Introduction

In 1492, the Early Modern Atlantic was born. After that date, sailing ships connected distant parts of the Atlantic in new and dynamic ways. As people, trade goods, and ideas flowed across the ocean, African, American, and European cultures and economies were radically reshaped. For several hundred years, American Indians would die in tremendous numbers from diseases that white explorers and settlers introduced and wars they waged; Europeans would colonize much of the Americas and establish plantations that produced exports for Old World metropoles; and blacks would labor on those plantations as Europe shipped what ultimately was about 12.5 million enslaved Africans from coastal ports in the largest forced migration in human history. To illustrate the magnitude of this migration, before 1820 about three-quarters of all people arriving in the Americas hailed from Africa.[1]

It is only over the past several decades that studies using the Early Modern Atlantic as a unit of analysis have become popular. Many scholars who examine Atlantic history see Europeans as dominating Atlantic interactions and shaping transformations. They equate the Atlantic basin with European civilization. These scholars marginalize Africa and reduce Africans' contributions to the construction of an Atlantic World to merely labor alone.[2] However, historians who reject Eurocentric approaches to

[1] David Eltis and David Richardson, "A New Assessment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade," in *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database*, eds. David Eltis and David Richardson (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 1–2, 37.

[2] See, especially, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, "Entangled Histories: Borderland Historiographies in New Clothes?" *American Historical Review* 112 (2007), 794; Alison Games, "Atlantic History: Definitions, Challenges, and Opportunities," *American Historical Review* 111 (2006), 741–57.

the past see considerable African and Afro-American agency. That is, they view Africans and their descendants in the Americas as controlling some of the processes that led to the creation and metamorphosis of an Atlantic economic and cultural system. Following John Thornton, "Africans were active participants in the Atlantic world, both in African trade with Europe … and as slaves in the New World."[3]

This book focuses squarely on people from Africa. In simplest terms, it traces the flow of enslaved Africans from identifiable points in Upper Guinea (what the Portuguese came to call *Guiné*) to plantations in Amazonia, Brazil. It is concerned with the period from about Portugal's establishment of a colony in Amazonia in 1621 to the legal abolition of the oceanic slave trade into the region in 1830. I am particularly interested in how Upper Guineans effected change in the Atlantic economic and cultural network that connected the Upper Guinea ports of Bissau and Cacheu – cities in the present-day country of Guinea-Bissau – to the ports of São Luís and Belém in the captaincies of Maranhão and Pará, which together comprised Amazonia. In the period covered by this book, captains of sailing ships embarked slaves at Bissau and Cacheu and disembarked iron, cloth, beads, guns, gunpowder, rum, tobacco, and other trade items. The vessels were mostly Portuguese-owned. The enslaved were shipped, for the most part, to Amazonia.

The slave trade from Upper Guinea to Amazonia reached its zenith in the second half of the eighteenth century. Before then, Amazonia was an underdeveloped backwater of the Portuguese empire. Few whites were settled there, and over a period of about 150 years, fewer than 3,500 African slaves (mostly Upper Guineans) had been shipped there. In 1755, Portugal sought to stimulate Amazonia's economy by encouraging increased levels of African slave imports. For this, the crown granted a monopoly on shipments from Bissau and Cacheu and into São Luís and Belém to a joint stock company called the Company of Grão Pará and Maranhão (*Companhia Geral do Grão Pará e Maranhão*, or CGPM). High volumes of trade from Bissau and Cacheu to São Luís resulted in an Upper Guinean majority emerging in colonial-controlled rural areas of Maranhão. Parts of Pará, too, saw the emergence of an Upper Guinean majority. However, fewer slaves went to Pará than went to Maranhão (and many who went to Pará were traded elsewhere), so the bulk of my analysis focuses on Maranhão. Trade from Bissau and Cacheu declined

[3] John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400–1680* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 6–7.

sharply after 1815 when Portugal, under pressure from Britain, forbade its nationals from engaging in the transoceanic shipment of slaves north of the equator. From 1755 to 1815, about 70,000 Upper Guineans entered Amazonia, and most of those entered before 1800.

With those 70,000 and the hundreds of thousands more in the communities from which they were taken as its subject, this study makes several historiographical contributions. First, this is one of a handful of accounts of Upper Guineans in diaspora and is the only book-length examination of African slavery in Maranhão before the early nineteenth century. Second, this is one of few studies to identify with precision from where members of a large diaspora in the Americas hailed in Africa. Finally, this book proposes new directions for scholarship focused on how immigrant groups who crossed the Atlantic in the Early Modern period created new or re-created old cultures in the Americas. I will expand on each of those points.

