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Ghana's Cultural Records in Diaspora: Perspectives from Papers held at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, New York

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Abstract

This paper examines two manuscript collections housed at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City which were created in Ghana by two African-Americans during the heady post-independence days there. These archival collections offer unparalleled views into the newly independent nation's strides to fulfil its socioeconomic agenda; sadly, these are perspectives generally unavailable to the research community within Ghana for a number of reasons. Thus, the paper considers some questions regarding access to cultural patrimony raised by these papers and, as such, seeks to contribute to the debate on the repatriation of cultural records, be they artifacts, artworks or archives, and to offer other paradigms through which we might analyse the issues involved. Using these collections, the paper shows how the interconnections between continental and diasporic Africans that played out in the independence era complicate the notions of cultural patrimony and rights of ownership that often arise during debates on repatriating cultural records. As such, the paper contends that for archives created in diaspora, often out of multiple locations and cultural contexts, the questions of ownership and patrimony are not easily answered.

Keywords: Migrated Archives; Mutual Cultural Heritage; Diaspora; Ghana; Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture

Introduction

This paper examines two manuscript collections housed at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City. These personal archives were created in Ghana by African-Americans – an academic and a businessman – during the heady days of newly-gained independence in Ghana. Their contents pertain wholly or partially to Ghana or Ghanaian subjects and offer unparalleled views into the newly independent state's strides to fulfil its socioeconomic agenda from the eyes of private and official individuals, both Ghanaian and non-Ghanaian. Sadly, these are perspectives generally unavailable to the research community within Ghana for a number of reasons, chief among them being the destruction of public records at Nkrumah's downfall, a dearth of personal papers at Ghana's Public Records and Archives Administration Department (PRAAD), the neglect of a policy to actively collect these, as well as the general absence of a culture of preserving private papers. Thus, beyond using the papers at the Schomburg Center to portrait Ghana sixty years ago, this study considers some questions regarding access to cultural patrimony raised by these papers and, as such, seeks to contribute to the debate on the repatriation of cultural records, be they artifacts, artworks or archives, and to offer other paradigms through which we might analyse the issues involved.

To frame its discussion on the Ghana-related materials at the Schomburg Center, the article initially reviews the literature on repatriated and migrated

(or displaced) archives. It then considers perspectives from Kenya and South Africa, the two African countries that have particularly grappled with the issue of migrated archives, following which it discusses the Ghana-related papers at the Schomburg Center. Using these collections, the paper shows how the interconnections between continental and diasporic Africans that played out in the independence era complicate the notions of cultural patrimony and rights of ownership that often arise during debates on repatriating cultural records. It suggests that these collections containing Ghana-related materials, like other papers of African, African-American and Caribbean individuals, businesses and organisations, often reflect the roots and routes of diaspora; that is, they often reveal the affinities between continental and diasporan Africans that were born of a shared heritage and the connections made as they discovered each other whilst traversing Africa, Europe and the Americas as artists, educators, students, entertainers, business people, soldiers, activists and religious leaders, among other things. As such, the paper contends that for archives created in diaspora, often out of multiple locations and cultural contexts, the questions of ownership and patrimony are not easily answered.

The Repatriation Debate on Art, Artefacts and Bodies

The terms repatriation, restitution and return are used synonymously in this essay to indicate the means by which cultural property removed from one cultural or national context, mostly by illegal or unethical means, are returned to their place of origin. This choice is made while acknowledging that some authors differentiate between the terms. Kowalski, for example, determines that restitution pertains specifically to redress of wartime plunder or theft, repatriation to the territorial attachment of the heritage in cases where territory has been ceded or there has been a breakdown of multinational states; and return where property taken from former colonies or illegally exported are restored to the country of origin.

The imposing mummies and towering Greek and Egyptian sculptures are must-see for most visitors to the British Museum in London and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. While captivated by the Greek Elgin marbles at London's British Museum, the sacred Yoruba masks at the Brooklyn Museum in New York, or the Egyptian obelisk that has pride of place on Paris's Place de la Concorde, the average tourist has likely never asked how those pieces came to reside at these sites so far away from their lands of creation. Yet, in the last few decades, it is precisely that question that has generated debate over the repatriation of works removed during colonial rule by theft (of course, some would categorise removal during colonial rule this way) or war. This has, in some cases, even seen the return of some of these works to their patrimonial homes. Still, this has not happened without controversy.

