This political aspect is weakening the mission of the university. It is also discouraging the research projects as well as adequate teaching methods; for instance, all the so-called foreign political ideologies are prohibited to be taught and discussed in social sciences and humanities courses. The scopes of teaching and researching are becoming very limited. The mission of the university that Clark is analyzing is far from being realized in a centralized military regime in Liberia.

7. The U.S. Influence at the University

It is difficult to discuss influence in symbolic and general terms. But by lack of data, our discussion will be based generally on this symbolism. It may be easier to deal with the influence in terms of economic aid, political influence, and/or trade than looking at the historical connection as the basis of influence. But it is difficult to quantify or to measure precisely the level of influence of a given people or culture over another group of people or culture. One of the factors that makes any analysis on influence difficult is the complexity that may involve such an influence in human behavior and society. It means that we do not know with precision yet how far a given influence has gone or can go into the human development. However, a critical observation based on historical analysis
may help us to make some generalizations as to how we see the U.S. influence at a given institution.

Two types of sources of influence are going to be mentioned in this section, namely: informal and formal relationships. Informal is characterized as spontaneous, individualistic, and not legalistic, while formal implies institutional and legalistic. All those sources may bring influence but the strength of influence and its impact depend on many other factors outside formality and informality. We will try to discuss influences from both sources.

With an exception of some short periods, the University of Liberia, in general, does not have any formal relationships with any U.S. universities including black ones. Despite this, we are claiming that, symbolically, the U.S. influence is greater here than in any other African universities. This paper also shows that this symbolic type of influence is not a very dynamic one at the functional level.

By and large, the university curricula reflect, to some extent, U.S. college (or university) curricula. The curricula of the University of Liberia did not fundamentally change from the goals and perspectives set up by the Liberia College. The latter was designed after U.S. colleges for lack of considering other models. As shown in other parts of the paper, not only its curricula were similar, in many aspects, with the U.S. ones, but many of its teachers were either U.S. citizens or U.S.-trained individuals.

The various parts of the university curricula have been revised since 1951. There is also a diversification of the curricula. This reflects a combination of various intellectual tendencies such as: Africanist, British, French, and, of course, Americanist. On the basis of historical connection and all its ramifications, the last one tends to dominate over the others.

Language is an important cultural element which can transmit influence even at the informal level. It brings a worldview, ethos and a way of thinking. The U.S. English as utilized at the university brings also the mentioned values to the society. Although Liberian English and other native languages are popularly and
widely used, at the university, however, the U.S. English is considered to be standard.

The university does not have many U.S. professors as compared to the number of Ghanians. Only a very few U.S. citizens join the university on an individual and regular contract basis. A small number of them come as Fulbright professors. They often take no more than two years of teaching and researching. A few Peace Corps volunteers also offer their service to the university, but they can be easily transferred to other areas according to the needs of their organization. In short, the percentage of all U.S. professors who come under a regular contract may be estimated to be less than 0.5 percent of the entire faculty (at least between 1982 and 1984).

It should be mentioned that the majority of the university teachers are trained in the United States. It is assumed that they also bring a certain degree of U.S. influence in their teaching methods, management and perhaps behavior too.

Some U.S. foundations and agencies such as U.S.AID, American Educational and Cultural Foundation and others provide some scholarships to Liberians to study for graduate work. The type of influence they may bring back is intellectual, cultural and social. It should be emphasized that more than 80 percent of the university graduates wish to pursue their further studies in the U.S. The U.S. influence at the University of Liberia has been strongly supported by the result of the Cornell team.

In the early 1960s, the U.S. government and the government of Liberia made up a contract to help revise or reform the education system in the country. As a result of the intensive studies that were made during the time, many changes took place in the schooling system; for instance, the governmental schools were spread in the various counties and the establishment of some rural teacher's institutes like the one in Kakata were realized. The Cornell University's project had a considerable impact on the organization and the development of the university.

It was on May 28, 1962 that the initial contract, AID/Afr 3-A-1, was
signed by Cornell University to provide technical assistance to the University of Liberia (Final Report of Cornell University, 1967, p. 3). The project was entirely sponsored by the U.S. AID. Starting July 31, 1968 most of the recommendations made by the Cornell team were gradually implemented.

Briefly, the main objective of this team is that its work was an effort to help change structurally many aspects of the administration and the organization of the university and also to see how the general curriculum would be more "universal" and probably closer to the U.S. system. As a result of this project, many administrative units were established such as: (1) Academic Affairs, under a dean of faculty; (2) Business Affairs, under a controller; (3) Students Affairs, under a dean of students; and (4) Public Relations and Development, under a director (Final Report of Cornell University, 1967, p. 5).

