

# AFRICAN AGENCY AND COLONIAL COMMITTEES AT FOURAH BAY COLLEGE

## Architecture and planning of the new Fourah Bay College in Freetown, Sierra Leone

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**ABSTRACT:** Fourah Bay College was the first Western-style university to be established along the West African coast in 1827. Primarily used to train missionaries and traders operating in British West Africa, it remained one of the premier educational establishments, overlooking the docks of Cline Town in Freetown, Sierra Leone. Following the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts and civil unrest in the aftermath of World War II, British colonial policy began to fund a series of secondary and tertiary education institutions. Modeled on the new University of the West Indies, these new universities adopted the residential college dorm typology coupled with the latest modernist architecture designed to enhance climatic comfort.

A new campus was proposed for Fourah Bay, and in contrast to earlier precedents, the architectural approach was to be more humble and less monumental. Following a masterplan by London-based architects Norman and Dawbarn, the much smaller and relatively unknown British practice of Frank Rutter was appointed to design most of the campus buildings. The centerpiece is a large concrete tower named after John F. Kennedy, symbolic of the shifting political posturing for control and influence. Following Independence in 1961 and with increasing technical aid offered to neighboring Ghana and Nigeria from Socialist Eastern European powers, Fourah Bay College demonstrated how these political attempts for influence were directly played out through these newly formed institutions. Fourah Bay College also reveals the African agency in appointing architects and who was able to control the procurement processes and design teams. Rutter was dismissed as 'college architect' by a small contingent of newly qualified Sierra Leonean architects eager to ensure local appointments and architectural expressions were given opportunity. The campus, with its impressive architectural structures and innovative solutions, mirrors the political flux and shifting global power structures of the late 1950s and early 1960s, along with the local agency of Freetown architects and their quest to shape the future.

**KEYWORDS:** Sierra Leone, Freetown, Fourah Bay, Tropical Modernism

**INTRODUCTION:** In 1946, Fourah Bay College in Sierra Leone planned a new campus on the summit of Mount Aureole in the hills of Freetown. Successively commissioning two British-led architectural practices to masterplan this new campus—Norman & Dawbarn (appointed 1952) and Frank E. Rutter & Associates (appointed c1958/9, who remained the college architect until c1966)—the college sought to expand on its missionary training in the old district of Cline Town and transform into a university capable of meeting the demands of the newly emerging nation.

The last twenty years have witnessed a fruitful period for research into the architecture of Western Africa, with scholars such as Le Roux, Uduku, Liscombe, Crinson,

Levin, and Livsey all pioneering research and focusing on educational projects.<sup>1</sup> More recently, Adefola Toyé is undertaking a PhD in collaboration with The UK National Archives to research the architecture of the University of Lagos,<sup>2</sup> Kuukuwa Manful's PhD thesis at SOAS has further considered educational projects and spaces in Ghana, and Adekunle Adeyemo has researched the University of Ife at Obafemi Awolowo University.<sup>3</sup>

Despite this emerging body of important work, Sierra Leone has remained somewhat excluded and overlooked. While Fourah Bay has been of interest to historians of education and African political thought (e.g., Paracka, 2003), the lack of architectural research in Sierra Leone is

perhaps attributable to the conflict that ravaged the country for eleven years (1991-2002), disrupting research at a time when academic interest was rapidly emerging around topics of 'colonial' and 'tropical' architecture.

Equally, the architects operating in Sierra Leone during the late colonial and early independence period were not as well-known nor as well-represented in the professional journals as their more famous and media-conscious counterparts elsewhere in Western Africa. The difficulty in accessing evidence, drawings, biographies, and photographs of projects in Sierra Leone has rendered them almost forgotten and invisible in the architectural history of the region. Even more recent scholarship, such as the excellent *African Modernism: The Architecture of Independence* (Herz et al., 2022) and the encyclopedic six-volume architectural guide *Sub-Saharan Africa* (Meuser and Dalbai, 2021), offer relatively sparse coverage of Sierra Leone, with no mention of Fourah Bay's 20th-century campus. This is clearly not due to a lack of architectural quality and range of buildings there.

There is a significant void in the scholarship, despite the educational history in Sierra Leone predating that of its neighbors. Ayala Levin's recent publication (and expansion of her PhD research) is the major exception and perhaps the start of a new wave of scholarly interest (Levin, 2022).

This paper investigates the particular circumstances around the planning of Fourah Bay's new campus, suggesting that the interplay between colonial officialdom and African agency was decisive in shaping the outcome and that the relative power of the two groups shifted over time and in response to decolonization. As is perhaps to be expected, expatriate architects loom large in the narrative in the years prior to the formal end of British rule in 1961 and are increasingly displaced thereafter. However, the mechanics through which this shift was enacted also point to necessary future research on the role of the 'consultant architect'—a figure often overlooked in architectural historiography. The consultant architect is a specialist role independent of the commissioned architect. They are employed to act on behalf of and as a representative of the client, providing expert advice on complex projects with multi-faceted design components. They can be thought of as a project manager or expert client. In a postcolonial context, the 'architect as client' increasingly questioned and indeed supplanted the expertise of the expatriate architect, thereby creating new kinds of architectural agency.

#### FOURAH BAY'S HISTORICAL MISSION

Fourah Bay College's foundational aim was to train clergy and to aid the proselytizing of the Christian faith in West Africa. Founded by an Anglican missionary organization,

the Church Missionary Society (CMS), the college initially offered degrees in theology. The CMS was a significant entity in the governance of the Sierra Leone colony, being responsible for the operation of many of its prestigious schools—as one commentator noted, "it was not always easy to know when the CMS ended and government began [in 19th century Freetown]" (Lewis, 1954, p. 186). The college became an instrumental component in the broader imperial enterprise as its graduates established CMS schools (including the first secondary school in Nigeria) and 'the bulk of the educated African personnel in the relatively high positions in the colonial service at the time.'<sup>4</sup> It became a particular focus of the Sierra Leone Creole (or Krio) community.

One of the most intensively analyzed and historicized African populations, the Creole, was an affluent, Christian community descended from freed enslaved Africans settled by the British in Freetown during successive waves of migration from 1787 to 1864.<sup>5</sup> Whilst the Creole culture was syncretic, drawing much from Yoruba traditions and practices, the Creole adoption of British mores, manners, and institutions—including Anglicanism—were widely commented on by British writers in the 19th and 20th centuries.<sup>6</sup> The scale and presence of the original buildings of Fourah Bay College reflect the importance of the college to the Creole community [FIGURE 01].

The college was built at Cline Town Wharf from local laterite stone, with a delicate front veranda formed by steel members bolted together. The now ruinous state of



the building has further exposed the steel structure inside. The beams were manufactured by the Glengarnock Iron and Steel Co in Ayrshire, Scotland, and were shipped to Sierra Leone during the construction of the college building. The foundation stone was laid by Governor William Fergusson in 1848. Fergusson was of Scottish-Jamaican parentage and the first student of African descent to study at Edinburgh University.

The old college building became a symbolic beacon to ships arriving in the nearby harbor, and as noted by a colonial government chaplain;

*The white walls of a large and noble building,  
rising in aristocratic loftiness, three good stories  
high, as if by enchantment, from the palm trees  
which embosom it, and displaying its parapets in  
the quiet moonlight, like a structure of fancy, which  
Spenser's pen might not have despised.  
(Lewis, 1954, p. 186)*

Despite the immense prestige of the college and the international recruitment efforts—many of its students coming from the Nigeria and Gold Coast Colonies—the college was not immune to administrative problems, temporary closures, and other challenges. These issues continued into the 20th century, with the UK government conducting reviews of education in the colonies generally and West Africa specifically during the 1940s, which were published as the Asquith and Elliot reports.