AN UNDERSTUDIED DIASPORA IN AN UNDERSTUDIED PART OF BRAZIL

This book fills large voids in scholarship about slavery and the Atlantic slave trade. It is one of few works to examine the cultural linkages between Upper Guinea and its diaspora in the Americas. Considerable research has traced flows of captives from West Central Africa (especially the Kongo and Angola areas) and the Bights of Benin and Biafra (what the Portuguese called Mina). Scholars have been especially concerned with the degree to which slaves from West Central Africa and Mina re-created in the Americas aspects of the cultures from which they came.[4] However,

[4] On West Central Africans: Linda M. Heywood, ed., *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Foundations of the Americas, 1585–1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441–1770* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003); Roquinaldo Ferrira, "Atlantic Microhistories: Slaving, Mobility, and Personal Ties in the Black Atlantic World (Angola and Brazil)," in *Cultures of the Lusophone Black Atlantic*, eds. Nancy Naro, Roger Sansi and David Treece (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 99–128; On Minas: Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs, *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004); João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Douglas B. Chambers, *Murder at Montpelier: Igbo Africans in Virginia* (Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2005); York/UNESCO Nigerian Hinterland Project, http://www.yorku.ca/nhp/areas/nhp.htm.

only a handful of studies focused on the transfer of rice-growing techniques and one looking at the transfer of an architectural aesthetic have considered Upper Guinean cultural contributions anywhere in the New World.[5] Several notable studies explore the economic links between Upper Guinea and Amazonia in the era of the CGPM. But beyond speculating about the ethnic groups to which slaves arriving in Amazonia belonged, no single work pays attention to the cultural implications of the trade.[6]

[5] Peter Mark, *"Portuguese" Style and Luso-African Identity: Precolonial Senegambia, Sixteenth-Nineteenth Centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2002), 59–80; Judith A. Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001); Judith A. Carney, "'With Grains in Her Hair': Rice in Colonial Brazil," *Slavery and Abolition* 25, 1 (2004), 1–27; Judith A. Carney and Richard Nicholas Rosomoff, *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World* (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 2010); Edda L. Fields-Black, *Deep Roots: Rice Farmers in West Africa and the African Diaspora*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008); David Eltis, Philip Morgan, and David Richardson, "Agency and the Diaspora in Atlantic History: Reassessing the African Contribution to Rice Cultivation in the Americas," *American Historical Review* 12, 5 (2007), 1329–58; Reinaldo dos Santos Barroso Júnior, "Nas rotas do atlântico equatorial: tráfico de escravos rizicultores da Alta-Guiné para o Maranhão (1770–1800)," (Ph.D. thesis: Universidade Federal da Bahia, 2009); S. Max Edelson, "Beyond 'Black Rice': Reconstructing Material and Cultural Contexts for Early Plantation Agriculture," *American Historical Review* 115, 1 (2010), 125–35; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, "Africa and Africans in the African Diaspora: The Uses of Relational Databases," *American Historical Review*, 115, 1 (2010), 136–50; Walter Hawthorne, "From 'Black Rice' to 'Brown': Rethinking the History of Risiculture in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Atlantic," *American Historical Review*, 115, 1 (2010), 151–64; David Eltis, Phip Morgan, and David Richardson, "Black, Brown, or White? Color-Coding American Commercial Rice Cultivation with Slave Labor," *American Historical Review* 115, 1 (2010), 164–71. Also, Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah: African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformations of African Identities in the Colonial Antebellum South* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1998).

[6] António Carreira, *As companhias pombalinas de navegação, comércio e tráfico de escravos entre a costa africana e o nordeste brasileiro* (Bissau: Centro de Estudos da Guiné Portuguesa, 1969); Manuel Nunes Dias, *Fomento e merchantilismo: A Companhia Geral do Grão Pará e Maranhão (1755–1778)* (São Paulo: Universidade de São Paulo, 1971); Ilídio Baleno, "Reconversão do comércio externo em tempo de crise e o impacto da Companhia do Grão-Pará e Maranhão," in *Historia geral de Cabo Verde*, ed. Maria Emília Madeira Santos (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de História e Cartografia Antiga, Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 2002), III: 157–233; Daniel B. Domingues da Silva, "The Slave Trade to Maranhão, 1680–1846: Volumes, Routes and Organization," *Slavery and Abolition* 29, 4 (2008), 477–501; Rafael Chambouleyron, "Escravos do Atlântico equatorial: Tráfico negreiro para o estado do Maranhão e Pará," *Revista brasilleira de história* 26, 52 (2006), 79–114; Jeronimo de Viveiros, *História do comércio do Marahão (1755–1778)* (Belém: Universidade Federal do Pará, 1963); Benedito Carlos Costa Barbosa, "Em outras margens do Atlântico: Tráfico negreiro para o Estado do Maranhão e Grão-Pará (1707–1750) (Ph.D. thesis, Universidade Federal do Pará, 2009).