A number of recent international pacts against the smuggling of antiquities have brought about a shift in ethics which has resulted in many regarding such repatriations as rightful returns. On the other hand, there are those like Philippe de Montebello, the director of New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art who oversaw the return to Italy of an ancient Greek vase stolen from a tomb in Rome, who question the validity of returning "objects from ancient civilizations back to modern nations that didn't exist when the art was created" (de Montebello quoted in McGuigan, Murr and Nadeau, 2007; Hallote, 2011). Still, some argue that more financially endowed cultural institutions in the West can take better care of the items than their countries of origin while still others make the case for "universal museums" or advance the notion of a shared universal heritage, the "patrimony of all mankind" (Carpenter and Sandford, 2003; McGuigan, Murr and Nadeau, 2007; Cuno, 2014).

While the popular conversation and reports surrounding the more controversial repatriation cases have often focused on art, artefacts and bodies, as in the case of the return of Ramses I's mummy to Egypt and that of Sarah Baartman, the so-called Venus Hottentot, to South Africa, the issue also pertains to archival materials. UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for Promoting the Return of Cultural Property to its Countries of Origin or Its Restitution in Case of Illicit Appropriation, for example, primarily focuses on dispossessed museum antiquities and also acknowledges the cultural significance of archives (2010). In his 2015 consideration of the inalienability principle,

Montgomery traces the development of modern protocols and legal frameworks governing the restitution of cultural property, especially after wars. Importantly, Montgomery's review notes the failure of these conventions in defining captured state records and archives as cultural heritage and proposes an initial conceptual framework to reconcile the inalienability principle with the conventions of war which permit the seizure of enemies' public records by foreign forces and impose no obligation of return. To accomplish the latter aim, Montgomery suggests public records seized under the laws of war be considered "the eventual inalienable cultural patrimony of the country of provenance and that, as such, seized wartime records should be repatriated when they are no longer needed by the capturing state for strategic military operations, intelligence, occupation, or diplomatic advantage at the end of hostilities" (2015). Under this framework, captured state records would not be left to post-war diplomacy as is the case now and has been for centuries.

Decades earlier the International Council on Archives (ICA) addressed a more pressing issue – that of archives migrated due to decolonisation. As the United States-based African Studies Association (ASA) noted, the changes in territorial boundaries and political sovereignty deprived many countries partially of their rightful archival heritage. The ICA's 1976 Universal Declaration on Archives recognised archives as an essential part of national heritage, providing documentation of countries' historical, cultural, and economic development, providing a basis for national identity, as well as providing the evidence needed to assert individual citizenship rights. The United Nations, in the following decade, also attempted to resolve the matter of migrated archives, formulating the Vienna Convention on the Law of Succession on State Property, Archives and Debts; however, Western powers, largely, did not ratify this 1983 convention (http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/3_3_1983.pdf).

The term 'displaced archives' has come to be applied to diplomatic, military, administrative, historical archives displaced by war, seized in occupied territories or, as particularly concerned the ICA, through colonial rule. The term was used as early as 1960 by Ernst Posner who, from 1943, had assisted Solon Justus Buck, Archivist of the United States to promote programmes to protect archives in Europe and Asia threatened by war and to establish collection centres for displaced archives to be returned to their rightful owners (Ketelaar, 2017: viii). According to Lowry (2017), "migrated archives" is the preferred term in Commonwealth countries, although the term has recently become associated with a particular cache of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) records that have been partially transferred to the UK National Archives; these are discussed below. The Society of American Archivists (2005) Glossary of Archival and Records Terminology defines migrated archives as "the archives of a country that have moved from the country where they were originally accumulated; removed archives". To Nsibandze (1996) quoted in Mnjama and Lowry (2015) migrated archives are archives in exile or archives unjustly transferred (removed) from one country to another. Garaba (2011) argued that "whether one employs the term "fugitive archival material," or "missing documents", "migrated archives", "removed" or "displaced archives", the common factor is that they are not where they are supposed to be, in their rightful place of custody.

Yet, beyond the fairly complex matters of national sovereignty and the loss of rightful ownership, other crucial consequences of archival displacement have been noted. Mnjama (2015), for example, notes that migrated archives constitute a vital historical resource which should be readily available in their countries of origin. To the Botswana National Archives, migrated archives are important as they bridge gaps in national documentary heritage, provide insight into the history and development of the country which may not have been previously known, and increase the diversity of the national archives and local research base. This last point raised by the Botswana National Archives is especially pertinent. In giving their support to the ICA's resolution, the Archives-Libraries Committee of the African Studies Association highlighted the need to provide local scholars, students and citizens free access to documentation on their national past as a particular concern of government archivists in African countries. The Kenya case, particularly, brings this issue into sharp relief.

