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# Reclaiming history: Arthur Schomburg

Hannah J. M. Ishmael

Department of Information Studies, University College London, London, UK

**ABSTRACT**

Focusing on the inter-war period, this article examines the context of the publication of Sir Hilary Jenkinson's *Manual of Archive Administration* alongside the less well-known contemporary publication of Arthur Schomburg's 'The Negro Digs up his Past'. By placing these publications together, this article raises questions about the production and reproduction of the professional canon, as well as highlighting Schomburg's contribution to key archival questions on the nature of collecting. This work discusses Schomburg's articulation of the purpose of archival collecting which offers a radically different conception of the value and use of archives, one that focuses on the concepts of recovery and transformation. This article also places Schomburg within the wider emergence of the Pan-African movement and situates his work within the developing Pan-African ideologies and the networks in which he operated, and argues that Schomburg's legacy can be found in the development of Black-led archives in London.

Archival education, in Britain at least, focuses on the work of Sir Hilary Jenkinson as a foundation of British archival thought and practice. As outlined in Jenkinson's key treatise *A Manual of Archival Administration* (hereafter, the *Manual*), published in 1922, the basis of Jenkinson's views on the duties of the archivist were primarily to 'take all precautions for the safeguarding of his Archives and for their custody, which is the safeguarding of their essential qualities',[1] which for Jenkinson were impartiality and authenticity.[2] In the (almost) 100 years that have elapsed since Jenkinson wrote these key ideas, the profession has been grappling with questions relating to the purpose of archives and the role of the archivist. This article seeks to contextualise the writing of Jenkinson in the immediate aftermath of World War I and establishes the inter-war period as a key moment in the creation of archival theories as responses to the fractures of the War. Additionally, this article places Jenkinson's descriptions of the duties of archivists alongside the work of his contemporary, the Caribbean theorist Arthur Schomburg and his key essay 'The Negro Digs up his Past'. By placing these works together, this article seeks to add to our understanding of the importance of archives and argues for a greater recognition of alternative views on the role of archives in shaping memory and identity. Through foregrounding the work of Schomburg it is hoped that this article can in some small way add to the reclamation of his important

CONTACT Hannah J. M. Ishmael ✉ hannah.ishmael.14@ucl.ac.uk ▣ Department of Information Studies, University College London, Malet Place, Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT, UK

contributions to archival thinking and practice. By framing these two publications together, this article seeks to foster dialogue, to highlight the creation of two divergent archival traditions and to deepen our understanding of our professional history.

By placing the development of the 'Jenkinsonian' archival tradition in dialogue with Schomburg and the Pan-African movement, the article examines how the 'borders of the archive'[3] are created. These borders not only centre on physical collecting but also protect and reinforce the production of archival theory and its discourses. In her discussions on Dutch colonial archives, Ann Laura Stoler explores the archives of the Dutch East Indies and writes that the 'borders of the archive' mark the distance between recognised and qualified knowledge, between intelligible accounts and those deemed inappropriate for exchange,[4] and focuses her work on how colonial archives operate as sites of knowledge that take account of the processes that led to their creation.[5] Although it is important to acknowledge power dynamics in the creation of archives of former colonies, this article turns attention to how colonial thinking has influenced the development of English archival theory and practice, and its global impact. The 'borders of the archive' exist not only in terms of absences and silences in what is held within the archive but can be found in how we think about professionalism and professional discourses. Thinking about archival development as part of global discourses tied to history and the effects of colonialism helps to highlight and re-centre the development of professional practice as one that has many strands. While the profession has moved beyond simply accepting Jenkinson's focus on neutrality and objectivity, there has been little published on the historical context of creation of the *Manual*.

Drawing on the multiverse,[6] and the whiteness that permeates the development of the profession, this article will consider the publication of the *Manual* within a broader dialogue about Empire, archives and World War I to highlight an important intellectual and archival framework that centres on the work of Arthur Schomburg, and the wider Pan-African movement. Discussing the multiverse, Anne J Gilliland argues that:

> One of the least explored aspects of the archival multiverse is the plurality of archival traditions with distinct epistemological, ontological, ideological, practical, even linguistic aspects at work within the contemporary professional archival and recordkeeping landscapes as well as within different communities of records that carry out record – and memory-keeping functions outside professional archival purview.[7]

The archival multiverse offers a critical framework in which to situate the plurality of approaches that exist within the field and the profession and within different community contexts. Gilliland's call to explore different communities of records also sits within the development of what Terry Cook referred to as the 'fourth archival paradigm'[8] and the professional interest in community archives, the role they play in how we understand ourselves and our practice.[9] At the heart of the development of community archives lies their status as independently created, controlled and maintained,[10] and often defined in relation to the work on power within archival theory by Schwartz and Cook[11] and outside of the discipline through the work of Foucault and Derrida. Consequently, there has been a steady increase in the body of literature on the emergence of archives within different communities that offers many important viewpoints and that has contributed to a greater appreciation of different archival practices. It is clear that the *Manual* was not published in a historical vacuum, but the lack of contextual detail about its publication does little to

help the profession understand its own history. What is often missing from the historical framework of the profession is the link between the development of a codified professional practice through the publication of Jenkinson's *Manual* and its relationship to race and colonialism. Though this article seeks in some ways to address this gap, it will not focus on the content of the *Manual* as that is already well known and discussed within professional literature. Instead, this article will situate the development of the *Manual* as part of a global discourse on the nature of archives and documentation immediately following World War I, and place the *Manual* alongside the work of Arthur Schomburg, who arrived at a radically different concept of the purpose of archives. This article will draw out a discussion on a transatlantic, global archival discourse in which multiple archival sciences can be discussed, one that is underpinned by surfacing the legacies of enslavement and racism that have been disguised under notions of objectivity and neutrality.