#### FOURAH BAY IN THE EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

In both the London and Sierra Leone colonial administrations, there was tension in the management of Fourah Bay. On one hand, colonial administrators professed great admiration for the college, noting its “proud historical tradition [and] hold on Creole sentiment,” on the other hand, they hesitated to invest funds in tertiary education, given the “relatively small population, secondary school output and graduate manpower requirements of Sierra Leone” (Cox, 1967). This reflects the Sierra Leone’s relatively low priority for colonial planners, who instead sought to channel developmental resources into the larger, more populous Gold Coast and Nigeria colonies.<sup>8</sup>

Paradoxically, a blow against the college was the establishment of new tertiary institutions in the 1940s. This “new tide of colonial education,” which saw the foundation of University Colleges at Legon, Ibadan, and Makerere, left Fourah Bay “high and dry,” as it deprived the college of its traditional student base, as many of its distinguished alumni were from the Gold Coast and Nigeria colonies (ANON, 1954).

By 1944, the college had “dwindled to a remnant” of its former glory, with only 17 students and six staff

(ANON, 1954). At the same time, its venerable home at Cline Town Wharf was commandeered by the government to provide accommodation for a proposed expansion to Freetown’s deep-water harbor. Despite the CMS’s efforts to lobby for the site’s return to the college, they were unsuccessful (Paracka, 2003, p. 155).<sup>9</sup> By 1946, the old college building was serving as the headquarters of the Railway Company, and the College was homeless. Accordingly, on June 7, 1946, the Senate of the College passed a motion to investigate:

*The provision of a suitable permanent site for the  
College, the constitution of a new College Council  
fully representative of the Sierra Leone community  
and having administrative powers, the steps which  
ought to be taken to obtain the fullest measure of  
cooperation and support from the Sierra Leone  
Government in the maintenance and development  
of Fourah Bay College.  
(Paracka, 2003, p. 152)*

This move was likely advanced to combat *The British Colonial Secretary’s Dispatch on Modern Education in West Africa* (July 1946), which had advocated for scaling back of the Fourah Bay curriculum in favor of a single university for all ‘British West Africa’ based in Nigeria, and a concomitant downgrading of Fourah Bay’s status to that of a preparatory school (Paracka, 2003, p. 152).

The college was granted a new site up in the hills surrounding Freetown, on the summit of Mount Aureole. Whilst only a short distance from the city, it feels remote, with views overlooking vast forests and yet urban in its compact density. The isolated campus, with residences for the students, certainly invokes the vision pursued at the Ghanaian secondary schools ran by Christian mission organizations (for example, at Akropong, Aburi, St Mary’s, Amedfoze, and Ho) being remote from the temptations and distractions of the town. In Freetown, the Sierra Leone Grammar School adopted the same idea and moved from the city to a much more salubrious 50-acre site at Murray Town.<sup>10</sup>

The College might have also been eager to keep up appearances with the latest developments in neighboring Ghana and Nigeria. The remote and carefully curated campuses with bespoke architecture in the latest fashion must have caused the Fourah Bay senate to pay careful attention. A geographically proximate predecessor was also found in Freetown’s Hill Station, built by the Colonial Government in 1902 for European residence. This mountaintop drive for racial segregation, cooler air, and mosquito-free dwelling was seen as the idealized mode of living. The comparison was not lost on contemporaries, with one British writer noting in the mid-1950s that;

for fifty years the officials have been looking down on Freetown and planning its future good from the quiet of Hill Station. It will do no harm, and probably much good, for trained minds of another kind to look down from Mount Aureole...  
(Lewis, 1954, p. 189)

The proposed site had been in use as an army hospital since the First World War, no doubt selected, as Hill Station had been, for its cool breezes and 'healthy' climate. Despite the incredible challenge of the topography and the poor state of the roads, it was hoped that the cost of constructing the new campus would be minimized by converting the existing hospital buildings on the site (Paracka, 2003, p. 170). By 1954, day-to-day college activities were well established in the hospital's former wards, mess halls, and operating theatres. A lyrical description of the college at this time noted it was "scrappy and untidy [...] but it is alive, it is growing, and tin roofs do not prevent high thinking, even in the West African rains" (Lewis, 1954, p. 188).

More succinctly, an editorial in *The Manchester Guardian* bemoaned Fourah Bay's "fine site but makeshift buildings" in 1954 (ANON, 1954). The same writer noted that the staff looks forward to building an impressive campus at an "early date."

## THE SELECTION OF NORMAN AND DAWBARN

The first campus masterplan (or schematic envisioning, at least) was completed in 1952. The timing is significant. In 1951, legislative changes in Sierra Leone saw the inclusion of African politicians in national decision-making for the first time as part of a power-sharing government with the colonial civil service.<sup>11</sup> These partnership governments were pursued across late colonial West Africa. They were,

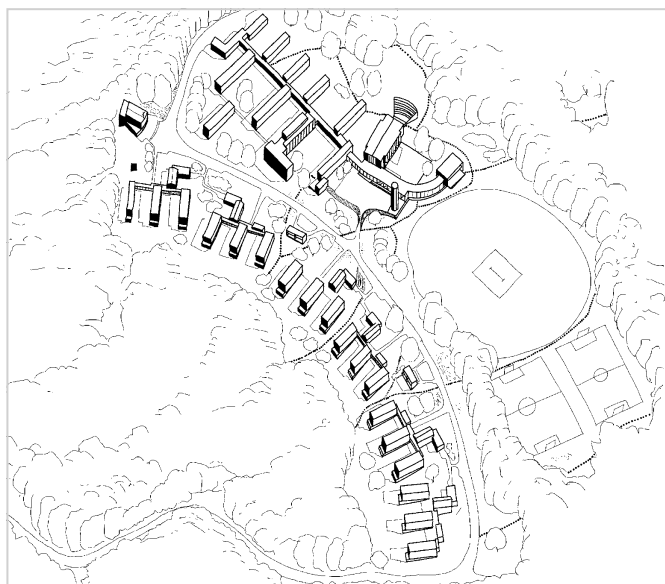
in tandem with the colonial development policies that saw the funding of Fourah Bay's new campus, intended to prolong colonial rule by making "the exercise of power... legitimate, efficient and progressive" (Cooper, 2002). In the specific case of Sierra Leone, the new African cabinet, led by Sir Milton Margai, a doctor from the rural interior and leader of the newly formed Sierra Leone People's Party, charted a cautiously developmentalist approach in close rapprochement with the British.<sup>12</sup>

This partnership government commissioned the British practice Norman and Dawbarn to masterplan the new campus. Established in London by Graham Dawbarn and Nigel Norman in 1934, it grew into a large practice with a growing reputation for education and airport projects. It was most famous for designing the BBC Television Centre in London [FIGURE 02, FIGURE 03].

The surviving plans of Fourah Bay reveal a schematic proposal of interconnected blocks arranged in a triplet formation.<sup>13</sup> Norman and Dawbarn had already designed the University College of the West Indies (UCWI) in Jamaica, which was instrumental in influencing Ibadan, designed by Edwin Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew.<sup>14</sup> Norman and Dawbarn were also active in Eastern Africa, designing various accommodation blocks and faculty at Makerere in Uganda with its distinct brickwork, and parts of the University of Dar es Salam in Tanzania, featuring a much more rugged concrete finish.<sup>15</sup>

Norman and Dawbarn's appointment reveals much about the circulation of knowledge, expertise, and, crucially, the recognition of expertise in imperial frames. In February 1951, when Fourah Bay College indicated their intention to engage an architect to "examine the site [and] to advise on the type of buildings to be erected," the Governor of the Sierra Leone colony wrote to the Colonial Office to ask for a "list of suitable architects [...] from which

02 Norman and Dawbarn Schematic Plan for Fourah Bay College. © UK National Archive, CO 1045/1272, 1952 [Redrawn by authors, 2023].



