

<p>Institution: University of Worcester</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: 30 - History</p>
<p>Title of case study: The preservation of national heritage in Sierra Leone and new approaches to public presentation and dissemination of historical material in the aftermath of civil war</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact</p> <p>This study describes the public and cultural impact of research undertaken by Prof Suzanne Schwarz upon ongoing processes of national recovery in post-conflict Sierra Leone. It describes its impact on public policy in relation to the preservation of national heritage and, in particular, to the conservation and digitisation of internationally-renowned archival collections documenting formation of the world's first post-slave society. Schwarz played a pivotal role in the training of archival staff in Sierra Leone and, through her work with Paul E. Lovejoy (Distinguished Research Professor and Canada Research Chair in African Diaspora History, York University, Toronto), achieved long-term public access, in Sierra Leone, to rare and valuable evidence located in Britain, America and Canada. Schwarz's and Lovejoy's international conference in Freetown in 2012 was the first major gathering of historians from around the world since the civil war. Streamed live on national television and radio and attended by government officials and members of the public, it placed the modern history of Sierra Leone in historical perspective, and contributed to processes of truth and reconciliation at the heart of furthering domestic and international understanding.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research</p> <p>Schwarz's research, for which she was awarded a Leverhulme Research Fellowship in 2012, focused on Sierra Leone's development as the world's first post-slave society and its multicultural origins in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Her tracking of the experiences of thousands of Africans forcibly re-settled there, and their survival strategies in the aftermath of the transatlantic slave trade, are of global diasporic significance: as the first base for slave trade suppression introduced by the British metropolitan authorities in 1808, Sierra Leone exhibited prototype systems for the international enforcement of abolition and the colonial management of uprooted peoples.</p> <p>Schwarz's research into archival sources held by the Public Archives of Sierra Leone, the National Archives at Kew and Hull History Centre shed new light on the origins of the colony's early population and its unique composition resulting from diverse streams of coerced and voluntary migration from Canada, Britain, the Caribbean and Africa. Following British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, Royal Navy patrols stationed at Freetown intercepted illicit slaving vessels, resulting in some 100,000 recaptive Africans from across the main provenance zones of the slave trade being released in the colony by the 1860s. Schwarz identified how the forced intra-continental migration of Africans by sea, and the consequent arrival of peoples from numerous societies and language groups, introduced radical discontinuities in the demographic history of Sierra Leone.</p> <p>She traced the identities and experiences of enslaved Africans released in the immediate aftermath of abolition - whose descendants are still resident in Sierra Leone. These were the first generation of Liberated Africans, whose treatment and 'disposal' by the colonial authorities reflected the development of prototype systems for the re-settlement of former slaves later applied to other international jurisdictions in Brazil, Cuba and South Africa. Schwarz drew on Registers of Liberated Africans spanning the period 1808 to 1819 providing information on the identities, appearance and personal characteristics of approximately 12,000 men, women and children adjudicated by the British Vice-Admiralty Court. Such evidence is exceptionally rare: in the historiography of the Atlantic slave trade the names of only approximately 100,000 individuals of an estimated 12.5 million slaves are known. Her research on these registers has been central to Schwarz's and Lovejoy's ongoing digitisation programme in the archives at Sierra Leone.</p> <p>The research took place between 2011 and 2013, when Schwarz was Professor of History at the University of Worcester (UW). Her work in archives in Freetown, London, Hull and at the University of Illinois in Chicago was enabled through a Leverhulme Research Fellowship, as well as through support from UW. It drew on international networks of leading scholars engaged in research on the African diaspora at the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation (WISE),</p>

Impact case study (REF3b)

University of Hull and the Harriet Tubman Institute, York University, Toronto, and led to the award of a contract for a monograph with Yale University Press to be completed in the next REF cycle. External recognition of Schwarz's research was signalled by The Hakluyt Society's invitation to her to give the Society's annual lecture in June 2013. Her research directly informed development of a British Library Endangered Archives Programme Major Project undertaken by Schwarz in collaboration with Lovejoy to digitise the extensive, rare collections of nineteenth-century sources held in the Public Archives of Sierra Leone.

3. References to the research

Journal articles and chapters in books:

- Suzanne Schwarz, 'Reconstructing the Life Histories of Liberated Africans. Sierra Leone in the Early Nineteenth Century', *History in Africa*, 39 (2012), pp.175-207.
- Suzanne Schwarz, 'D'une administration privée au contrôle de la Couronne: Expérimentation et adaptation en Sierra Leone à la fin du XIIIe et au début du XIXe siècle', in Claire Bourhis-Mariotti, Marcel Dorigny, Bernard Gainot, Marie-Jeanne Rossignol, Clément Thibaud, eds., *Couleurs, Esclavages, Libérations Coloniales, 1804-1860* (Paris : Les Perséides, 2013), pp. 179-202.