World War I was a war of Empires,[12] and the discussion of the *Manual* is often concerned with the British context. If considered beyond its content, it is divorced from discussion of Britain at the centre of an Empire or how the intellectual underpinning of Empire and categories of difference permeates Jenkinson's world view. Even though we have broadly moved away from an uncritical identification with the idea of objectivity and neutrality, 'Jenkinsonian' ideas still permeate our discourses. However, it appears that it is only the idea of Jenkinson that we cling to, as Jenkinson becomes a floating signifier for whatever we wish to argue, either for or against. This article seeks to re-tether Jenkinson to a specific context and world view – one that is suffused by his position as a civil servant – at the heart of colonial administration. As argued by Paul Gilroy in *The Black Atlantic*, the position of Blackness and its relationship to science or modernity is necessarily contingent on how the 'West' and 'Europe' are defined against the 'Other'[13] and any discussions of the British Empire must take account of how racial, cultural and gender differences are constructed. For any discussion on Jenkinson, this has to consider how the notions of rationality and objectivity are racialised and constructed within a framework of whiteness (and masculinity) and an assumed natural order. Recently, this has been covered within archival science with key work highlighting how whiteness and white supremacy underpins the profession by Michelle Caswell, Anthony W Dunbar, Eunsong Kim, Mario H Ramirez and Tonia Sutherland.[14] Caswell defines white supremacy as:

> a political, economic, and cultural system in which whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of white superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of white dominance and non-white subordination are daily re-enacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings.[15]

These works have greatly contributed to disrupting the normative whiteness of the profession and ask key questions of how and what the profession values, which sit within broader discussions about the need for aligning the sector with broader social justice movements.

In 2013 a debate emerged within the pages of *The American Archivist* that crystallised many of the arguments relating to social justice within archives. This debate highlights some of the wider discussions within the profession on the nature and use of archival records and can be viewed historically through the work of both Jenkinson

and Schomburg. This debate also exposes the tensions that exist when broaching issues of exclusion and archival power, questions of objectivity and subjectivity, and the role of race and gender within the professional canon. The debate began with Mark A Greene's article 'A Critique of Social Justice as an Archival Imperative: What is it We're Doing that's All That Important?' with two responses issued to Greene's article, one by Randall Jimmerson under the title 'Archivists and Social Responsibility: A Response to Mark Greene', and a letter by Michelle Caswell, 'Not Just Between Us: A Riposte to Mark Greene'. In his article, Greene argues that there is a distinction to be made between the call by F Gerald Ham and Howard Zinn to be 'activist archivists' and the more recent call by archivists such as Verne Harris, Randall Jimmerson and Michelle Caswell for the profession to become engaged with social justice.[16] Greene primarily argues that there is a contradiction between both the calls for archivists to be disengaged from the oppressive systems that create records and the use of those same records to hold regimes to account.[17] He argues that it is the use that records are put to that is important, as over time those records that were once used to disempower people can be put towards social justice causes. However, in following the call for social justice these records may not be created.[18] Greene also argues that another problem with the call to social justice is the desire to abandon the Jenkinsonian archival concept of neutrality, while still aiming for objectivity.[19] In line with Jenkinson, Greene argues that we should aim for neutrality to ensure that records from across society can be captured.[20] As will be discussed later, Greene's argument touches on the need to recognise the future value of archival use but fails to engage with many of the power dynamics at play during the creation and accessioning of archives.

In his response, Jimmerson argues that following a social justice agenda would allow for the necessary diversity within the profession, and he leaves the decision to work towards social justice as a personal choice to be made by individual archivists.[21] He contends that Greene misrepresents his argument about the difference between the archive as a political site, and the engagement of archivists in politics. Jimmerson argues that:

> the problem is not politicizing archives. Rather, it is not recognizing that archives have always been politicized as [centres] of power within society. Through most of human history, archives have served the needs and interests of the rich and powerful. What the call of justice asks archivists to accept is a responsibility to level the playing field.[22]

Answering the paradox raised about the use of records to uphold social justice causes after the fact, Jimmerson states that he would rather be in a position where atrocities were curtailed in the extreme examples, and that archivists should be involved in whistleblowing in less extreme cases.[23] On the discussion of objectivity and neutrality, he contends that objectivity is necessary to provide a framework of professional responsibilities[24] and in some cases, particularly in regard to community archives, that neutrality should be abandoned.[25]

In her letter, Caswell argues that a commitment to social justice is a moral and ethical obligation beyond the archives, and highlights the ongoing ways in which records transcend questions of neutrality and objectivity, as records 'are discursive agents through which power is made manifest'.[26] However, Caswell's letter underlines

the very issue of the call to social justice as she highlights that even in the construction of the debate, it is the voices of older, male, white archivists which have been given prominence.[27] Caswell also noted the exclusion of Anthony W Dunbar's article,[28] even though his article touches on the very applicability of social justice and Critical Race Theory (CRT) to the profession. In his exploratory article, 'Introducing Critical Race Theory to Archival Discourse: Getting the Conversation Started' that pre-dated the debate, Anthony W Dunbar describes the growing body of literature within CRT and how it might be applied within archival theory and literature. In discussing CRT Dunbar highlights and problematises ideas that are taken to be 'normal' or 'natural' in relation to the production of theory,[29] and what is taken as objective or neutral. Dunbar argues that CRT is most applicable to the formulation of ideas around evidence and its application within the wider arguments about the role of social justice.[30] As noted by Caswell, this article was excluded from the debate despite its clear relevance, which further highlights whose voices are excluded within the creation of professional discourses.