Migrated Archives: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Kenya Documents

As the gruesomely violent Kenyan independence struggle tapered to its inevitable end, and the British colonial government prepared to hand over the reins of government, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) sought to sanitise the archival record of the brutalities the colonial government meted out to counter the Kenyan resistance. Some documents were destroyed outright. Others were covertly sent to London with the complicit knowledge of the FCO (Banton, 2012a and 2012b). Indeed, the Secretary of State for the Colonies ordered the colonial authorities to send documents that they did not want to hand over to the newly independent governments (Badger, 2012). The FCO policy was that records that might embarrass the UK government and public servants should not be ceded to successor governments (Mnjama and Lowry, 2017: 102) and so a 3 May 1961 Colonial Office guidance telegram laid down criteria for documents that were to be migrated. These were those that: might embarrass Her Majesty's Government or local government; might embarrass members of the police, military forces, public servants and others such as informers; and, might be used unethically by ministers in the successor government (Badger, 2012). Over a period of 30 years, these papers of varying volume totaling some 8,800 files arrived in London from 37 colonies, including 1500 files in "readily identifiable series" relating to Kenya (Banton, 2012a; Anderson, 2011).

For almost twenty years, between 1967 and 1982, the Kenyan government unsuccessfully requested the return of these documents. The British government maintained that the records were their property and would not be returned. But in 1982, England's Public Records Office (PRO), now National Archives, argued that the records were not actually UK public records in the meaning of the Public Records Act (Badger, 2012). In the interim, Kenya's government and citizens had effectively been denied access to materials documenting their own history.[1]

In April 1982, an office was opened at the Kenya High Commission specifically to copy Kenyan records held in the UK which had been identified through various surveys. The office was closed in 1989 when funding to support the full time staff from the Kenya National Archives was drastically reduced.

However, the British government's guilty secret was to be exposed by a case brought against them by Mau Mau veterans who, alleging torture and abuse by the British colonial government, sued it for compensation (Anderson, 2011). The prosecution defending the former resistance fighters unearthed these migrated documents which had not been seen since 1963 and discovered they supported their clients' claims. In the controversy that ensued, which saw the FCO ordered by the courts to open the archives under Freedom of Information provisions, questions were raised about whether the British, by migrating and hiding colonial records, had sought to manipulate and censor history to their advantage. As some wondered, what else might they have to hide? (Anderson, 2015).

The Kenya migrated archives case is exactly the sort of circumstance that concerned Montgomery when developing his inalienability thesis and is a situation covered under the ICA declaration. Absent from the ICA Declaration and Montgomery's argument, however, is a consideration of private papers and other contexts in which what might rightfully be considered the cultural patrimony of one country ends up in another, and where the ensuing legal conflict could foreseeably be, not between nations, but between a nation and an individual or estate, or between a nation and a private entity such as a library, archive and auction house. Beyond these scenarios, this paper is particularly interested in one other – what obligations should national or private libraries and archives that hold records created by private individuals or groups be under when the papers in question could possibly have competing heritage or national claims? The South African liberation archives offer one way some have settled this question.

Repatriated Archives: South Africa's Liberation Archives

The decades long black South African struggle to gain liberation and full civil rights created a substantial body of cultural records of enduring value. These archival materials created by the African National Congress (ANC), Pan-African Congress, Black Consciousness Movement of Azania and other exiled liberation movement groups comprised manuscripts, newsletters, posters, photographs, tapes, video recordings and interview transcripts. The majority of these records have been repatriated from countries including Algeria, Botswana, Lesotho, Tanzania and Zimbabwe in which the groups, especially ANC, the largest, operated. (Dewah and Feni-Fete, 2014; Garaba, 2011). The ANC archives have been repatriated from Tanzania to South Africa's Fort Hare University Archives which was designated the official repository for the papers (Garaba, 2011). The East and Southern Africa Regional Branch of the International Council on Archives (ESARBICA) has recognised liberation archives as valuable part of Africa's heritage and a national asset (Garaba, 2011: 28), a significant declaration particularly in light of the fact that these records survived the threats or actuality of raids on liberation movements' offices and destruction of records by pro-apartheid South African state forces.