03 The University College of the West Indies, Special Collections and Archives, University of Liverpool D688/2/1/8 c.1950. © Private Collection, No date.



the college council could make its selection" (Governor of Sierra Leone, 1951). The resulting process would, however, reveal how little agency the College Council had in the selection of their architect.

The college's request was passed to the Crown Agents for Overseas Development, and it was this agency who compiled the list of architects deemed suitable for the task. This process resulted in shortlisting of four practices:

- Norman & Dawnbarn, 'the architects for the University College of the West Indies'
- Adam, Holden & Pearson, best known for Holden's work for the University of London but who had also recently been contracted to design a hospital in the Tanganika Protectorate.
- Robert Atkinson, who had undertaken government commissions in Gibraltar and were in talks to undertake 'the possible rebuilding of Government Offices' of the Gold Coast Government, and
- Nicholas & Dixon Spain, 'a sound firm of good reputation,' who had also undertaken hospital work in Singapore (Crown Agents for Overseas Development, 1951).

In each case, the Crown Agents emphasized the practice's ability to work in colonial contexts, even if these were in vastly different locations from the summit of Mount Aureole. A meeting of the Advisory Committee on Colonial Colleges of Arts, Science and Technology resulted in the addition of another name to the list: Seeley & Paget.<sup>16</sup> Based in a rambling Tudor mansion on London's Cloth Fair, Seeley & Paget were an eccentric choice for such a commission, as the practice was a small one best known for its historicist church and country houses work and the design of neo-Georgian follies for establishment clients.<sup>17</sup> The practice was nonetheless praised for its "good achievements" in the field of educational buildings in England, for their "economical" design of a training college at Norwich, and the file also noted approvingly that the practice acted as in-house architects to Eton, the Charterhouse School and Bede College, a constituent college of Durham University (Secretary of State of Sierra Leone, 1951). The historical links between Durham and Fourah Bay might have contributed to the Seeley & Paget's inclusion, although the Council of the Church Training Colleges, an Anglican body and the client for the partnership's college building at Norwich, also wrote in favor of the practice's inclusion (Reverend Stanford, 1951).<sup>18</sup>

We can only speculate on what kind of neo-Georgian vision Seely & Paget held for the summit of Mount Aureole. For, while it was noted that Seely & Paget were "keen to enter the colonial field and confident in its ability to do so effectively," the favored practice from the outset was clearly Norman and Dawbarn (Reverend Standford, 1951).

Both the Crown Agents and members of the Advisory Committee on Colonial Colleges viewed Norman & Dawbarn's successful completion of the University College of the West Indies favorably. This was a substantial job—the brief for which had included seven science departments, an arts lecture hall, a library, a hospital, an institute for social research, three halls of residence for students and one for nurses, and 50 staff bungalows on a 700-acre hill-top site near Kingston, Jamaica (ANON, 1954).<sup>19</sup>

These buildings were arranged in a dispersed layout across the site, allowing for 'the free circulation of air to all buildings and the avoidance of reflected heat and glare,' although a degree of formality was included by grouping the library, registry, senate house and a proposed great hall in a tighter formation at the center of the site, encircled by a circular road and approached by a long straight avenue.<sup>20</sup> Beyond this, the student housing, sciences and arts blocks were separately planned across the site. The eight departments of the science school, for example, were planned in individual blocks arranged in parallel formation following the contours of the site connected by covered walkways, creating one unified structure. Tectonically, the buildings were unpretentiously modernist, although variety in texture was introduced through the judicious use of local rubble stone. This is shown with brio in Gordon Cullen's rendering of the Great Hall Complex.

The site of the University College of the West Indies shared similarities with that of Fourah Bay; both were mountainous and partially used as army facilities, and the University College design produced by Norman and Dawbarn had obvious formal qualities to recommend it: not least the contrast between formality and openness in its site planning, and the elegant juxtaposition of rubble work and smoothly rendered and cast concrete throughout.

What truly really recommended Norman and Dawbarn's work at the University College of the West Indies was the partnership's exceptional ability for budgetary control. Several times, Norman and Dawbarn were commended by Colonial Office and Crown Agent officials for their "brilliant job in keeping within the estimates," something also singled out for praise by no less august an authority as *The Architectural Review*.<sup>21</sup>

The College Senate of Fourah Bay favored the appointment of an architect with West African experience—namely Richard Nickson, who, by the early 1950s, had a clutch of religious and educational commissions in the Gold Coast and Nigeria colonies to his credit.<sup>22</sup> However, it was the quantifiable experience of Norman and Dawbarn that mattered to the Colonial Office, despite the firm had no experience of working in West Africa.

For colonial officials, the ability to keep to the budget on a university commission in the West Indies was enough

to ensure that the practice was the first choice to design a university several thousand miles away on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean. As the cost of the architect was covered by Colonial Development and Welfare funds, the view of the Colonial Office prevailed over the opinions of Fourah Bay College itself, and in the summer of 1951, Norman and Dawbarn were appointed to produce a sketch-scheme for the site.<sup>23</sup>

Although the bulk of the funding was to come from CDW funds, there are suggestions that private finance was also sought. The United Africa Company's Frederick Pedler considered the company acting as guarantor for a loan to Fourah Bay College.<sup>24</sup> Further funding was also provided by the Sierra Leone Development Company (also partially owned by UAC), which gifted £25,000 for the construction of an engineering laboratory known as "Delco Laboratory"<sup>25</sup>, and the Diamond Corporation, an international diamond exchange controlled by De Beers, donated funds to build the school of Geography and Geology.<sup>26</sup> These large corporations were eager to be associated with the new facility, attempting to demonstrate their ongoing financial commitment to the region and to display a benevolence that would enhance public relations. This was not an uncommon practice for private businesses in the region, who often sought to align themselves with the developmentalist agendas of both late colonial and post-independence nationalist regimes.<sup>27</sup>

### NORMAN & DAWBARN FOURAH BAY MASTERPLAN

If a full brief to Norman and Dawbarn was issued, it has not survived in either the British or Sierra Leonean National Archives. However, a schedule of accommodation circulated to the practice before its appointment noted the need for an administrative and general purposes block and of residential accommodation for students. A further amendment to this list included requirements for a college chapel, although curiously, no mention was made of the need for a mosque, which might lend credence to the long-running assertion that Fourah Bay was an institution dominated by the city's Christian Creole elite. The inclusion of space for the teaching of engineering, technology, and the sciences reflects the expansion of Fourah Bay's curriculum, away from the arts and theology program that had defined its teaching program in the 19th and early 20th centuries to the technical subjects required for an independent state. This reflects the importance that nationalist politicians placed on the university as part of the necessary infrastructure of independence and might suggest that African ministers in the partnership government were thinking of how Fourah Bay could support a post-independent Sierra Leone by training technical staff to work in its administration.<sup>28</sup> As noted by Daniel Paracka (2003), the historian

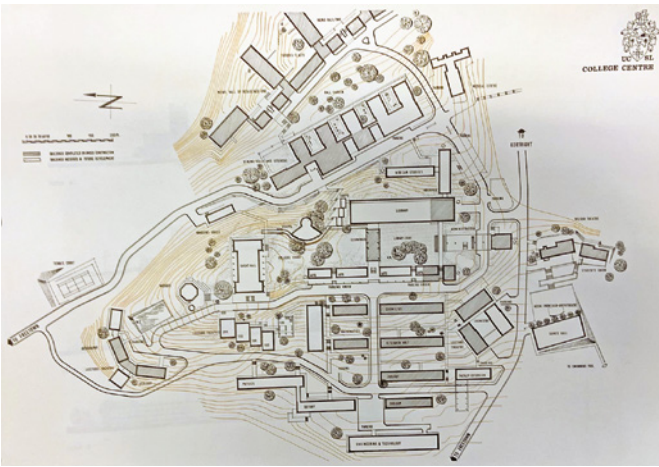
of Fourah Bay's educational program, "Ownership, self-reliance, and relevance thus emerged, at least for Leoneans, as important curricular themes' in the period of decolonization" (p. 184).