In a follow-up article to Greene and Jimmerson, Mario H Ramirez argues that the discussions on social justice is an attempt to secure the whiteness of the field and to maintain the status quo.[31] Drawing on the discussions of neutrality and objectivity, and on Dunbar's discussion of CRT, Ramirez highlights the ways in which 'whiteness' is often viewed as an invisible signifier, and one that is taken for granted, becoming the marker for what is 'normal' or objective.[32] Ramirez argues that Greene's adherence to the idea of neutrality is only possible given his whiteness, and the power it grants to him to seemingly pass through boundaries.[33] He goes on to highlight that the lack of diversity within the archival profession in America is one of the reasons why there may be an unwillingness to engage more widely with social justice, particularly when it attempts to disrupt power and privilege.[34]

These articles on the merits of aligning social justice with archival practice highlight the multiplicity of approaches that can be taken and act as a distillation of many of the key themes that this article will address. As a Black man, the significance of Schomburg's work has been obscured through the historic construction of race and power and, as outlined, the focus on neutrality and objectivity and the role of archivists and collecting. By focusing on the work of Schomburg this article recontextualises the work of Jenkinson to argue for a multiplicity of archival practices and to attempt to move away from the either/or binary of practice through the invocation of Jenkinson as the foundation of archival practice. This article will now briefly discuss the biographies of Jenkinson and Schomburg before moving on to a detailed discussion of Schomburg's work.

## Sir Charles Hilary Jenkinson

Born on 1 November 1882 in Streatham, a neighbourhood of south London, Charles Hilary Jenkinson represents the ideal of the English professional class. Researching Jenkinson's biography has highlighted some inconsistencies and inaccuracies within the received narrative. For example, the main biographies on Jenkinson cite that his uncle was Francis John Henry Jenkinson, a notable librarian at Cambridge University,[35] but it

seems unlikely that this was the case.[36] This inaccuracy is mentioned here to draw attention to the fact that although Jenkinson and his theories are oft-cited within archival theory, as a profession we know little of the man himself. Equally, the task of re-constructing a biography of Jenkinson is hampered by the dispersal of Jenkinson's archives,[37] with the bulk of his archives held at the National Archives in Kew, England, but predominantly covering his professional career.[38] As such, while this article has attempted to locate Jenkinson, the multidimensional man, it is only through his professional contributions that he can be found.

After attending a prestigious fee-paying school, Dulwich College, Jenkinson graduated from Pembroke College, Cambridge with one of the highest honours in the Classics.[39] On graduating, Jenkinson took the Civil Service entrance exams and joined the Public Record Office (PRO) in 1906 as a clerk, rising to Deputy Keeper in 1947.[40] At this point, the PRO was still relatively young, having been established after the passing of the *Public Record Act* in 1838.[41] Prior to this, the keeping of records in England was haphazard, but the Act mandated the bringing together of all the legal records under one single institution, and under the supervision and control of the Master of the Rolls, later Keeper of the Public Records.[42] Jenkinson set to work in his new role and the principles and practices he employed would set the benchmark for many of the theories that he articulated almost 20 years later in the *Manual*. Jenkinson set about transcribing Charter Rolls and later, Exchequer Records, which he cited as his entry point into his interest in Jewish history, becoming president of the Jewish Historical Association in 1953 on his retirement from the PRO.[43] In the Preface of the *Manual*, Jenkinson argued that the treatment of modern records should be dealt with in the same way as 'records of the past',[44] despite the immense social, cultural and political changes that England itself had undergone. Through his work on transcribing early court documents, Jenkinson gained a great deal of knowledge of palaeography and soon turned his attention to archival education. He worked as a lecturer, focusing on palaeography and diplomatics, firstly at the University of Cambridge from 1911–35, and then again from 1938–49.[45] From 1913 he took on lecturing at Kings College, London, and from 1920–25 gave lectures at the new school of Librarianship at University College London (UCL).[46] Jenkinson pushed for the establishment of a distinct professional course to cater for the growing need for professional archivists, and in 1947 the School of Librarianship at UCL created a new course in Archive Administration, at which he gave the inaugural address.[47] Outside of his career at the PRO, Jenkinson's dedication to history and archival preservation can be seen in his involvement in the development of the British Records Association in 1932 and England's National Register of Archives, both of which aimed to map and draw attention to Britain's documentary heritage,[48] as well as his involvement in a number of historical societies.[49] However, Jenkinson's interest in securing and preserving archives was not focused solely on Britain and during World War II he was seconded to the War Office to attempt to protect German and Italian archives, in addition to attending the Nuremberg Trial to advise on recordkeeping.[50] In 1948 he drafted the proposals for what would become the International Council on Archives, of which he was one of the first vice presidents.[51] Jenkinson was knighted in 1943 and died in Horsham, Surrey in 1961.[52]