As well as being one of few studies about Upper Guineans in diaspora, this is the only book-length examination of African slavery in Maranhão before the early nineteenth century. Despite the fact that the slave trade to the region is relatively well documented and that archival sources about African slave life are plentiful in Maranhão's well-organized state archive, Anglophone scholars have paid little attention to black slavery in the region.[7] Beyond articles mostly published by a handful of dedicated scholars living in Amazonia, little, too, has been published in Portuguese.[8] This might be because the region's historical trajectory was very different from the rest of Brazil. Maranhão and Pará were largely cut off from regions to the south by contrary currents and winds. Indeed, it was faster to sail from São Luís to Lisbon than from São Luís to Rio de Janeiro.[9] Further, whereas much of the rest of Brazil had vibrant export economies in the seventeenth century, Amazonia's economy, as noted above, floundered until after the mid-eighteenth century. Added to this is the fact that ocean currents and winds linked Amazonia to a very different part of

[7] Colin M. MacLachlan, "African Slave Trade and Economic Development in Amazonia, 1700–1800," in *Slavery and Race Relations in Latin America*, ed. Robert Brent Toplin (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1974), 112–45; Sue A. Gross, "Labor in Amazonia in the First Half of the Eighteenth Century," *The Americas* 32, 2 (1975), 211–21.

[8] Regina Helena Martins de Faria, "Escravos, livres pobres, índios e imigrantes estrangeiros nas representações das elites do Maranhão oitocentista," in *História do Maranhão: Novos estudos*, ed. Wagner Cabral da Costa (São Luís: EDUFMA, 2004), 81–112. Information about slavery in this period can also be gleaned from Mário M. Meireles, *História do Maranhão*, 2nd ed. (São Luís: Fundação Cultural do Maranhão, 1980); Antonia da Silva Mota and José Dervil Mantovani, *São Luís do Maranhão no século XVIII: A construção do espaço urbano sob a lei das sesmarias* (São Luís: Edições FUNC, 1998); Antônia da Silva Mota, "Família e fortuna no Maranhão setecentista," in *História do Maranhão: Novos estudos*, ed. Wagner Cabral da Costa (São Luís: EDUFMA, 2004), 51–80; Regina Helena Martins de Faria, "Trabalho escravo e trabalho livre na crise da agroexportação escravista no Maranhão" (Ph.D. thesis, UFMA, 1998). On slavery in Pará, Vicente Salles, *O negro no Pará sob o regime da escravidão* (Rio de Janeiro: Fundação Getúlio Vargas, 1971); José Maia Bezerra Neto, *Escravidão negra no Grão Pará: (séculos XVII–XIX)* (Belém: Paka-Tatu, 2001); Anaiza Vergolino-Henry and Arthur Napoleão Figueiredo, *A presença Africana na Amazônia colonial: Uma notícia histórica* (Belém: Secretaria de Estado de Cultura, 1990); Barroso Júnior, "Nas rotas"; Rafael Chambouleyron, "O 'senhor absoluto dos sertões': O 'Capitão Preto' José Lopes, a Amazônia e o Cabo Verde," *Boletín Americanista* LVIII, 58 (2008), 33–49; Patricia Melo Sampaio, "Escravidão e liberdade na Amazônia: Notas de pesquisa sobre o mundo do trabalho indígena e africano," unpublished paper, 2007. For a notable publication in German that explores slavery in Maranhão in the first half of the nineteenth century, Matthias Röhrig Assunção, *Pfanzer, sklaven und kleinbauern in der brasilianischen provinz Maranhão, 1800–1850* (Frankfurt: Vervuert, 1993).

[9] Luiz Joaquim de Oliveira e Castro, *Historia do Brazil* (Rio de Janeiro: Garnier, 1862), 383.

the Atlantic World. The region looked to *Guiné* for slaves. This can be contrasted with the southern reaches of Brazil, which drew slaves mostly from Angola, and with Bahia and Pernambuco, which drew slaves mostly from the Bight of Benin.