Research grant:

- Suzanne Schwarz, 'An Early African Colony: Contested Freedom, Identity and Authority in Sierra Leone' Leverhulme Research Fellowship, 1 January 2012 – 30 June 2013, £40,972.

Conference papers:

- 'Reconstructing the Life Histories of Enslaved Africans, Sierra Leone, c. 1808-1819', American Historical Association, 127th Annual Meeting, New Orleans, 3-6 January 2013.
- Invited lecture: "Slaves Seized in the Colony": The Controversy Surrounding Apprenticeship in Sierra Leone, 1808-1809', *Africans and their Connections in the Americas* Summer Workshop, York University, Toronto, 21-22 June 2012.
- Invited lecture: 'From Company Administration to Crown Control: Experimentation and Adaptation in Sierra Leone in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century', *New Directions in European Colonization 1804-1860: Race, Slavery and Liberation in the Americas* conference, University Paris 1, Paris, June 2011.
- Invited lecture: 'Identity and Encounter: The Role of Women in Sierra Leone in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Century', *Confluence of Cultures or Convergence of Diasporas: An International Symposium*, organised by Arizona State University, Université Muhammad V, Morocco, and York University, Toronto. Marrakech, May 2011.

4. Details of the impact

Insights derived from Schwarz's research resulted in preservation of, and enhanced public access to, formerly neglected African voices, identities and perspectives central to Sierra Leone's post abolitionist formation. They played an important role in processes of ongoing community and national recuperation and reconciliation in the aftermath of civil war.

Archival research in 2011 and 2012 (see above) developed Schwarz's understanding of the scope, significance and poor condition of sources in the National Archives of Sierra Leone. As a result, she and Lovejoy secured British Library Endangered Archives Major Funding in June 2011 to digitise a wide range of nineteenth-century sources in the National Archives. Schwarz took a lead role in training its archivists, establishing the foundations for development of local skills and capacity in the preservation of, and provision of access to, records (many in imminent danger of irreparable decay). She organised training on digitisation for the Public Archives of Sierra Leone's archival team in Freetown and worked with Senior Government Archivist (Albert Moore) and Deputy Government Archivist (Alfred Fornah) to meet international standards of good practice. This resulted in introduction of a code of practice for all users of the Archives in May 2012, which has improved both the security and physical protection of the country's archival heritage. Schwarz herself provided training on digitisation and preservation and devised a bespoke programme of

Impact case study (REF3b)

professional training for Fornah involving visits and placements in Britain (University of Worcester; the British Library; the Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham; WISE, University of Hull; Hull History Centre) in November and December 2011. Fornah thereby developed a network of professional advisers to support his ongoing work in Sierra Leone.

Lovejoy's and Schwarz's British Library-funded work has involved identifying sources held in international archives and digitally repatriating thousands of documents and records to the Public Archives of Sierra Leone, alongside achieving safe storage of the Archives' own, unique primary sources documenting the population origins of the world's first post-slave society. National media coverage of the project in Sierra Leone led to Schwarz and Lovejoy being contacted by nineteenth century Liberated African Daniel Coker's descendants, who themselves possessed family archives, and to subsequent digitisation of records of the Church Missionary Society.

With the Public Archives and the Department of History at the University of Sierra Leone, Schwarz and Lovejoy organised a conference in Sierra Leone in April 2012. Designed to link past and present, to promote wider public understanding of Sierra Leone's history in a post-conflict situation, and to address issues of collective memory of recent and more distant historical events, speakers and delegates included individuals from the local heritage sector, archivists and members of the public all variously engaged in developing understanding of community and family history. The conference, including Schwarz's introduction and research paper on the life histories of Liberated Africans, was streamed live on national television and radio by the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Company; public engagement with cutting-edge international academic research - and discourse stimulated and informed by it - thus assumed high profile in an event directly associated with recent historical events and lived experience of civil war, and in the week of the country's 51st anniversary celebrations. (Schwarz's presentation on the results of her research on the origins and experiences of Liberated Africans was subsequently published in the international peer-reviewed journal *History in Africa*). She and Lovejoy were interviewed in the national press and on national television and radio, with translation into Krio facilitating widespread public access. The national newspaper *Premier News* featured an editorial commending Schwarz and Lovejoy "for their work in seeking to understand the country's past, so as to help the country address the challenges of the present and future". The conference was attended by 100 delegates including representatives of Sierra Leone's Ministry of Tourism and Culture. It included tours of the Public Archives, and a closing address delivered by Hon. Jean Augustine, Fairness Commissioner for Ontario, reflected Canada's close links with the colony's late eighteenth century founding.