## Arthur Schomburg

Arturo (Arthur)[53] Alfonso Schomburg was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico on 24 January 1874 to parents of African, Spanish, German and Danish descent.[54] Although little is known of his early life, he often credits his interest in collecting Black history to an incident that took place when he was young. Supposedly, as a young boy, he was approached by a teacher who told him that African people had no history. This encounter instilled a life-long desire to prove the teacher, and others like him, wrong.[55] Schomburg arrived in New York in 1891, a hub for the growing Caribbean and Spanish communities that allowed him to forge connections and networks with 'Anglophone West Indians, Haitians, and Spanish speakers from Cuba, Puerto Rico, and elsewhere in Latin America'.[56] He became active in the revolutionary, independence movements of Puerto Rico and Cuba, although he became disillusioned with the movements following the annexation of Puerto Rico and Cuba by America in 1898.[57] After parting ways with these independence movements, Schomburg threw himself into organisations that focused on the collection of Black history. In 1911 Schomburg and his mentor, African American John Bruce, formed the Negro Society for Historical Research. Bruce, a self-taught historian and journalist, was born into enslavement and would often describe his experiences of enslavement to Schomburg, with Bruce arguing for the importance of studying history as a source of inspiration for younger generations.[58] Schomburg began to enthusiastically collect historical material, storing the Library of the Society at his home, contributing to the Library and allowing people to come to use it.[59]

In 1922 Schomburg was elected as president of the American Negro Academy, which was founded in 1897 in Washington, DC, by Alexander Crummell, a prominent African American abolitionist involved in missionary work,[60] to collect evidence of Black people and to undertake research to inspire 'uplift'.[61] The development of the American Negro Academy, and a similar organisation, the American Negro Historical Society, also founded in 1897, can be situated in the context of the development of other historical societies. Waves of migration into the US during the nineteenth century, including German refugees in 1848,[62] complicated assertions of US citizenship and belonging. As outlined by Elisabeth Kaplan, the questioning of 'the definition of "Americanness," and who had a right to the title of American became a pressing concern by the 1880s'.[63] This coalesced with the growth of Eugenics as a pseudo-science that saw the classification of 'races' into a strict hierarchy[64] and led to wider debates on who could qualify for American citizenship and exercise those rights fully. The creation of organisations like the American Negro Academy and the American Jewish Historical Society, founded in the late 1880s,[65] were important endeavours to attempt to shape the meaning of race, identity and belonging, to refute ideas of inferiority and to highlight the ways in which different groups had contributed to the development of America. This refutation of inherent inferiority was a key aspect of Schomburg's work and impetus behind his collecting throughout his lifetime. However, Schomburg only served as president of the Academy for four years, facing many setbacks and eventually becoming disillusioned with some of the Black intelligentsia who were members of the Academy.[66] In contrast to other prominent African American intellectuals such as WEB Du Bois, Schomburg was opposed to the

vanguardism of intellectuals like Du Bois and focused instead on how the masses of Black people were in charge of their own uplift and the ending of racism.[67] It was in Schomburg's collecting and archive building that his vision for mass Black political involvement became evident.[68]

The New York Public Library's (NYPL) 135th Street Branch located in Harlem officially opened on 14 January 1905. During the Harlem Renaissance there was a flourishing period of literary and artistic practice that centred on Harlem during the 1920s and 1930s. The Harlem Renaissance focused on a rediscovery of a source of pride in Africa and the use of African history as inspiration to underpin the work of those involved.[69] This led to the heavy use of branch books and journals about Black history and culture, which caused rapid deterioration, prompting the Librarian, Ernestine Rose, to suggest the creation of a reference collection to limit further damage.[70] Rose consulted with community leaders, including Schomburg, James Wheldon Johnson and Hubert Harrison, to look at developing a plan for the collection.[71] Schomburg had already loaned a considerable amount of his collection to the library 'to build up a collection which would give the Harlem community a sense of background [with an] accent on achievement'.[72] By 1925 Schomburg's collection was widely recognised for its value (economic and research) and he had received several offers to buy it. However, in keeping with his principles, Schomburg wanted to ensure that his collection remained within the African American community in Harlem, where it would be accessible to researchers and to young people, a key part of his rationale for collecting.[73] In order to purchase the collection for the NYPL a grant of $10,000 was made by the Carnegie Corporation, on the conditions that the collection be kept together under the title of the 'Schomburg Collection', and that a Board of Trustees, including Schomburg, be convened to oversee the collection.[74] The 'Arthur Schomburg Collection' was opened on 20 January 1927, four days before his 53rd birthday.[75] Once the collection was handed over to the NYPL, Schomburg was approached by Fisk University, a historic Black university,[76] to help create a Black collection for them. After working as a consultant to help identify material, Schomburg became their curator in 1931 following another successful grant from the Rosenwald Fund.[77] Although he was responsible for laying the foundations for Fisk's historical collections, once the grant from the Rosenwald Fund ended, Schomburg was unable to continue his position at Fisk.[78] He was quickly informed that the NYPL would take him on as a permanent member of staff as they had secured further funding from the Carnegie Corporation. He worked there as a curator from 1932 until his death in 1938.[79] In 1940 the 135th Street Branch was renamed 'The Schomburg Collection of Negro Literature, History and Prints' and in 1972 was designated as a research library and was later renamed the 'Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture'.[80]

As outlined in these brief biographical sketches, Jenkinson and Schomburg have areas of overlap: they were involved in building institutions and organisations and were both keenly aware of the importance and need for education for younger generations. They were also deeply committed to articulating their own approaches to the necessity of archival practice and theory, but coming from different approaches. Equally, the genesis of their works is in many ways a response to the same global reverberations of World War I. This article will now turn to discuss the publications of these two works, but it is important to note the fundamental differences between them. The *Manual* is an

attempt to codify archival practice based on an underlying assumption that material already exists and is easily accessible and Jenkinson had little cause to consider why or how the material he was working with was available. Schomburg's work focuses on the necessity of collecting and using material and the need to justify why the material should be collected, before he could consider how it should be managed.