What this book does is explore two understudied areas on the Atlantic's periphery that were united by a slave trade. I argue that through much of the Early Modern period the Amazonia and Upper Guinea areas were two sides of the same coin. They comprised one unit – one region that stretched across an ocean. Processes of historical change in one part of that region reverberated throughout the rest, effecting change thousands of miles away. Neither area should be seen in isolation. Both are best understood through a study that takes a broader, Atlantic perspective.

ORIGINS AND IDENTITIES

Within *Guiné*, I trace the origins of slaves exported to Amazonia after 1755 to specific and relatively small areas.[10] Recent scholarship about African diasporas in the Americas has made use of data generated from records of slave ship voyages to detail flows of slaves across the Atlantic. Particularly important has been data generated from two sources. The first is David Eltis, Stephen Behrendt, David Richardson, and Herbert Klein's 1999 *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-ROM* (TSTD) – a dataset with information from the Atlantic crossings of 27,233 slave ships. The second is the same team's Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (TSTD2), an Internet-based dataset that documents about 35,000 slave ship voyages.[11] Users of the datasets

[10] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall calls for studies like this in *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005). Gomez traces African slaves to large regions within the continent in *Exchanging Our Country Marks*. Similar is Chambers, *Murder at Montpelier*; Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*; Reis, *Slave Rebellion*. Notable works use ethnonyms in notarial records to trace the origins of Upper Guinean slaves in Peru: Stephan Bünhen, "Ethnic Origins of Peruvian Slaves (1548–1650): Figures for Upper Guinea," *Paideuma* 39 (1993), 57–110; Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524–1650* (Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974); Jean-Pierre Tardieu, "Origins of the Slaves in the Lima Region in Peru (Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries)," in *From Chains to Bonds: The Slave Trade Revisited*, ed. Doudou Diène (Paris: UNESCO, 2001), 43–54.

[11] David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, David Richardson, and Herbert S. Klein, eds., *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-ROM* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, http://slavevoyages.org/tast/assessment/estimates.faces.

can trace particular flows of slaves from ports in Africa to ports in the Americas and can generate information about, among other things, the volume of those flows over time. Together, the datasets show better than any other scholarship the nature of the linkages between broad regions of Africa and wide areas of the Americas. Africans in the Americas, the datasets make clear, were not any more randomly distributed than were Europeans.[12]

But what the datasets do not show is from where within Africa slaves embarking on Atlantic vessels hailed and to where in the Americas slaves disembarking from those vessels went.[13] That is, the datasets contain information about how many slaves embarked at particular African ports and disembarked at particular American ports, but they contain no information about the birthplaces of the Africans aboard any ship or the final destinations of African slaves who reached the Americas. It should go without saying that Africa has always been a vast and varied place. Supply routes stretching from deep in the interior brought slaves to ports as did shorter routes connecting to communities tens of miles from the coast. Moreover, there was a substantial coastal trade in slaves, which involved merchants moving captives from place to place in the open ocean and through intercoastal waterways before boarding them on ships bound for the New World. It is also clear that America, too, was a vast and varied place, with supply routes stretching from coastal ports to the deep interior of many colonies in addition to the not-so-distant hinterland. Further, it was not uncommon for slaves to disembark at one American port and then embark on a new ship for another distant place – a different colony hundreds of miles away. The TSTD and TSTD2 contain no information about intra-African or intra-American supply routes.

Hence, studies making use of TSTD and TSTD2 generally discuss Africa using generalities. That is, they focus on the likelihood that slaves in particular plantation zones were "Angolans" and "Minas," without pinpointing from where, exactly, those Angolans and Minas came. In the case of Upper Guinea, those arguing for and against a thesis that Upper Guineans brought with them the technologies necessary for plantation

[12] For conclusions drawn from the datasets, Eltis and Richardson, "New Assessment"; David Eltis, "The Volume and Structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade: A Reassessment," *William and Mary Quarterly* 58, 1 (2001), 17–46.

[13] Philip D. Morgan, "The Cultural Implications of the Atlantic Slave Trade: African Regional Origins, American Destinations and New World Developments," *Slavery and Abolition* 18, 1 (1997), 122–45; Paul E. Lovejoy, "Extending the Frontiers of Transatlantic Slavery, Partially," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 40, 1 (2009), 57–70.

rice production in the Americas (the "black rice thesis") have failed to determine the exact origins of the people they study.[14] Were they from rice-producing parts of Upper Guinea or weren't they? Can we know?