The first sketch plans produced by Norman and Dawbarn provided for teaching departments to the north of the site, accommodated in parallel two and three-story blocks, connected by a long spine of covered walkway, a beefed-up version of the sciences school provided at Kingston. At the southern end of this arrangement, a three-story great hall with an external amphitheater and a water tower served as a focal point. Student residences were situated in a curved line running from the northwest to the southwest of the site, on a lower contour line than the teaching accommodation. These were organized in eighteen three-story blocks, arranged in groups of three parallel blocks, and again connected by covered walkways.

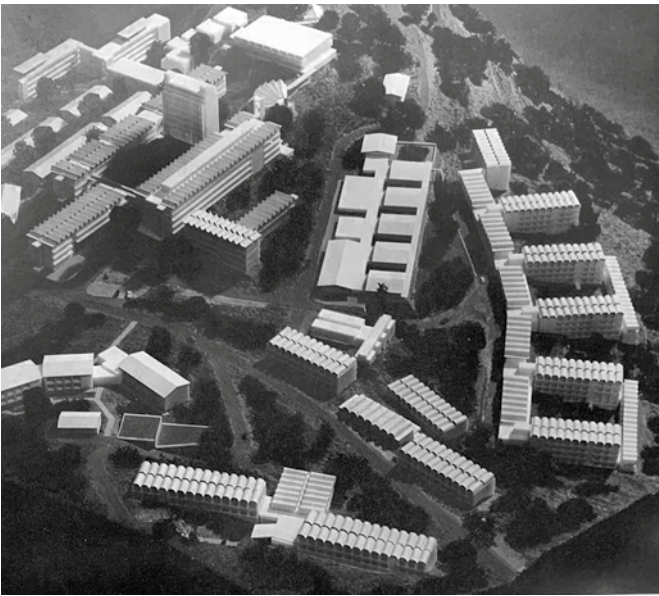
The student residences and the teaching accommodation were further separated by a curved road leading to the college chapel. In plan, this arrangement resembles two large megastructures arranged around central spines. However, the low height of the buildings and the open space between them would have had quite a different and much more gentle effect had it been constructed in this manner.

Although the detailing is schematic, it appeared that plainness was the order of the day, for the architects appear to have been counseled against the provision of "monumental buildings and the use of stylistic architectural detail," on which, a colonial civil servant noted (perhaps in reference to Maxwell Fry and Jane Drew), "there has sometimes been undue extravagance in the past" (Atkinson, 1950). Nevertheless, the plan was welcomed in Freetown. A columnist in the West Africa newspaper noted that, "these are excellent plans in a style between the too solid respectability of the University of the Gold Coast and the South Bank Fantasy and impermanence of the University College, Ibadan" (Matchett, 1954).

A reduced version of this plan was prepared in the mid-1950s and illustrated in the government's official statistical guide to Sierra Leone of 1958.<sup>29</sup> This retained a similar arrangement of teaching blocks to the first plan but placed this in a denser relationship, with a large block hosting the administrative functions, library, extra-mural department, and chapel. Much less provision for student housing was included, and the random placement of the Geography Department and Students Union off the main axis of the teaching spaces suggests the permanent retention of pre-existing buildings. The absence of this provision in the first masterplan suggests that Norman and Dawbarn's vision for the site had proven too costly.



04 Rutter's development plan. © 1962 Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone: Development Plan and Related Papers. The National Archives of the UK (TNA): CO 1045/827.



05 Rutter's development plan model. © 1962 Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone: Development Plan and Related Papers. The National Archives of the UK (TNA): CO 1045/827.



06 John F. Kennedy Building, Model. © 1962 Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone: Development Plan and Related Papers. The National Archives of the UK (TNA): CO 1045/827.

## FRANK RUTTER AND ASSOCIATES

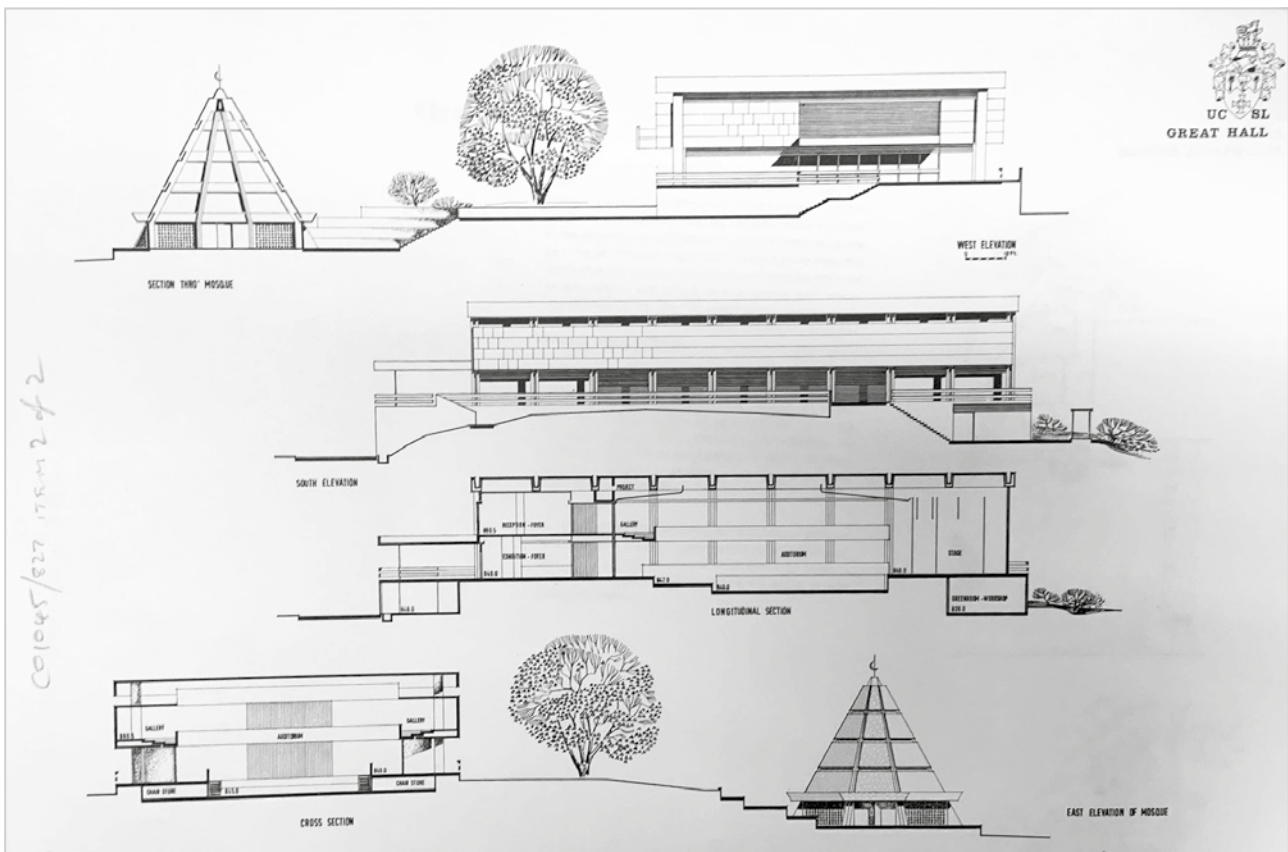
Within the large international business of Norman and Dawbarn, a small faction was ready to establish their own practice. Whether this was a 'break-away' client snatch or received the blessings of Norman and Dawbarn, we don't know, but Frank Mowbray Rutter (1911-1989) was well positioned with his international connections and previous 'tropical' and education-design experience. He established his practice, having also worked for Maxwell Fry at Impington Village College and Fry and Drew at Ibadan University. In addition to working on Fourah Bay, Rutter had also secured commissions in Guyana at that time.