## Publication

Jenkinson served in the British Army during World War I, and in 1915 was commissioned to the Royal Garrison Artillery, taking part in fighting at Arras, Messines, Nieuport, Ypres and Cambrai.[81] In 1922, he resumed his duties at PRO and his *Manual of Archive Administration* was published. The impetus for the publication of the *Manual* is often cited as a response to the dramatic increase in modern records generated by World War I,[82] but naturally the factors are more complex. It appears that the impetus for Jenkinson's *Manual* was twofold: the need for a new textbook that dealt with managing archives to complement the new School for Librarianship established at UCL in 1919, where Jenkinson lectured, and to meet his desire to establish archival science as necessary and independent from Librarianship.[83] As outlined earlier, Jenkinson devoted much of his energy to advocating for archivists and archival science as a separate profession worthy of its own training and codified practice, which was eventually recognised in 1947. Key to Jenkinson's argument in the *Manual* is the importance of trained archivists who can ensure the 'moral and physical defence' of archives[84] and the use of the *Manual* as the ultimate codification of this practice.

Secondly, the publication of the *Manual* as part of a series published under the 'Economic and Social History of the War' also sheds light on its development. The 'Economic and Social History of the War' was published and funded by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.[85] The funding of Jenkinson's manual also signifies another, albeit smaller, area of overlap between Jenkinson and Schomburg. As noted earlier, the purchase of Schomburg's collection was facilitated through the Carnegie Corporation. Both had been created through endowments made by Andrew Carnegie to fulfil his philanthropic aims.[86] The 'Economic and Social History of the War' began life in 1911 when John Bates Clark, an American economist and professor at Columbia University, approached a number of international scholars to conduct a rigorous study on the economic dimensions of war.[87] However, the outbreak of war in 1914 gave Clark a greater impetus to begin his project and was 'an "incomparable" opportunity for data collection', focusing specifically on social and economic problems.[88] The series created 150 volumes with Austrian, English, French, German and Italian series and included neutral countries to assess the global impact of the war.[89] However, in order to complete this ambitious task the members of the editorial board were aware of the possibility of distortion and fabrication of evidence, particularly owing to the rise of propaganda during the war, and argued that any history written 'had to be rooted in incontrovertible fact'.[90] The editors also recognised, as outlined, that there would also be a need to preserve these records and save many from destruction, outlining that 'the solution of the archival problem is to consider the question of preserving or destroying documents at the time they are produced'.[91]

Although there was an articulation of the 'archival problem', many of the records needed to write the history of the War were still out of reach and were still in active use, so the editors decided to create a number of monographs based on the direct experience of the authors in the war.[92] The focus on the 'archival problem' and ensuring the robustness of the records and archives that would be used to create the history led to the editorial board commissioning bibliographical volumes, *A Manual of Archive Administration* by Jenkinson and Waldo G Leland's *Introduction to the American Official Sources for the Economic and Social History of the World War*, appearing in 1926.[93] Though the editors were at pains to highlight the position of these additions as not necessarily contributing to histories of the war, the series also appeared following an increasing interest in apportioning blame, and the issues of war guilt following the signing of the 1919 Treaty of Versailles. This led to the publications of guides to archival sources and transcripts by respective countries and to the creation of what Katherine Rietzler describes as an era of 'archival openness'.[94] For Rietzler, this era of 'openness' was a deliberate ploy by countries involved in the war to divest themselves of responsibility for the outbreak by opening up their archives to public and international scrutiny to prove themselves innocent. While it is unclear whether the decision for Jenkinson to write his *Manual* was following a commission from the editors, or it was already written and suited their purposes, this context of the publication of the *Manual* in some ways gives a different focus on Jenkinson's discussion and position on aspects relating to destruction and the focus on neutrality and objectivity of the archives. However, it must also be noted that throughout his career he remained wedded to many of the theories outlined in the *Manual*. Additionally, Jenkinson's commitment to objectivity and neutrality should also be seen within the wider, global context. As highlighted through the discussion on the *Manual*'s inclusion in the 'Economic and Social History', it should be understood within a wider framework and a push towards documentation and commemoration of the war, which also saw the development of London's Imperial War Museum, which opened in 1920.[95] This 'documentary' moment also highlights the development of the Schomburg Centre in Harlem and the publication of Arthur Schomburg's key article 'The Negro Digs up his Past'.