Extramural programme, a continuing education unit, was established by Professor Richard D. Gifford, a member of the Cornell team. In 1967, the merger of the college of agriculture and the college of forestry was finalized by the effort and suggestion of the team. This "efficient" and "logical" arrangement was also sponsored financially by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N. The library managerial system was improved as well as the admission's procedures.

The number of this team (from 1962-68) was about twenty-nine scholars who occupied various positions at the university as professors, deans, administrators and coordinators (Final Report of Cornell University, 1967, p. 27). And only one, McFarland H. Thompson, was black (according to Dr. Sherman, the former president of the university) among the Cornell consultants and teachers. In the same period, about forty-two University of Liberia faculty members and staff were sent to study in the United States (Final Report of Cornell University, 1967, p. 30). Many of them are now in the key positions in the administration or academic areas at the university.

The result of their work was visible as the trend of enrollment also progressively increased. For instance, the student enrollment in the first semester
increased from 270 in 1962 to 457 in 1965 and 1,011 in 1968 (Final Report of Cornell University, 1967, p. 9). The number of student dropouts also decreased from 152 in 1961 to 134 in 1964 and 135 in 1966 (though proportionately by a drop).

In short, the work done by the Cornell team contributed to the restructuring of the university so that its outcome could reach an "acceptable" international standard. It also intended to train Liberians for the acceleration of economic growth and also to link it with one of the prestigious U.S. universities as a model. As the then dean of liberal arts college said: "The contribution of these Cornell members is immeasurable and their collective influence will be felt for years to come" (Final Report, Cornell University, 1967).

Up to now, this influence (though not very visible in functional ways) is reflected at the university's division of labor and some aspects of the organization of the school.

The remaining point is, however, about the nature of Afro-American influence at the university. First of all, it should be said that the University of Liberia does not have any formal relations with any black universities, even Howard or Tuskegee. Even Howard because many Liberians (of old and new generations) have studied and continue to study at Howard. Also Howard is considered to be one of the most respected black universities in the United States. Second of all, there is no black studies programme in the university curricula and there are no black professors sent or sponsored by any black institutions in the United States.

It was shown previously that some vocational and technical schools were designed after black technical and vocational schools in the southern United States. But black institutions did not support financially the Liberia ones. Thus, their influence on Liberia schools can be considered as symbolic based on informal relationships.

At the time Liberia College was founded, many black schools in the United States were fighting for their legitimacy and their survival. Because of this situation, they could not offer any financial support either to Liberia College or
later on to the University of Liberia. Even the establishment of African and Afro-American studies programmes were not strongly supported by the black universities in the early 1960s when the programmes were created, for instance, at Northwestern University, Boston University, etcetera.

The relationships that existed in the past between the university and those of blacks in the United States are considered to be informal. Black Americans (though few) who join the university faculty are recruited on a personal basis. Between 1951-1958, two presidents of the university, Drs. J. Max Bond and Kermit C. King, were both black Americans. They were recruited by the ministry of education on personal basis and not by any black institution representing Liberia in the United States. It can only be assumed that the greater chance of creating the formal relationships between the university and those of the United States was during the tenure of those two presidents. But black American influence at the Liberian schools is not functionally and visibly strong.

Many attempts are being made by both African and Afro-American scholars to study the conditions in which the relationships between them can be improved and institutionalized. The seminar on "Dynamics of Afro-American and African connection: From dependency to self-sufficiency," held in January 1983 at the University of Liberia, is one of the examples of such an effort.

Some of the purposes of the seminar as stated by Dr. Sherman were: 6

1. To assess the present relationship and develop means of improving future communication between Africans and Afro-Americans with the multiple effect of enhancing their respective identities;

2. To increase the understanding of Afro-Americans of the complexities and values of African societies and by Africans of the role and status of Afro-Americans in American society; and

3. To make more visible and effective the role of Afro-Americans in US/African relations.

The restructuring of African and Afro-American universities' curricula
toward the above purposes may enable blacks in the United States and Africans to establish some institutional linkages between them. If this effort should start from the universities, it is important to re-examine and strengthen the existing body of knowledge that can provide culture, ideas, history, politics, and so on, as tools of understanding and appreciating each other. The relationships that can be productive, socially meaningful and permanent should be based on a good understanding of each other's values.

Most of the African universities, including the University of Liberia, are poor, imaged after the western idea and reflect underdevelopment of the peripheral states. Afro-American universities, on the contrary, are located in the metropolis (U.S.), with goals and objectives different from the African ones. Given those differences (though some may view black institutions in the U.S. to be at the periphery of the national higher education system), it will not be easy to find a common ground for action. Emotionalism will not be a sufficient basis to create relationships. Some people argue that by introducing or improving the existing African and Afro-American studies programmes in both universities, it will be possible to continue mechanisms for discourse, a sine qua non condition for understanding the reality of both Afro-Americans and Africans. Although this solution seems to be simplified, given the structural differences between them, it may create some infrastructures of dialogue.