Rutter joined Norman and Dawbarn in c1950/1951, for his name was included in the original contract Norman and Dawbarn signed in 1952,<sup>30</sup> but when he broke away is unclear. It seems extraordinary that the conservative and cost-conscious clients should take a chance on a new practice, especially in light of the careful deliberations that took place. Perhaps it was Rutter's experience with Fry and then Norman and Dawbarn that convinced the client body, and as a new practice, he may have been able to offer savings on the professional fees. Joining Rutter were two associates, Boris Fijalkowski (1924-2015) and Ken Draper (1932-2017), both of whom had also worked for Norman and Dawbarn. Fijalkowski completed his architectural studies at Kensington, West London. He graduated around 1951.<sup>31</sup> Ken Draper studied at Regent Street Polytechnic and eventually went on to become head of BDP.<sup>32</sup>

## FRANK RUTTER'S DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1958

Rutter's development plan set out his vision for the flat summit of Mount Aureol as the principal focus of the college. The site was about 260 m above sea level, with subsidiary development of student and staff housing on two slightly higher plateaus and lining the main road up the mountain from Freetown [FIGURE 04, FIGURE 05, FIGURE 06].

At the center of the campus summit, Rutter proposed a 'crown' of buildings arranged around two courtyards: 'the College Centre'. The first of these, Library Court, was to be enclosed by the four-story library to the west, administration buildings to the south, a long three-story block to the west, and the John F. Kennedy Tower, an eight-story slab block to the north. These last two buildings jointly housed the Department of Economic Studies, which included the Faculties of Law and Public Administration, and which accounted for over a third of the College's student body, something that perhaps justified its prominence in the composition, for the John F. Kennedy Building was the tallest building designed for the campus, as well as being located at its very center, its name reveals the source of its funds, the United States Agency for International



07 Proposed mosque, Rutter. © 1962 Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone: Development Plan and Related Papers. The National Archives of the UK (TNA): CO 1045/827.

Development, which had donated \$250,000 for the construction of facilities to teach economics, education, and science in 1962 (Paracka, 2003, p. 176). This can be read as an attempt by the United States to ensure that decolonizing Sierra Leone was aligned with American ideology, as Edward Berman has suggested.<sup>33</sup> However, this also suggests much about the ideological position prevailing in Sierra Leone at the time. Whilst its close neighbors, Ghana and Guinea, sought to break ties with their former colonial master through expanded diplomacy with the socialist world, Sir Milton Margai and his Sierra Leone People's Party instead sought to retain rapprochement with Britain and the United States through an 'open door policy' of investment from the capitalist west.<sup>34</sup> The gift of an economics department by the United States, therefore, aligns as much with political and economic ideological currents in Sierra Leone as with any attempt at global hegemony by the United States.

Beyond the Kennedy tower, a 'larger and less formal' College Court was proposed. This was to be closed by a Great Hall—a multipurpose space designed for degree ceremonies, graduation balls, and theatrical productions, "a building of special importance [it] should possess an intrinsic dignity in keeping with the scale of the functions that will centre around it" (Rutter, n.d.).

Accordingly, the Great Hall was to be located at the highest point of the site, perhaps in emulation of that at the University of Ghana, where the axial arrangement terminates at the Great Hall atop a high hill. To the north of the Great Hall, and connected to it by cloisters, a hexagonal

mosque with a pyramidal roof was planned in reference to the adobe pyramidal minaret of the Larabanga Mosque in Ghana, one of the oldest in West Africa [FIGURE 07].

Rutter carefully included a mihrab and space for ablutions in the building plans, yet interestingly, a minaret is shown on the plan but not in sectional views of the complex. A multi-denominational Christian chapel was planned to the East of the Great Hall, like the mosque, it was to be connected to it by cloisters. The site of the chapel was steeply sloped, and Rutter made the most of this by creating a fan-shaped arrangement of pews flowing down the hillside from the cloister to an altar below. The arrangement of chapel, mosque, and Great Hall was sophisticated, with the chapel and the mosque balancing each other in the composition, thereby signaling "the impact made upon Africa by these two great religions" (Rutter, n.d.). This also reflects changing political realities in Sierra Leone at that time. The Sierra Leone People's Party, leading the country in partnership with the colonial regime, drew its support from the Islamic rural interior rather than Creole-dominated Freetown. Indeed, the party positioned itself in opposition to Creole rather than colonial domination; as John Hatch, a British academic and Fourah Bay administrator, noted, "it was to combat creole political supremacy rather than to abolish British political rule, that the SLPP was formed" (Paracka, 2003, p. 166). The inclusion of such a sophisticated mosque design, with its clear references to Larabanga and the Islamic vernacular architecture of the region, illustrates the political desire to introduce a greater population of students from the





08 Halls of Residence. © 1964, Images of Education in Sierra Leone, The National Archives of the UK (TNA) INF 10/303.

Islamic rural provinces into the Fourah Bay student body and thence into positions in future administrative positions, displacing the dominance of the Creole population both within the Fourah Bay student body and the administration of Sierra Leone as a whole.<sup>35</sup>

Library Court was largely built as planned, albeit with smaller buildings to the east, west, and south. But the ambitious arrangement of chapel, mosque, great hall, and cloister was not enacted, although a remnant of the cloister can be seen in the vaulted undercroft of the John F. Kennedy building. Despite being only partially built, the college center successfully fulfills its function as a *stadtkrone* for the campus: Rutter outlined his ambition that the center would provide,

*a clearly defined group of buildings giving a feeling of enclosure and producing a stimulating atmosphere [...] at the same time, the buildings are designed to form a crown to Mount Aureol and to dominate the many other separate blocks clustered around the upper slopes of the hill [and be] silhouetted against the sky from below in Freetown”*  
(Rutter, n.d.).



10 Fourah Bay Library. © 1964, Images of Education in Sierra Leone, The National Archives of the UK (TNA) INF 10/303.



09 Halls of Residence. © Paul Robinson, 2023.

Whilst the dense tree growth of the site renders the last ambition moot, the composition of buildings at the summit of the site, clustered around the John F. Kennedy Building, does form a successful focus for the campus as a whole [FIGURE 04].

To the immediate west of the college center, the pure and applied sciences were housed in a series of parallel blocks stepping down the contours of the hillside—an arrangement carried over from Norman and Dawbarn’s masterplan for the site, perhaps as it made use of the foundations and concrete bases of pre-existing buildings on the site. Arts departments were provided in smaller, generally free-standing buildings arranged to the north of the site, away from the central area, each containing staff offices and seminar rooms [FIGURE 08, FIGURE 09].

The men’s student halls are located to the east of the college center, on the precipitous edge of the site. They are symbolically orientated towards the old site of Fourah Bay College at Cline Town. These residences are some of the College’s boldest architectural statements. Carefully planned, they provide an individual study bedroom and balcony to each student, with laundry and bathroom facilities per 20 students. They were also furnished with a



11 Fourah Bay Library. © 1964, Images of Education in Sierra Leone, The National Archives of the UK (TNA) INF 10/303.

common room, senior common room, and reading room for each hall of 150 students.