While the migrated colonial archives held at the British National Archives clearly fall within the parameters of the inalienability doctrine and should rightfully be repatriated to the former colonies' successor nations, it can be argued that, despite their erstwhile restitution to South Africa, the case for the liberation archives is actually less so. Created in the midst of battles staged from satellite theaters of war across eastern and southern Africa, the liberation archives display some of the characteristics identified below for the Ghana-related manuscript collections at the Schomburg Center. They were born out of political activism targeted against oppression at home; yet, their operational success owed much to the fraternity and support of the African nations in which freedom fighters found themselves exiled and dispersed. The liberation papers record these underground networks and pan-African alliances formed with like-minded individuals and organisations, some involved in similar anti-imperialist and anti-colonial political struggles. So, as much as the liberation archives document the fight against apartheid in South Africa, they also speak to the varied pan-African assistance that supported this struggle.

Still, the liberation archives were produced by South African nationalists fighting for a liberated nation. Some of these individuals ascended to public positions in the new South Africa. On the surface, it seems only right that the documentation of this struggle be repatriated to South Africa, although it was not the nation of the archives' creation. These archives actually present an interesting angle to the discussion on repatriation and displaced archives, provoking the question: which carries greater patrimonial/ownership weight – the country of creation (provenance), especially if it is also the subject of the collection, or the creator and their place of origin? Mnjama (2005) quoted in Garaba, 2011) believes countries where the freedom fighters had been in exile have a moral duty to repatriate records to the fighters' countries of origin. Yet, such a stance could prove to be a double-edged sword for African archivists, as European countries also argue the logic of creators' country of origin and base their refusal to return embarrassing colonial archives to successor governments on their view that the records are in actuality European archives, a vestige of their imperial heritage (Mnjama and Lowry, 2017).

The ensuing sections will discuss personal papers pertaining to Ghana that were created in Ghana by non-Ghanaians and eventually archived outside Ghana to consider how these papers might inform the repatriation debate.

The Schomburg Center's Ghana Documents

The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture is one of the New York Public Library's (NYPL) four research libraries. It began in 1925 as a special collection, the Division of Negro Literature, History and Prints, of NYPL's 135th Street Branch Library. A year later, the library acquired the massive private collection of distinguished black Puerto Rican scholar and bibliophile Arturo Schomburg, totaling more than 5,000 books, 3,000 manuscripts, 2,000 etchings and paintings, and several thousand pamphlets. Schomburg would serve as the Division's curator from 1932 until 1938 when he passed away suddenly. Two years later, the Division was renamed in his

honour. In 1972, the Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature, History and Prints was designated as one of NYPL's research libraries and was renamed the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. The Center has five divisions: Art and Artefacts; Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books; Moving Image and Recorded Sound; Photographs and Prints; and Research and Reference. Today, with over ten million items in its collections, the Schomburg Center is recognised worldwide as a premiere repository for the preservation of materials on African, African-American and African diasporan experiences and histories.

The Schomburg Center holds a number of collections relating to Ghana in all of its divisions. Its Manuscripts, Archives and Rare Books Division particularly offered this study a number of collections and personal papers which it could have explored, including the Kwame Nkrumah Research Collection, the Laura Adorkor Kofey Research Collection, the Clarence Holte Papers (these three collections are described briefly below), the William Alphaeus Hunton Papers (contains correspondence with Kwame Nkrumah and materials relating to the Encyclopedia Africana Project the President commissioned), the Julian Mayfield Papers (apart from an 18 -page letter from Silvia Boone discussing the aftermath of the coup and how it affected the African diasporic expatriate community, the Ghana materials are largely printed matter concerning the coup as the writer's personal papers were confiscated by the National Liberation Council), and the Franklin Williams Papers (United States ambassador to Ghana at the time of the coup, his papers include, among other things, a diplomat's description and view of the coup and its aftermath). Other Ghana-related archival materials at MARB are: four manuscript documents in the artificial Africa Miscellaneous Collection, including a slave trade document, land lease documents, and letters from and to W. E. Amartey, a Jamestown, Accra merchant, and a folder of masonic letters from a lodge member in Kumasi found in the Henry Albro Williamson Papers.

Some of the manuscript collections have corresponding collections in the other divisions, for example, the Julian Mayfield Photograph Collection. Detailed collection guides, including information on materials that have been separated to other divisions, may be accessed through archives.nypl.org. A brief description of some of the above-mentioned collections will serve to provide a sense of the scope of the Schomburg Center's materials relating to Ghana.