Afro-American universities, in a certain respect, did not serve strongly as institutional channels of diffusing the U.S. technology, science and other elements of the "modern" life to many African universities because of the socio-economic and political constraints of their own environment.

Some people do believe that the impact of informal linkages and influence seem to be greater than the formal one in Liberia. A Ph.D.-holder from a "good" U.S. university enjoys generally a certain degree of respect in the Liberian society. Many of my students, especially girls, wish to pursue their graduate work at some prestigious U.S. university and when asked about the good black institutions, they
seem not to be convinced that there are some good black universities in the United States.

The impact of informal links and influence can be seen in arts, music, in the women and men's clothing in Monrovia, and so forth. In 1984, many young Liberians behaved, danced, and walked like Michael Jackson. This kind of informal linkage can be generalized in Monrovia as a friend of mine from the University of Abidjan told me: "One would say that Monrovia is a southern city in the U.S."

The informal linkages are not usually dynamic because they are not well organized, and need to be systematized and re-shaped by new national ambitions and realities. It is only when those linkages are supported by principles and precise goals that they can be of any good for the society at large. Many people tend to believe that black institutions do have "sufficient resources" now to share or to help some African universities. Whether this is true or not, the process of exchange of any kind may be realized only when both groups know and identify what they want to achieve in this endeavor on the basis of their economic and political realities.

Conclusion

The higher education system in Liberia is not an imposition of the West as compared to other African countries; rather, it is the creation of internal socio-political structures as set up by the ruling class. It was an effort to imitate and to reproduce the U.S. culture and values.

The voluntary importation of many aspects of higher education (Clark, 1983, p. 229) did also occur in Liberia as it did in the United States, Japan and Germany but politico-economic structures of Liberia impeded the fundamental change to occur in the system. The U.S. model could not be advanced in a monopoly and rigid political system. This monopoly tends toward narrowness (Clark, 1983, p. 226) and it can also promote a vicious circle of politicization.

While bureaucracy and centralization of power at this university are influ-
enced by African politics of primordialism, its curricula are still mostly classical. The university is still a knowledge-centered system (Clark, 1983, p. 276) but its "mission" is far from being fully actualized because of the intervention of politics at the university and lack of reconciliation between theory and praxis.

The university is undergoing some changes as it is becoming mostly the learning institution for the children of peasants and/or masses who claim to know what is "good" for their society. The "comprador" class is incapable of satisfying the demands of these new forces. In the process of trying to control them, the school is becoming politicized and thus, it is losing even its academic dynamics.

The university has some management problems but the efficiency of the revenue allocation at the university alone will not solve all the problems analyzed and mentioned here. Provision of the necessary resources and better management may make the university a better place to work and this may even increase the quality of the learning process but it may not solve socio-economic inequality, unemployment problems, and so forth, that Liberians, many of whom are university graduates, are facing.

The university should be not only the manager of the "best ideas," but it should teach them as tools to change human nature and society. This requires decolonization of the entire system.

There is a need for structural change at the school, but this remains wishful thinking unless the structures of the social formation are qualitatively changed or reformed. At the university itself, it seems that a collective control by a body of peers may be considered a classic form of a collegial rule that can advance research, teaching and participation.
Footnotes

1 A short answer he gave about the history of Liberia at the Afro-American and African Connections Seminar held at the University of Liberia in Monrovia in January 1983.

2 This estimated amount was obtained from the U.S. embassy in Monrovia in August 1984.

3 Liberian modes of production are the social mechanisms through which labor process, production of surplus-value and appropriation of natural resources reproduce and support the mixed social organizations led by an Americo-Liberian elite. The character of these modes of production reflects a mixture of many elements of "primitive" and precapitalist economy. The African extended family system did have some influence on the Liberian production processes. The Liberian capitalist mode of production has been promoted mainly by both the ruling class and the multinational corporations.

4 The head of state, Doe, accused Sawyer of plotting a coup d'etat against his government. Sawyer and another political science instructor were arrested. Students protested and the university was invaded by the soldiers in August 1984. Finally, the university was closed down and the members of the senate and the university council were all dismissed by Doe.

5 Students usually get similar punishments; for instance, in the Ivory Coast they had to be sent to the military camps (1971); in Kenya (1984), some had to be jailed; in Liberia (1981, 1984), many were either killed or put in prison; in Swaziland (1985), they had to be dispersed and seek re-admission; and in Zaire (1968, 1970, 1973, etc.), some had to be either killed, sent back to their own villages or enrolled into the army.

6 A welcome statement delivered by Dr. M. A. Brown-Sherman (former president of the university) on January 13, 1983.
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