On the Oxford model, tutors' flats were also provided on site, with bedrooms for two or three tutors accessible from shared living rooms. The blocks of residences varied in height from two to six stories, providing variety and rhythm. Their material and form were the most brutalist on the campus, with the walls and balconies in crisply cast concrete, rising to thin shell-vaulted rooflines—perhaps in emulation of London's Barbican or a heavier version of Basil Spence's Sussex University? [FIGURE 10, FIGURE 11].

A separate set of women's residences were located to the south of the site. Like the men's residences, these provided individual study bedrooms with balconies. However, the overall architectural expression was simpler—the blocks were three-story cubic compositions, without the cast-concrete shell roofs of the men's residences, although the elaborately patterned cast concrete balcony rails and use of local rubble stone illustrated in the development plan show a debt to Fry and Drew, an influence not otherwise widely evident in the campus. Staff housing was also provided, in small blocks of flats for junior staff and larger free-standing villas for senior staff—the elegant renderings of which, featuring modernist furniture and deck chairs, suggest a continuity of colonial luxury living for the senior staff. The principal of Fourah Bay College, Davidson Nichol, publically fulminated against such excesses in 1960, when he noted that "University educated Africans like ourselves should cease to regard themselves as a privileged class entitled to a car, furnished quarters, refrigerators and servants as soon as they graduate" (Paracka, 2003, p. 177). However, the need to secure appointments of expatriate staff to fill Fourah Bay's teaching needs ensured that such provisions were perceived as a necessity by the University's planners.<sup>36</sup>

The proposal was both a bold and pragmatic response to the site, making use of existing rocky outcrops and tree cover to add variety and texture, utilizing the topography, rejecting overly formal or axial arrangements, even converting and retaining existing buildings in order to keep costs low, and existing tree coverage and planting to provide shade.

In the end, nothing like the whole of this masterplan was constructed. The demography of Sierra Leone could not support a college of the scale envisioned: "there are not enough children school, not enough sixth forms, and consequently not a sufficient flow of students for Fourah Bay College" (British High Commission, 1964). Whilst the foundation of new higher education institutions in Sierra Leone (such as a teacher training college and an agricultural institute at Njala) and across post-colonial Nigeria and Ghana also deprived FBC of some of its original intake. Indeed, there is a slight pathos to the 1963 masterplan—which illustrated both the progress on the site to that date and the projections for the campus to 1969—although much of the projected development would not come to pass.

Yet, the campus does have a unified architectural language. The buildings unite similar scales, materials, and forms; a lively approach to roof detailing (a practical response to the heavy rainwater during the rainy season) is a particularly unique feature. Whilst the limited use of rubble work and precast concrete hints at the influence of Fry and Drew, generally, the massing is heavier throughout and the detailing more rugged than much of the duo's work. Even the John F. Kennedy Building, the most characteristically tropical modernist building on the site, has an austerity and rectilinearity to it that is quite unlike Fry and Drew's tendency to 'too much lace.' [FIGURE 12, FIGURE 13].



12 John F. Kennedy Building, Piloti detail. © Paul Robinson, 2023.



13 Fourah Bay Campus topography. © Paul Robinson, 2023.

## THE BUILDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE 1965

The Rutter plan was initially executed at a good pace, but progress suffered due to a lack of on-site supervision and problems in appointing a site architect. The large campus project required rapid and informed decision-making from the client body council, too. The College Council established a Building Advisory Committee in June 1965, made up of college staff and professionals from the Ministry of Works and the Ministry of Housing and Country Planning. The Ministry of Works was represented by Joseph Ransford Jarrett-Yaskey (1924-?), whilst Housing and Country Planning was represented by Reuben Johnson Oluwole Wright (1914-1990), both Sierra Leonean architects

[FIGURE 14].<sup>37</sup>

The Advisory Committee developed into a powerful group capable of not only monitoring process and decision-making but also holding Rutter to account. The committee's minutes are characteristically sparse but to the point. In the first meeting attended by the Ministry personnel, the committee resolved that, The monopoly of one Architect exercising absolute rights over the physical development of the College for an unspecified [sic] period, does not allow room for competition. And there is no justifiable reason why this monopoly should be continued. Consideration should be given to Architects prepared to establish a local office, employ local people, and contribute to local taxes from fees earned. Experience of existing arrangements prove that work suffers from protracted correspondence and lack of direct supervision (Building Advisory Committee, 1965).

They recommended that the college establish a building department to undertake design and supervision, and/or designs are tendered on a competitive basis. They recognized that in the early period, when a development plan was required, retaining an architect 'at a distance' was a sensible approach, but the current arrangement was no longer serving the college (or the wider development of architecture in the city).



14 Reuben Johnson Oluwole Wright. © Private Collection, date unknown, probably c. late 1960s.

It's an interesting scenario, as a single practice could deliver a unified vision and benefit from certain economies of scale, contractual agreements, and increasing efficiency, but at the same time, the college was beholden to a particular approach, and communication problems were compounded. There were also clearly ideological reasons and a desire for local practices to be given the opportunity.

The two representatives from the Ministries were experienced architectural practitioners as well as civil servants. They both received civic awards in recognition of their work. Reuben Johnson Oluwole Wright was the first Sierra Leonean to be a qualified architect—possibly the first Black member of the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA). He studied at Edinburgh College of Art from 1943 and worked in Scotland while undertaking a Town and Country Planning Diploma. He returned to Freetown in 1951 to a position in the Civil Service and was President of the Institute of Sierra Leonean Architects. He became Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Housing and Planning, responsible for building regulation and planning policy, and also collaborated with Nickson and Borys on their municipal office building in Freetown.

Joseph Ransford Jarrett-Yaskey was chief architect at the Ministry of Works. During his time in office, he designed the Freetown Library in 1963 and the Sierra Leone Central Bank in 1964, both with a distinctive honeycomb brise-soleil. On the occasions that Jarrett-Yaskey could not attend committee meetings, Abdul Rahman Mahdi (1919-?) deputized. Mahdi attended the Department of Tropical Architecture at the Architectural Association, London, pursuing the 'Educational Building in the Tropics' strand in 1964-65. The studentship was funded by UK technical assistance. Mahdi's earlier training was at the PWD technical school in Lagos, and evening classes at Hammersmith School of Building, Arts, and Crafts in London whilst working in practice during the daytime.

Clearly, capable and highly skilled designers were locally available, and it must have irked them that, in the first few years of independence, architects from the former colonial country were recipients of these prestigious projects. Based hereupon the college transitioned away from using Rutter as each of the buildings he had designed (and been paid for) was completed. Furthermore, the college was informed it was unlikely to receive further funding from the British High Commission and that important departments such as African Studies might have to be scaled back to suit (Building Advisory Committee, 1965).

The committee made recommendations on who might be appointed locally. This still included expatriate British firms, but those who had established offices in Sierra Leone; to a degree transgressing the political-colonial

relations as they built up networks of collaborators and clients. The committee's list included McElroy and Pethybridge,<sup>38</sup> Nickson and Borys, and a consortium of Ministry Architects, including committee members Mahdi, Jarret-Yaskey, and Oluwole Wright (who also minuted they were entitled to professional fees) (Building Advisory Committee, 1966).