Partly through his friendship with Alain Locke, a prominent African American philosopher, Schomburg soon found himself at the centre of the blooming Harlem Renaissance. Many researchers and artists wanted to obtain information from him, he became friends with many of the leading lights of the Harlem Renaissance, including Locke, James Wheldon Johnson and Claude McKay.[96] Schomburg's key written contribution emerging during this period appeared as a chapter titled 'The Negro Digs up his Past', which was featured in the acclaimed *New Negro* anthology edited by Locke.[97] The *New Negro* became the blueprint for the Harlem Renaissance, and Schomburg's work highlights a key aspect of the development of Black-led archives, the centrality of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to the historical and racial consciousness of Black people in the diaspora, and its lasting effects and affects. In 'The Negro Digs up his Past' Schomburg proclaimed:

> The American Negro must remake his past in order to make his future. Though it is orthodox to think of America as the one country where it is unnecessary to have a past, what is a luxury for the nation as a whole becomes the prime social necessity for the

> Negro. … History must restore what slavery took away, for it is the social damage of slavery that the present generations must repair and offset.[98]

Schomburg's discussions of the importance of repair sits within the growing acknowledgement of the need for 'reparative histories'. In a recent special edition of the British journal *Race & Class* the concept of 'reparative history' was laid out as the ways in which the re-telling of history can be used to disrupt traditional historical narratives.[99] The concept of 'reparative history' is used explicitly in relation to the historical narratives of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and enslavement and highlights the ways in which centring on the agency of the enslaved can contribute to this disruption. 'Reparative history' can be an important source for challenging the power relations inherent in the development of historical narratives.[100] Furthermore, 'reparative histories' acknowledges the importance of emotions in dealing with the historical traumas resulting from the Transatlantic Slave Trade and subsequent racism. Bergin and Rupprecht, writing in *Race & Class*, describe the ways in which trauma acts as:

> a contemporary structure of feeling, which functions as a cultural dominant within which the reparative organises modes of remembrance in relation to inherited experience. It structures cultural memory around guilt, loss and pain by producing divisive and fragmented conditions that work to legitimise, privatise and contain that structure of feeling within a redemptive narrative of 'working through'. Yet reparative history is about more than contemplating injury or apportioning blame. It is about agency, and it can be wedded to a form of memory energised by the emancipatory activism, solidarity and political struggles of the past.[101]

The reparative agency and its affective nature in contemporary work has been highlighted by Black British activist Colin Prescod, who in 'Archives, Race, Class and Rage' describes his 'rebellious rage' and the focus on 'reparative history' as one of the driving forces behind his work,[102] and draws on the Black history as a history of 'resistance and rebellion, as well as, protest and participation'.[103] Prescod discusses how he uses 'rage against "othering"; rage against "White-washing" the record; rage against systemic, institutionalised denial; rage against continuing, intransigent, irritating, debilitating, distracting and destructive racism' in order to challenge practice and make changes within society.[104] This 'rage against othering' can also be found in the work of Black British queer activists Ajamu X and Topher Campbell. In 'Love and Lubrication in the Archives, or rukus!: A Black Queer Archive for the United Kingdom', they outline the development of their collection held at London Metropolitan Archives under the auspices of their charity rukus!, which documents the Black LGBTQ community in the UK. rukus! was established specifically to deal with the issues of lack of representation and the 'othering' of the Black LGBTQ community within the mainstream, and within British Black community archives such as Black Cultural Archives.[105] Although the development of rukus! highlights some of the issues of drawing tight boundaries around what it means to be a member of a community and whose stories may be excluded in those constructions, rukus! is also able to use their archival practice to disrupt the process of categorisation:

> We're not restricted to other people's identity categories. Early on I was often asked: Are you a Black archive, are you a gay archive, are you a London archive? And I'd say actually

we're all these things, at the same time. Our politics have never been about either/or categories.[106]

Ajamu goes on to articulate the importance of reclaiming history as he describes their approach as one of inclusivity:

> We need to find a way of articulating that difference. The archive can find a way of doing that. You want to reclaim the notion that when you look at Black gay and lesbian history, you are not looking at a separate thing. You are looking at something that is integral to all our histories.[107]

It is clear that Schomburg's articulation of the importance of collecting archives as a way of not only counteracting negative stereotyping but as a source for future reparation is still a key aim for many Black-led archives.

Schomburg's writing also focuses attention on the importance of archival collecting in times of increasing uncertainty and to deal with historical legacies. As noted, Schomburg dedicated his life to collecting material relating to the history of people of African descent from across the African diaspora and encapsulates his underlying methodological approach to the collection and use of archival material. In his work on the African diaspora, Stuart Hall defines diaspora in terms of Benedict Anderson's 'imagined community'[108] and shared experiences. For Hall, this 'imagined community' of diaspora connects people of African descent across the world, firstly, as a result of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, which forcibly relocated millions of African people to the Caribbean and the Americas. Secondly, connections are made through later economic dispersals as a result of colonialism and economic necessity.[109] Schomburg's 'The Negro Digs up his Past' was in part a response to an upsurge in nationalism and racism[110] following World War I, which led to a number of racial attacks on Black communities throughout 1919 in England and America.[111] These attacks highlighted that the oppression of Black people was global, and not isolated to particular countries or contexts.[112] These experiences of war helped draw together Black people from across the diaspora and, as argued by historian Robin DG Kelley, '[b]lack historians during the 1930s faced the past through the prism of an unstable and uncertain future'.[113] This period saw the growth and acceleration of the decolonisation movements that would see fruition after World War II.