Schwarz's research during the period also supported educational and civic twinning between the cities of Hull and Freetown. During her research at WISE in 2012, she spoke to diverse stakeholders and policy makers, including members of the Hull Freetown Society, Hull Black History Partnership, Hull City Council and co-ordinators of partnerships between over 30 schools in Hull and Freetown (attended by the descendants of Liberated Africans). Public lectures at the Hull History Centre and Hull Museums in 2012, and at WISE in 2013, raised awareness of the cities' interrelated histories. The Hull History Centre lecture attracted an audience of approximately fifty, including archive and heritage professionals, members of the Freetown Society and a City Councillor and former Leader of the Council.

Principal beneficiaries of the impact have been: citizens of Sierra Leone and its global diaspora (through new information about aspects of their histories and Sierra Leone's national heritage and, in Sierra Leone, access to the public and media discourse generated by the research); the government and people of Sierra Leone (through securing preservation of nationally significant historical documents, development of the country's archival expertise and activity supporting national processes of truth and reconciliation in the aftermath of war); The Public Archives of Sierra Leone (through the continuing professional development of staff, development of national policy on the preservation of significant historical material, the development of international professional networks and the enhanced availability of, and public access to, archival material lodged in archives worldwide as well as in Sierra Leone); the cities of Hull and Freetown (through greater dialogic exchange resulting in enhanced intercultural and historical understanding and enhanced sharing of expertise). Schwarz also shared her expertise on Liberated Africans with heritage professionals in South Africa in May 2013, with Schwarz and Dr. Nicholas Evans (WISE) holding discussions at Simonstown Museum about a possible joint exhibition focusing on Atlantic

liberation.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- British Library Endangered Archives Programme
http://eap.bl.uk/database/overview_project.a4d?projID=EAP443;r=17807
- The Leverhulme Trust, Annual Report 2012
http://www.leverhulme.ac.uk/news/news_item.cfm/newsid/23/newsid/191
- International Conference, *Sierra Leone Past and Present* brandsierraleone.tv/international-conference-on-the-past-and-present-of-sierra-leone-2012
- International conference, *Sierra Leone Past and Present*
http://tubman.info.yorku.ca/files/2013/01/Newsletter-30_0.pdf
- Editorial, *Premier News* (Freetown, Sierra Leone: 20 April 2012)
- Visit by Deputy Government Archivist, <http://www2.hull.ac.uk/fass/wise/news/deputy-archivist-visit.aspx>
- Visit by Deputy Government Archivist, <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/cgi-bin/webadmin?A2=archives-nra:6c6d504d.1110>
- The Historical Association, 'Sierra Leone, Abolition and the Suppression of the Slave Trade', 14 May 2011 http://www.history.org.uk/resources/general_news_1056.html
- Public lectures: Hull History Centre, June 2012, 'Abolitionist Experimentation in Sierra Leone: Conflicting Ideas and Expectations' <http://www.thisishullandeastriding.co.uk/Lecture-governor/story-16337331-detail/story.html#axzz2TBoG8L>; Hull Maritime History Society, November 2012, 'Thomas Perronet Thompson's Career in Sierra Leone'.

Confidential reports or documents

- Reports submitted to the British Library Endangered Archives Programme: EAP443.
- Letter from the British Library Endangered Archives Programme confirming the award of Major Project funding, June 2011.

Individual users or beneficiaries

- Albert Moore, Senior Government Archivist, Sierra Leone, Public Archives of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone.
(Contribution to development of archival expertise, policy and practices in Sierra Leone, to promoting public access to historical source material and to the role of the Archives in promoting national recuperation and reconciliation in the aftermath of civil war).
- Alfred Fornah, Deputy Government Archivist, Sierra Leone, Public Archives of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone.
(Contribution to the training of archivists in Sierra Leone, to Fornah's own professional development and expertise and the impact of Schwarz's work on policy and practice development in the Public Archives of Sierra Leone).
- Hon. Jean Augustine, Fairness Commissioner for Ontario, Toronto, Canada.
(Contribution to civic and public understanding in Sierra Leone and Canada to understanding of their interrelated histories).
- Reverend Allen Bagshawe, President, Hull Freetown Society.
(Contribution to public understanding of the interrelated histories of Hull and Freetown).