## THE INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES

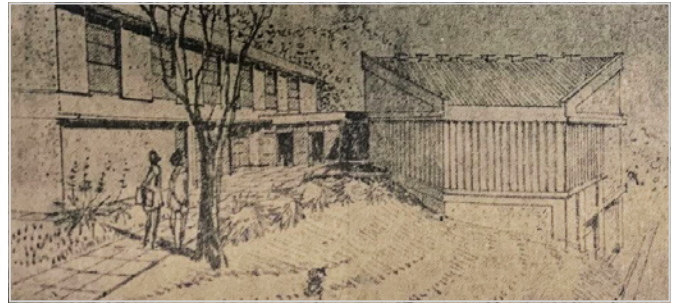
Just south of the library, connected to it by an external staircase, sits the Institute of African Studies building. It is one of the last buildings designed on the campus site by Rutter, and one of the smallest. The building reveals much about the politically charged nature of university development in the immediate post-independence period<sup>39</sup>

[FIGURE 15, FIGURE 16].

By the mid-1960s, Fourah Bay's reputation as a Creole institution, dominated by the "bookish, pedantic and lily-handed", providing a "British university education, stiff, unbending and unrelated to the needs of Africa," led by a "subdued and at times almost mystic" principal, Davidson Nichol, was becoming a political liability (Dunhill, 1964).<sup>40</sup> This reputation relied on both the long history of the college, deeply intertwined with the Creole identity, and the fact that Creoles and expatriates dominated the staff roster for some years after independence: Nichol himself was both a Creole by birth and a former Cambridge don, who came to Fourah Bay with the 'blessings' of the Colonial Office in 1960 (Paracka, 2003, p. 171). But Fourah Bay's remote location, high above the city and the interior, atop a natural ivory tower of sorts, can only have contributed to this view (Stevens, 1984).<sup>41</sup>

The institution of new departments, teaching law, medicine, and midwifery, might be read as a challenge to this reputation. However, Fourah Bay College's pre-eminence in Sierra Leone continued to be challenged by two new institutions—the Milton Margai Technical University at Goderich, which had grown out of Fourah Bay's satellite Teacher Training College (also designed by Rutter), and the Njala Institute.<sup>42</sup>

The Njala Institute was a new foundation, opened with US overseas aid funding and the support of the University of Illinois. It was located on two campuses at Njala and Bo, in the largely Muslim rural Sierra Leonean interior. Its curriculum was originally intended to focus mainly on agronomy, but it quickly added supplementary courses. A British civil servant noted a tendency to look down on the Njala Institute as "brash, inarticulate and horny-handed," perhaps with a degree of projection given the college's American connections (Dunhill, 1964). But Njala's rise not only threatened "overlapping institutions, drift, different educational structures," it was also an explicitly political



15 Sketch of the Institute of African Studies, 1966. © 1966 "Institute of African Studies" Brochure produced by Fourah Bay College, held in Fourah Bay College Correspondence and papers 1949–1969, the National Archives of the UK (TNA): Co 1045/1104



16 Institute of African Studies. © Paul Robinson, 2023.

threat to Fourah Bay (High Commissioner, 1964). Not only might it offer a more developmentally focussed education than that on offer at Fourah Bay, something likely to be looked on favorably by the government, but as the "provinces (tribal) answer to (Creole) Fourah Bay", Njala found automatic favor with the Sierra Leone People's Party led government, which drew much of its support from the traditional rulers of the country's rural interior (High Commissioner, 1964).

In the early 1970s, this issue was circumvented by the creation of a Federal University of Sierra Leone, in which both Fourah Bay and Njala would co-exist as constituent colleges. In the mid-1960s, Fourah Bay's solution was the new Institute of African Studies.

The institute was developed to address several interlocking agendas. For Fourah Bay's leadership, and especially its President Davidson Nichol, the African Studies Institute provided a means to both unite disciplinarily distinct research on African subjects under one roof whilst also fostering a pan-Africanist approach to pedagogy by offering a physical setting for colloquia of African scholars and university administrators from across the region and, indeed, the continent as a whole. For the British Government, who offered partial funding for the institute's construction, it was also intended to serve as a 'bridge' between Fourah Bay and the government, providing both

a physical space and an intellectual climate for the promulgation of discussion on “economic and development planning matters,” between academic staff at Fourah Bay and government officials and politicians (Dunhill, 1964). Plans for the institute were positively received by both the Ministry of Education and the Development Secretary. As its steering committee included a representative from the Njala Institute, it offered a nascent arena for cooperation between the two rival colleges (Dunhill, 1964). Whilst it is tempting to also see the development of the institute as a reflection of the Africanisation of the college lectureship, this seems unlikely. The validity of African studies as a discipline was often embraced by British and American scholars and challenged by African academics (Paracka, 2003). These debates were present at Fourah Bay, where the Creole theology lecturer Henry Sawyerr, for example, felt that, instead of a distinct department, “every discipline—English, History, Theology— should so organise its programmes of teaching and study that material related to African life provides integral aspects of all the teaching done in University departments in Africa (Paracka, 2003, p. 183).

But the institute also reflected the realpolitik of decolonization. The capital cost of the building was met through a gift from the Gulbenkain Foundation and also from British aid funding, gifted by the British largely for reasons of prestige. Having extensively invested “time and energy” in Fourah Bay, British and Commonwealth officials were unwilling to see the college become “dangerously insulated and remote from events nearer sea-level” (Dunhill, 1964).<sup>43</sup> Accordingly, the new institute was given vigorous support from the British Government and the British Council in the hope it would inject ‘relevance’ to Fourah Bay’s operations (Cox, 1967).

The site for the building was carefully chosen for both practical and symbolic reasons, in close communication with the library but on the “lower (town) side ... in order to ensure ease of access to Freetown,” and the government ministries and secretariats located there (Dunhill, 1964). Spatially, its program was rather simple: the brief provided for staff offices, seminar rooms, and space for a small specialist book collection, with the hope that construction could be carried out for £25,000 or less. Yet, given the politically charged nature of its work, the building, though “modest”, was also intended to “serve as a focal point” on the campus (Dunhill, 1964).<sup>44</sup>

Rutter responded to this brief with brio, producing a small but vibrant building with an expressively hexagonal lecture hall block and a free-standing block containing seminar rooms, separated by a monumental external staircase that connects the complex to the library. In a surprisingly Aalto-esque gesture, this staircase comes to a triangular point, lending the composition a hint of Saynatsalo, but

here translated into the tropical high forest. The building served its function as a focal point well, for Rutter’s perspective views were used to illustrate college promotional material in the late 1960s.

## CONCLUSIONS

The story of Fourah Bay College and its development reflects the country’s political shifts, power structures, and certain cultural and educational ambitions. From the small college primarily serving theological training to a modern campus with a broader remit was part of a wider development and modernization agenda that was echoed throughout West Africa and further afield in other (former) colonial territories. Equally, these vast building programs on challenging and remote sites became technological tests requiring expensive foreign advice and expertise—as well as imported materials, machines, plants, and products. The development of the campuses allowed the colonial enterprise to continue well into the post-colonial period under the guise of capacity-building whilst furthering the colonial education model and approach.

Architecturally, Fourah Bay presents an important collection of work that should feature more prominently within the canon of mid-century Tropical Modernism and be considered part of the nation-building narrative in West Africa. Fourah Bay complicates the story of education provision in West Africa, as the universities in Nigeria and Ghana were often positioned as prerequisites for political independence, yet Sierra Leone was already equipped with these facilities and means. The architecture deployed on these projects was often celebratory and triumphant; it was required to deliver a message of creativity and independent thought and be at the forefront of cultural vision. Yet, at Fourah Bay, unlike in Ghana and Nigeria, the architectural ‘pedigree’ was less prominent. Whether this was because of the various ‘problems’ encountered with working with the likes of Fry and Drew and James Cubitt (such as construction and communication issues) or because Fourah Bay was built slightly later and the emphasis was on a simpler layout, with only the Kennedy building seeking any special attention. Despite the desire to avoid architectural excesses, the overseas investment and named association with the American funders shaped the design and its ambition.