The Nkrumah Collection is research notes, interviews and correspondence relating to Nkrumah that researcher Marika Sherwood compiled for her book *Kwame Nkrumah: The Years Abroad, 1935-1947*. Similarly, the Kofey Collection consists of, among other things, research notes, correspondence relating to the research, news clippings, pamphlets, and copies of telegrams concerning Kofey between Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) officials and their leader Marcus Garvey were created by Richard Newman for his chapter on Kofey in his 1987 book *Black Power and Black Religion: Essays and Reviews*. Kofey was born outside Accra in 1875 and claimed to be the daughter of King Knesipi (possibly Nii Shippii?) who wanted to encourage African-American migration to the then Gold Coast. The collection outlines Kofey's sojourn in the United States, her rise through the ranks of the UNIA, and her eventual split from, and suspected assassination by, the organization.

Clarence Leroy Holte was an African-American bibliophile who collected books pertaining to Africa and the African diaspora. He was a Lincoln University classmate of Kwame Nkrumah, a relationship documented in his papers which also reflects his desire to educate people about black history and culture, and reveals his attempts to assist with the economic development of Nigeria, Ghana and Liberia through an advertising company he represented. The Holte papers also include files pertaining to Holte's role in hosting Nkrumah's 1951 visit to the United States, sponsored by Lincoln University.

At Home in Diaspora: The Drake and Freeman Papers

Although many of the above-mentioned collections show the multifaceted connections between Africans in diaspora and on the continent and demonstrate the perspective of roots and routes germane to the argument being offered here, upon reflection, it was decided not to include them in the analysis. Rather, for the purposes of the discussion, what was chosen were collections that had been organically created

by one individual who had sojourned in Ghana for a substantial amount of time.

St. Clair Drake Papers

St. Clair Drake was a social scientist and activist born in 1911 in Suffolk, Virginia. After graduating from the historically-black college Hampton Institute, now Hampton University, in 1931 and prior to pursuing his PhD, Drake taught at high schools and colleges, joining the faculty of Roosevelt College in Chicago as an assistant professor in sociology and anthropology in 1945. There, he helped organise an African studies programme. He conducted research on black communities in England's sea ports in 1947-48 for his PhD. Degree; and while in England, he became acquainted with George Padmore, Kwame Nkrumah, and other leaders of the Pan-African movement. As an educator and social anthropologist, Drake worked and conducted research in West Africa intermittently between 1954 and 1965 as a visiting professor at the University of Liberia in 1954 and a Ford Foundation Fellow in Nigeria in 1955. It was under the auspices of the Ford Foundation that Drake first went to Ghana in 1954, returning there in 1958 to lecture in the Sociology Department at the University College of Ghana in Achimota. He was subsequently appointed acting head of that department between 1958 and 1961. During this time, Drake became an adviser to the Nkrumah government on the development of the former fishing village of Tema into an industrial town with a deep harbor. He also assisted in the implementation of Peace Corps programmes in Ghana and Sierra Leone.

Scope of the Drake Papers

The Drake papers, spanning the years 1935 to 1990 when Drake passed away, were donated to the Schomburg Center by Drake and his estate in seven accessions, beginning in 1989. In totality, the papers measure 48 linear feet, comprising 27 cartons and 76 boxes, and are divided into 18 series, including Personal Papers, Correspondence, Subject Files, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and other African countries. The Ghana series is 5.4 linear feet and is arranged into five sub-series: Correspondence, Diaries, Manuscripts, Tema, Politics and Government. Represented in the correspondence are matters relating to Drake's appointment and tenure at the University College of Ghana, his efforts to secure financial assistance for West African students in the United States, and letters to and from Kofi Busia, whom Drake had replaced as head of the Department of Sociology at the University College of Ghana, Legon when the former became a leader of the opposition. Also included are diaries and notes dating from 1954 and 1959. The mostly unpublished anthropological writings in this section are listed by title. His office files at the Department of Sociology fall broadly into the following categories: sociological surveys of student life, family background and career orientation; student papers, examinations and curriculum material; research projects related to Ghana; an outline for a PhD programme and Drake's recommendations for the growth of a modern university in Ghana.

The Tema sub-series documents the Nkrumah government's undertaking to complete the Tema harbour project as well as the University of Ghana's Department of Sociology's involvement in a research group that explored the projected educational, cultural and socioeconomic problems intrinsic to an industrial project of that scale, drafts of a report on Tema, and material collected by Drake for a major article on the new town.