A key aspect of Schomburg's political outlook was his commitment to the Pan-African movement. In *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy discusses the ways in which ideas move around the diaspora (or the Black Atlantic) including the importance of travel and the experience of exile and location[114] in helping to create the Black Atlantic. He describes the Pan-African movement as an attempt to find similarities within the Black experience in the West and the diaspora, as well as considering significant differences.[115] From an ontological point of view, Pan-Africanism offers a framework for dealing with, and overcoming, the experiences of being racialised as Black in times of increasing hostility and threat. Although many African-descended historians and intellectuals could be labelled as Pan-African, Pan-Africanism has no single definition. It has taken different forms at different times, as a response to the social, historical and cultural context in which the proponents have operated.[116] One of the important contributions of Pan-Africanism is the ways in which its intellectual basis and formations can be repurposed as a blueprint and guide for future

generations in different contexts. The inter-war period was one of the most politically fervent in the development of the intellectual basis for Pan-Africanism and the focus on the use of history to try and repair the damage of the Transatlantic Slave Trade, and to disrupt the historical narratives and stereotypes that subsequently emerged.

## Pan-African movement

The origins of Pan-Africanism can be found in the Pan-African Conference that was convened by Trinidadian Henry Sylvester Williams in London in 1900 and was attended by delegates from across the diaspora. Although 'Pan-Africanism' as a term officially emerged with the convening of this conference, it has antecedents in the writings of African intellectuals throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries who used their writing and platforms to fight against the injustices of enslavement and to refute the ideas of African inferiority.[117] At the core of Pan-Africanism has been this desire for African-descended people to rediscover their history as a 'revolt against the white man's suzerainty in culture, politics and historiography'.[118] Part of the Pan-African tradition has been the development of the idea of a common bond across the diaspora, particularly one that highlights the commonality of experiences as a result of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the subsequent experiences of living under colonialism and imperialism.[119] While the Pan-African tradition has had these broad aims at its heart, the ways in which they have been realised have led to the development of distinctive movements within the broader tradition so the term Pan-Africanism provides a broad umbrella in which to group a number of distinct articulations, each deeply embedded in the historical political and cultural contexts. The Pan-African tradition can also be viewed as an important vehicle for the transmission of these key ideas throughout the twentieth century and can be found in the development of the Harlem Renaissance, the Négritude movement and the rise of Black Power among others.

In line with Pan-African ideology, Schomburg wanted to highlight the fallacious argument of white supremacy: that Black people are inherently inferior to white people, and that systems of enslavement and the global system of colonialism have been for the greater benefit of Black people to civilise and to educate them.[120] Jenkinson's own earlier writings are imbued with the racist underpinnings of colonialism. Writing about the records and history of the African Company[121] that he catalogued, Jenkinson writes, in contrast to the East India Company,[122] that:

> The African coast and the African peoples are the obvious inferiors of India and the Indians in all these respects; and the African Trader,[123] who could not supplement his exports of natural products with manufactures, supplemented them with a supply of unskilled labour. While slavery lasted, therefore, the African might sustain a comparison with the Indian trade; slavery gone, it collapsed into the comparatively unimportant position proper to its inferior extent and resources.[124]

This treatment of people of African descent notwithstanding, this writing on the African Company was one of the few histories that dealt with the Trade until the 1920s,[125] highlighting the general lack of interest in difficult histories and dealing with their legacies. As already discussed, this extract highlights how deeply embedded

Jenkinson's world view is in the logic of Empire underpinned by white supremacy and its commitment to ideals of science and objectivity.

As argued by Adalaine Holton, through the building of his archive Schomburg worked to provide evidence of historical continuity, and more importantly articulated a theory of recovery and the process by which to undertake it.[126] Schomburg's theory rested on three aspects: firstly, in line with Pan-African principles he wanted to highlight the ways in which people of African descent were involved in their own liberation and activism (agency); secondly, he wanted to place the achievements of individual African Americans within the history of community activism to focus attention on the importance of community, rather than continuing to perpetuate the idea that individual African Americans who had achieved success were somehow anomalous (diaspora); and thirdly, he wanted to draw upon the long history of Africa to situate these achievements.[127] Schomburg and others have argued for the centring of the agency of Black people in their own emancipation and highlighted the rich cultures of African peoples to provide an alternative that Black people can draw from to counteract white supremacy. Although Schomburg recognised the rupture that enslavement created within the diaspora, he recognised that it was also the experience of enslavement that bound members of the diaspora together.[128] For Schomburg, history was intrinsic to the development of culture and he argued for the study of cultural history as part of the unique contribution of African Americans to the development of American society.[129] Schomburg actively engaged in collecting documentary material but also continued to publish histories drawn from his collection. The key to Schomburg's collection of material and publication activity was to overcome the prevailing racist ideas that Black people had contributed little to American history. Schomburg further argued that 'the Negro has been a man without history because he has been considered a man without a worthy culture'.[130] He strove to collect material that demonstrated and covered the whole of Black life and culture and sought to highlight the intricacies of continental African art and culture,[131] stripping it of its association with the primitive. However, Schomburg's interest in overcoming prevailing racist ideas was not primarily to convince the dominant white society of Black people's value, but to build the confidence of the Black community.[132]

## Legacies

As argued throughout this article, it is important to view Schomburg as an archive builder and theorist in the same way as we have historically viewed Jenkinson. While their contexts are different, they are engaged in a single discourse on the nature and value of archives and both used publications and institutions as a way of codifying their practice and thought.