The paper shows how this approach was successfully contested and challenged by local architects who had received the same standard of education (if not greater) than the architects appointed through the colonial administrative machinery. The local architects secured important positions and authority within the Sierra Leonean Civil Service and were able to advise, shape policy, and hold to account the procurement and design practices

operating at that time. Unlike in Ghana (and to a lesser extent Nigeria), they were not supported by or collaborating with architects from socialist countries. They adopted a position based on hard commercial decisions rather than aesthetic or stylistic terms—appealing against the ‘monopoly’ and taxation implications of employing Rutter; a familiar argument when dealing with businesses in the quest for political independence and the ongoing decolonizing process.

As the College approaches its 200-year anniversary, it remains incomplete, a work-in-progress rather than a finished product; a fresh wave of expansion commences, including a new school of architecture, and fresh hope for a reimagined campus.

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- 2 <https://transnationalarchitecture.group/2022/04/06/phd-researcher-profile-adefolatomiwa-toye>
- 3 <https://www.africanstatearchitecture.co.uk/kuukuwa-manful>. Thank you to the anonymous reviewer for informing us of Adekunle Adeyemo's work.
- 4 See the UNESCO tentative list for Sierra Leone, <https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/5744/>.
- 5 Bangura, 2017 quotes James Thayer, 'it is hard to find a single ethnic group on which so much scholarly effort, mostly of an historical nature, has been expended.' James Steel Thayer, "A Dissenting View of Creole Culture in Sierra Leone." *Cahiers D'Études Africaines* 31, no. 121/122 (1991): p. 251.
- 6 See, for example, Spitzer, L. (1974). The Creole of Sierra Leone: Responses to Colonialism 1870-1914. The University of Wisconsin Press, Porter, A. (1963). Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society. Oxford University Press, and the various books written by Christopher Fyfe, a colonial administrator turned historian, who can justly be described as a Creolist for his repeated studies of the importance of the group. See, for example, Sierra Leone: Two Centuries of Intellectual Life, and Sierra Leone: A History. For a more considered view, see Bangura (op cit) and Daniel Paracka's history of Fourah Bay College.
- 7 [Lewis, 186] this quote suggests that the college buildings were once lime washed or painted white, although this is not evident in historic photographs of the building.
- 8 See, for example, Letter from Sir Maurice Dorman to Lord Reith 14th June 1958, UK National Archives, CO852/1604
- 9 See also Maxwell Fry and K W Farms, 'Townplanning scheme for Freetown', Accra, Government Press Gold Coast, 1944.
- 10 The Grammar School used the proceeds from the sale of the valuable land in the city at Regent Square (now Lightfoot Boston Street), to buy the new site.
- 11 For an account of the specifics of these legislative changes see, John Cartwright, Political Leadership in Sierra Leone (London: 1978).
- 12 Margai was a notably conservative and pro-British leader.
- 13 See UK National Archives CO 1045/1272.
- 14 See Suzanne Francis-Brown & Peter Francis (2019) Norman & Dawbarn, the UCWI, and Tropical Modernist Architecture in Jamaica, *Caribbean Quarterly*, 65:1, 27-56, DOI: 10.1080/00086495.2019.1565219 and Iain Jackson (2013) Tropical Architecture and the West Indies: from military advances and tropical medicine, to Robert Gardner-Medwin and the networks of tropical modernism, *The Journal of Architecture*, 18:2, 167-195, DOI: 10.1080/13602365.2013.781202
- 15 They also designed the University of Malta (designed in 1961, and built from 1964).
- 16 Referred to in the file as both Seeley & Paget and Mottistone & Paget, as Seeley was the 2nd Baron Mottistone.
- 17 The practice made something of a business from the design of ceremonial halls for City livery companies, for example.
- 18 The letter from the Reverend R W Stanford to Collins of the Clonial Office included a list of 20 education commissions that Seeley & Paget and Mottistone & paget had undertaken, mainly small scale extensions to existing private schools in England. It also included the practice's most famous commission, the conversion and extension of Eltham Palace, on the grounds that this building had subsequently become the headquarters for the Army Education Corps, although it had originally been commissioned as a weekend house by the interwar socialites Simon and Virginia Courtauld.
- 19 See also Suzanne Francis-Brown & Peter Francis (2019) Norman & Dawbarn, the UCWI, and Tropical Modernist Architecture in Jamaica, *Caribbean Quarterly*, 65:1, 27-56, DOI:10.1080/00086495.2019.1565219 and Iain Jackson (2013) Tropical Architecture and the West Indies: from military advances and tropical medicine, to Robert Gardner-Medwin and the networks of tropical modernism, *The Journal of Architecture*, 18:2, 167-195, DOI: 10.1080/13602365.2013.781202
- 20 Paracka (2003)
- 21 Lewis (1954)
- 22 Such as the St Cyprian's Cathedral in Fante New Town, Kumasi, 1950, extensions to Achimota School, Accra.
- 23 Draft contract between the Crown Agents and Norman & Dawnbarn, undated. UK National Archives, BW 90/450.
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- 26 Rutter Development plan, unpublished brochure.
- 27 See, for example, Stephanie Decker "Corporate Legitimacy and Advertising: British Companies and the Rhetoric of Development in West Africa, 1950-1970" *The Business History Review*, Vol. 81 No. 1 (2007) 59-86.
- 28 See also, Paracka 143-175.
- 29 Sierra Leone: 1958. HMSO. 1960.
- 30 Draft contract between the Crown Agents and Norman & Dawnbarn, undated. UK National Archives, BW 90/450.
- 31 [https://www.guildfordsociety.org.uk/boris\\_exhibition.html](https://www.guildfordsociety.org.uk/boris_exhibition.html) and email correspondence with Krzysztof Fijalkowski.
- 32 <https://www.bdp.com/en/latest/news/2018/ken-drapeer-1932-2017/>
- 33 Quoted by Paracka, 176.
- 34 See for example Anon. 'Tourism in Sierra Leone' Briefing Paper dated 7th April 1961, Negotiations for a Hotel, Box 659 Sierra Leone National Archives. For more on socialist investment in decolonising West Africa, see Lukasz Stanek Architecture in Global Socialism: Eastern Europe, West Africa and the Middle East in the Cold War (Princeton: 2020).
- 35 This was a clearly stated ambition of the legislative changes brought in by the colonial government in 1951, explicitly designed to sideline the small Creole population in favour of more representation from the rural interior. See Cartwright, 59.
- 36 Paracka notes that staff passage to and from Britain constituted a major expense for the university for some years after independence. Ibid.
- 37 In the shipping register for 1958 there is a Gladys Sophie Jarrett-Yaskey also mentioned and listed as Architect PWD – could she be the first Black Female RIBA member?
- 38 Brian Patrick Graham McElroy and Edwin George Pethybridge, practice dissolved in 1968. No further information has been found relating to this practice.
- 39 That the building was one of the last designed by Rutter is revealed by the following minute of the University of Sierra Leone Building Advisory Committee for 14th June 1965 'resolved to recommend: that the design of the Institute of African Studies be proceeded with before the expiration of the six months' notice of the termination of the College Architects Agreement. Box 524 Sierra Leone National Archives.
- 40 The originator of this phrase noted that it was an 'untrue - or at least incomplete' stereotype.
- 41 The long serving president of Sierra Leone, Siaka Stevens, stated this explicitly in his autobiography.
- 42 The teacher training college was also designed by Rutter, and was built by Taylor Woodrow Sierra Leone.
- 43 A suggestion of baser interests might also be read into Dunhill's reference to economic co-operation between Britain and Sierra Leone achieved through the institute.