The Ghana - Politics and Government sub-series includes materials on Nkrumah's 1958 visit to Chicago, miscellaneous material on George Padmore and the Convention People's Party, the 1965 coup that overthrew Nkrumah, and miscellaneous writings by Drake on Nkrumah.

Other series in the papers also contain material related to Ghana. For example, speeches on Ghana, including radio talks, may be found in the Lecture Notes series; the Correspondence series contains letters from E. S. Attuquayefio, Kojo Botsio and Kofi Tetteh while the Writings series, in addition to reflecting Drake's interest in pan-Africanism, sub-Saharan Africa and black studies, also includes writings from Ghanaians Opoku Agyeman and Kofi Tetteh.

The documents in the Drake Papers are, unfortunately, likely not represented in the University of Ghana Archives or PRAAD collections.

Robert Freeman Papers

Robert Turner Freeman Jr. was born in New York City in 1918. He attended Lincoln University at the

time Kwame Nkrumah and Nnamdi Azikiwe were also students and was acquainted with both men. Freeman had majored in Mathematics at Lincoln and entered the life insurance industry in 1945 as the vice-president and actuary for United Mutual Life Insurance, an African-American insurance company. Nine years later, Freeman learned that Britain intended to grant its Gold Coast colony independence and that Nkrumah would be the new nation's leader. He reached out to his former Lincoln University classmate to propose setting up a life insurance company there. This he and his two partners accomplished in 1956. The Gold Coast Insurance Company recruited the colony's first insurance agents and gave them a two-week training course. By 1959, their number had grown from twenty-five to 150-strong and the company had opened branch offices in other major Ghanaian towns. During that time, Freeman and his partner Vertner W. Tandy Jr. also formed the first domestic property and casualty company in Ghana, the Ghana General Insurance Company, to sell automobile and fire insurance. Three years later, President Nkrumah incorporated both companies into his newly established State Insurance Corporation (SIC). Nkrumah requested that Freeman remain on board as the Managing Director of the SIC (Nkrumah to Freeman, October 10, 1962). Freeman also helped with the creation of the social security system in Ghana. In 1965, Freeman resigned his post at SIC and returned to the United States. However, he would continue to return to Africa over the ensuing years, helping a number of countries establish insurance or social security systems. He died in 2001.

Scope of the Freeman Papers

The Freeman Papers were donated to the Schomburg Center by his son, Robert Freeman III, in 2007. A small collection (0.8 linear feet) of two archival boxes, the Freeman Papers consist of two series, Personal and Professional. The papers not only offer insight into the establishment of the companies that would be incorporated into Ghana's State Insurance Company (SIC), but also offer insights into the activities and opinions of Ghana's first president. For instance, in his letter to Nkrumah following up on the proposal for setting up the insurance company, Freeman recalls that the future anti-colonialist leader often attended Lincoln University student programs where he "presented interesting narrations concerning the culture and music of Africa".

Among correspondence to family in the Personal series is a letter describing Ghana's Independence Day festivities and the Freeman's experience meeting American invitees such as Richard Nixon and Adam Powell, discussed in some detail in the following section. The first three folders of correspondence in the Ghana Insurance and Ghana General Insurance sub-series of the Professional papers trace the establishment of the Ghana Insurance Company and the challenges encountered in the process, namely red tape, settling in Ghana, and overcoming the populace's suspicions about the workings of insurance. Nkrumah himself was alleged to have thought insurance "a racket" (David Jones letter, 1956).

Some of the documents relating to SIC operational matters available in the Freeman papers might be represented in SIC Archives. However, earlier and private correspondence between the partners relating to the preceding companies' set-up and operations which give a fuller picture of SIC's history most likely are not.

Ghana's Cultural Records in Diaspora: Concluding Perspectives

The Schomburg Center's archival collections reflect Arturo Schomburg's philosophical leanings and richly document the histories and cultural productions of Africa and its diaspora as well as the varied interconnections between their peoples. Robert Freeman's associations with Nkrumah and Nigeria's Azikiwe serve as one example of these ties frequently recorded in the Schomburg Center's collections. The men met while they were all students in college, prior to the latter two becoming political stalwarts, and then years later renewed their affiliation with Freeman as a businessman who contributed immensely to the development of the two leaders' nations. Beyond these "top level" associations, there are also records documenting more "ordinary" interactions, such as those between Drake, his colleagues and assistants in the Tema project or Ambassador Williams' visits to local schools.