The legacy of Jenkinson's *Manual* is well known and as a profession we remain orientated by it, either in agreement or in opposition. Schomburg's legacy is visible in the ongoing success of the Schomburg Center in New York, but another of his key legacies is the transmission of his core ideas of the importance of archives and archival collection to the reclamation and remaking of history. It is also the concept of diaspora that helps us to understand how the work of Schomburg in 1920s America can serve as a catalyst for the development of archives in a different place and time. It is through the

transnational and diasporic networks that the ideas of Schomburg and Pan-Africanism take shape and circulate and that led to Schomburg, and others, living in New York at that time to come together to share experiences and formulate strategies to overcome the racism they were experiencing.

Highlighted within Schomburg's work is the importance of the collection of archives and the writing of history to create constant dialogue between the past, present and future. The basis of this article began through research into three Black-led archives in London: the Black Cultural Archives, the George Padmore Institute and the Huntley Collection held at London Metropolitan Archives, and it was through researching these institutions that the centrality of the work of Schomburg and Pan-Africanism became clear. Directly or indirectly these three organisations can trace their lineage to Schomburg through Pan-African networks and their work highlights the importance of dialogue and the recognition of their historical antecedents.

## Conclusion

This article has highlighted the articulation of an important archival tradition that has been focused on the intellectual framework of Pan-Africanism and found in the work of Arthur Schomburg. By examining the work and historical context of Schomburg's writing, this article also places Schomburg in dialogue with Jenkinson to highlight the historical context of the *Manual* and to argue for a greater understanding of Jenkinson's writing. Viewing these works contemporaneously helps us to better understand our own professional history and practice and makes room for broadening our professional canon to include other important works that can shed greater light on our understanding of archives and archival practices.

## Notes

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4. ibid.
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6. Defined as 'the pluralism of evidentiary texts, memory-keeping practices and institutions, bureaucratic and personal motivations, community perspectives and needs, and cultural and legal constructs with which archival professionals and academics must be prepared, through graduate education, to engage'. AJ Gilliland, 'Archival and Recordkeeping Traditions in the Multiverse and their Importance for Researching Situations and Situating Research', in AJ Gilliland, S Mckemmish and A Lau (eds), *Research in the Archival Multiverse*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, 2017, p. 50.
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16. MA Greene, 'A Critique of Social Justice as an Archival Imperative: What is it We're Doing that's All That Important?' *The American Archivist*, vol. 76, no. 2, Fall/Winter 2013, p. 303.

17. ibid., p. 305.

18. ibid., p. 321.

19. ibid., p. 311.

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21. RC Jimmerson, 'Archivists and Social Responsibility: A Response to Mark Greene', *The American Archivist*, vol. 76, no. 2, Fall/Winter 2013, p. 336.

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23. ibid., p. 338.

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25. ibid., p. 339.

26. M Caswell, 'Not Just Between Us: A Riposte to Mark Greene', *The American Archivist*, vol. 76, no. 2, Fall/Winter 2013, pp. 605–8.

27. ibid.

28. ibid.

29. Dunbar, p. 113.

30. ibid.

31. Ramirez, p. 341.

32. ibid., p. 343.

33. ibid., p. 347.

34. ibid., p. 351.

35. 'Jenkinson, Sir (Charles) Hilary (1882–1961), Archivist', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 3 January 2008, Oxford University Press, available at <*http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34177*>, accessed 21 August 2018.

36. The source for this assertion can be traced to Sir Hilary Jenkinson's obituary in the *Times* newspaper (see 'Sir H Jenkinson: Higher Standards in Archival Work', *The Times*, London, Tuesday 7 March 1961, p. 15), although the author of the obituary is unknown and it is unclear where this information came from. Francis Jenkinson was born in Scotland to John Henry Jenkinson and his wife Alice Henrietta Gordon-Cumming, both descendants of prominent members of British society (cited in D McKitterick, 'Jenkinson, Francis John Henry', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, available at <*http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-34178/version/0*>, accessed 21 August

2018). However, genealogical research has revealed Charles Jenkinson's grandparents were Charles Thomas Jenkinson and Elizabeth Ann Cooper (see London Metropolitan Archives, London, England, 'Board of Guardian Records, 1834–1906/Church of England Parish Registers, 1754–1906', Reference Number: P69/MRY1/A/01/Ms 24,742/, available at ancestry.co.uk, accessed 21 August 2018), born in London. There is also no evidence that either of Charles Jenkinson's grandparents or Francis Jenkinson's parents ever re-married. The only connection that can be found is that they were both at Cambridge (although different colleges) at the same time.

37. Small collections exist at University College London and the University of Aberdeen.

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48. Eastwood, p. 36.

49. For the full list see J Conway Davis, *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, p. xxix.

50. Conway Davis, *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, p. xxvi.

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52. 'Jenkinson, Sir (Charles) Hilary'.

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59. ibid., p.48.

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62. J Higham, *Strangers in the Land: Patterns of American Nativism, 1860–1925*, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, NJ, 2002, p. 8.

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65. Kaplan, p. 131.
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67. Meehan, p. 61.
68. ibid.
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70. Des Verney Sinnette, p. 136.
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83. Sir CH Jenkinson, 'The Librarian as Archivist', in Robert Ellis and Perter Walne (eds), *Selected Writings of Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, Alan Sutton, Gloucester, 1980, p. 115.
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89. ibid., pp. 836–8.
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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

## Notes on contributor

*Hannah J. M. Ishmael* is an archivist currently researching a PhD at UCL investigating the development of Black archives in London, and working at the Black Cultural Archives in London, UK.