These archival records relating to the Ghanaian past at the Schomburg Center are an intangible

heritage that can, as Jimerson (2003) suggests, convey emotional and intellectual links to people and events of previous eras. And these records are of immense value not only to Ghanaians, but also to their counterparts in the African Diaspora. Indeed, the documents do not simply record significant events from Ghana's past but relate how diasporic Africans experienced them. For example, Mary Freeman's detailed letter to their family in the States about Ghana's Independence festivities exudes with excitement and pride about the landmark achievement (Freeman to family, 10 March 1957). In the car behind the Governor and the Duchess of Kent, she wrote, "[was] Dr. Nkrumah and I was so excited I wanted to see him and not through the lens of a camera." Nkrumah and Ghana symbolised the realisation of pan-African liberation ambitions and offered a standard and hope for other black struggles, including African-Americans' own fight for civil rights in the United States. It was little wonder that diasporic Africans flocked to the continent of their heritage for the momentous occasion. Mary Freeman's list of attendees reads like a who's who: "… Mr. and Mrs. Johnson of Ebony, Simon Booker of Jet… you never saw so many Negroes outside of Harlem. There must have been 150-200 of them here… Dr. Ralph Bunche, Adam Powell, Rev. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, A. Philip Randolph, Norman Manley, Mrs. Louis Armstrong…"

Mary Freeman's letter relates other interesting vignettes from the day: "The first affair of Independence was Monday afternoon at the stadium – Welcome ceremony to the Duchess. I took lots of pictures and hope, above all that the picture of 1,000 school children dressed in yellow, green and red and representing the Ghana flag comes out. *It was a very inspiring picture and beautifully done*" (emphasis added). Then, "Wednesday was the big day, but first let me tell you *the most important thing that happened prior to Wednesday. At midnight March 6 the Union Jack was taken down and the flag of Ghana was hoisted.* This took place at the Legislative Assembly and there were thousands of people witnessing this most historic event" (emphasis added).

Apart from the views of Independence Day festivities and her highlighting of those aspects that particularly resonated with her, Mary Freeman's letter also reveals the sense of pride and satisfaction there was that diasporic Africans were making significant contributions to Ghana's progress and development. She reports that the African-American press that had come to Ghana to cover the event "really took pictures of us and the office". The press was not simply interested in featuring African-Americans in Ghana, but wanted to report on their involvement in the nation's economy and society as well, perhaps seeing it as a way their readers could also feel a part of the bourgeoning pan-African project.

That was certainly the import of Mary Freeman's letter to her family. Significantly, the last words of this letter written so that family members back in the United States could vicariously participate in the celebrations of the first African country to gain independence were "don't forget Ghana". This admonition invited them to do more than insert themselves in the festivities. It tasked them with remembering the nation, actively making it a part of their consciousness, perhaps so they or their friends could evoke it and its promise in their own activist struggles.

And yet, the feeling of diasporic affinity was not unidirectional. While expressing his "considerable pride" at Nkrumah's political progress and Gold Coast's advancement towards independence in his proposal to Nkrumah about setting up the Ghana Insurance Company, Robert Freeman also referred to the success of black-owned insurance companies in the United States, appealing to the Ghanaian leader's pan-Africanist sensibilities (Freeman to Nkrumah, 13 September 1954). Decades later, when Nkrumah associate, Kojo Botsio, was organising a Kwame Nkrumah Foundation, he seriously considered its presence in the United States so that friends like Drake "…so vibrant with the spirit of pan-Africanism" (Botsio to Drake, January 19, 1987) could continue the work of Nkrumah and his diasporic aides and confidantes George Padmore and W. E. B. DuBois (see Figure 2 for a compilation of Nkrumah's aides from the African Diaspora).

There are parallels that can be drawn between these papers at the Schomburg Center which speak to the Ghanaian past and the repatriated South African liberation archives. The latter records document as much about the countries that hosted the freedom fighters as they do about the anti-

apartheid struggle itself. In other words, contained in these archives are records about a significant period in the histories of these countries, noting both official governmental contributions and those of their citizens, as well as political backlash faced from the South African government. Subsequently, claiming unequivocally that these archives belong to and in South Africa seems to disregard their complicated origins and contexts. Could a case not be made against their restitution? Indeed, could their restitution not be considered something of an interruption to the narrative of pan-African cooperation that contributed to the success of the anti-apartheid struggle? Furthermore, does the restitution of the liberation archives to South Africa not blur the interconnectedness of Africa's histories and political trajectories in general, and that of the anti-apartheid and anti-colonial struggles in southern Africa in particular? These questions are pertinent to the Ghana-related archival materials at the Schomburg Center and myriad other records there and in other repositories across North America and Europe. Any solution to them is predictably complicated and fraught.

In 2016, the Lutheran School of Theology (LSTC) at Chicago returned Codex 1424, a ninth century New Testament manuscript, to the Greek Kosinitza monastery where it resided for centuries prior to being sacked by soldiers during the Balkan Wars in 1917. The manuscript, which forms the basis of the official version of the New Testament used by the Greek Orthodox Church, eventually found its way into the hands of a book dealer who sold it to a LSTC president in 1920. The current president of LSTC confirmed that the purchase had been legal under international antiquities laws then and now, but that the school realised the manuscript's return was a moral, not legal, question: "what do we do with something that is obviously ill-got gains? We didn't gain it illegally, but somebody did. What do you do when you have the opportunity to set that right?" (Seminary returns rare manuscript to Greek Orthodox, *Christian Century*, December 21, 2016). Earlier in the year, *Christian Century* reported the return to an Ethiopian monastery of sacred manuscripts by Howard University Divinity School (February 17, 2016).

Auer (2017) suggests that bilateral negotiations such as the ones that saw the return of these rare manuscripts to Greece and Ethiopia remain the most effective method of resolving archival claims while Karabinos (2017) and Cox (2017) believe that shared heritage arrangements also warrant consideration. Both solutions might incorporate copying which, Mnjama and Lowry, following the lead of the ICA, proffer as a solution where the restitution of archival materials faces inaction (Mnjama and Lowry, 2017). It might be argued that these preceding solutions are born out of conceptualising displaced archives as an undifferentiated whole that need an all-encompassing and definitive arrangement. However, this might needlessly complicate matters. A helpful strategy offered in the literature to resolve disputes over displaced archives is to review them on a case-by-case basis. One such pragmatic solution would be to temporarily put aside questions of provenance and the rightful place of the archives and instead focus on facilitating access to them (Ketelaar, 2017). In Australia, the focus on access has driven the repatriation of song recordings from archives and private collections to communities of origin as a way to attain cultural equity, to revitalise song traditions, to redress colonial research legacies, and to ensure that cultural stakeholders in Australia's aboriginal communities have access to the results of past and present research (Treloyn, Martin and Charles, 2016). For the Caribbean area, the Association for Cultural Equity (ACE) has undertaken a digital repatriation project, providing Caribbean repositories with the digital copies of the works of Alan Lomax, author, anthropologists and record producer who in the 1960s travelled around the Caribbean recording folksongs and oral traditions. The ACE project's main objective is to make these intangible cultural heritage resources accessible to present and future generations (Lyons and Sands, 2009). In the United Kingdom, access is the course of action that the British Library has pursued for the Moroccan and Somali audio archives in its collections (Landau, 2012; Brinkhurst, 2012). Both studies have demonstrated that proactive archivism that reaches out to diasporic communities whose cultures and histories are represented in archival holdings far from home might be one way to mitigate the charges of displacement because, as Landau (2012) notes, these archives have multifaceted significance for users from the communities; they serve as: tools to evoke memories and reconnect to the 'homeland'; valuable historical

documents; tools to rediscover cultural heritage; and tools to reinforce a sense of identity.

Thus, outreach programmes that facilitate access might be the most useful framework to apply in cases like the Schomburg Center's Ghana-related materials which can be considered shared heritage or cultural property and therefore do not warrant repatriation. The Ghanaian community in the Bronx is only a short subway ride away from the Schomburg Center, and there are several outreach possibilities that could create opportunities for them to meaningfully engage with documents of their past. Such outreach programmes could also be a vehicle for acquisitions, where community members, now aware of the proximity of historical documents pertaining to their national story, might donate materials. This would ensure that their own diasporic stories, vital to the telling of full histories of both their nations of origin and settlement, get preserved in the place they have made their home away from home. Although their diasporic home of creation was not where the Drake and Freeman papers remained, their availability to Ghanaians in diaspora, as well as to other Africans, African-Americans and African-Caribbeans, contributes to vital socio-cultural understandings between African-descended peoples that continue the vital interconnections these historical actors experienced and which have been recorded in their papers for posterity.

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