To the latter question, I say yes. We can know. In this study, I pinpoint the locations in Africa of Upper Guineans who were enslaved and shipped into the Atlantic by making use of postmortem inventories recorded in Maranhão between 1767 and 1832.[15] When a property owner died in the captaincy, a representative of the state tallied his or her possessions – including slaves. Inventory takers usually made extensive notes about slaves. Typically, they recorded slaves' ages, marriage partners, children, professions, values, and "defects" (injuries and illnesses). In addition, they asked slaves from what "nation" they hailed. To the question "What is your nation?" Upper Guineans in Maranhão most often responded with the name of an ethnic group – Balanta, Bijago, Papel, Banyun, Brame, Mandinka, Floup, and Fula, for example. Sometimes, too, slaves responded with a place such as Cacheu, Geba, and Bissau. Such responses, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall argues, can tell us who slaves thought they were – what identities they chose to emphasize. It is clear from sources she has collected in Louisiana and I have collected in Maranhão that African ethnic or national identities often survived the Middle Passage and continued to have meaning for African slaves in the Americas.[16]

Ethnic identities were, indeed, significant for Upper Guineans. From some of their first visits to the Upper Guinea coast, Europeans recorded the ethnonyms of the peoples with whom they came into contact.[17] And they would continue to gather this information for hundreds of years.

[14] Carney, *Black Rice*; Eltis, Morgan, and Richardson, "Agency"; Barroso Júnior, "Nas rotas"; Hawthorne, "From 'Black Rice' to 'Brown'"; Fields-Black, *Deep Roots*.

[15] I assembled those into a database – the Maranhão Inventories Slave Database (MISD). The documents are at the Arquivo Judiciário of the Tribunal de Justiça do Estado do Maranhão (TJEM).

[16] Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities*, xv, 49, 55–79; Michael Gomez, "African Identity and Slavery in America," *Radical History Review* 75 (1999), 111–20; Gomez, *Exchanging*, 11, 38, 150; Reis, *Slave Rebellion*, 154; Paul E. Lovejoy, ed., *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery* (New York: Continuum, 2000); Paul E. Lovejoy and David V. Trotman, eds., *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora* (New York: Continuum, 2003); José C. Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy, eds., *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil during the Era of Slavery* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2004); José C. Curto and Renée Soulodre-La Crance, eds., *Africa and the Americas: Interconnections during the Slave Trade* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2005).

[17] Duarte Pacheco Pereira, *Esmeraldo de situ orbis*, ed. Damião Peres (Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1988).

Further, Portuguese, French, English, and Dutch observers, acting independently, drew maps noting territories in which people from particular ethnic groups lived. In their conceptualization, European observers believed ethnicity was determined by language, although they often noted differences in political structures and customs – dress, scarifications, foods, and so forth. Within ethnic groups, there is often a notion of shared descent. In Upper Guinea, oral traditions also speak of ethnolinguistic territories, which people in Guinea-Bissau refer to as *chão* (*tchon* in the singular) in a widely spoken creole language called *Kriolo*. In an exhaustive study of written sources from the years 1440 to 1700, P. E. H. Hair shows how these *chão* have been stable over time. That is, ethnic groups remained established in more or less the same locations for many centuries.[18]

Although European colonial policies did, in the twentieth century, bring ethnic identities to the fore, hardening them and raising their importance by linking economic and political opportunities to group inclusion, there is no evidence that Europeans "invented" ethnic identities from whole cloth in Upper Guinea – in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries and certainly not before. Simply put, in Upper Guinea before the nineteenth century, Europe's representatives were rent-paying guests of local African landlords. For the most part, they exercised little direct political influence beyond the boundaries of small coastal areas. And in the enclaves of Bissau and Cacheu, Portugal's political and military position was tenuous indeed.[19] Africans responded to both internal and external forces by defining and redefining identities; to describe their identities as "European inventions" would be to misunderstand the nature of power in Upper Guinea. Here and elsewhere – although perhaps not everywhere – in Africa, ethnic identities were salient from the fifteenth through the nineteenth centuries.[20]

[18] P. E. H. Hair, "Ethnolinguistic Continuity on the Guinea Coast," *Journal of African History* 8, 2 (1967), 247–68.

[19] Joshua B. Forest, *Lineages of State Fragility: Rural Civil Society in Guinea-Bissau* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003), 27–63.

[20] My purpose here is not to compare and contrast the salience of ethnic identities in places across Africa. That said, I think people on the Upper Guinea coast may have emphasized ethnic identities more than people in many other parts of Africa. In Maranhão, slaves from West Central Africa in the eighteenth century were most often identified as Angolan in plantation inventories. Those from Upper Guinea most often identified themselves and were identified by others with more narrow ethnonyms – Balanta, Bijago, Biafada, Papel, etc.

This is not to say that ethnic identities, as misguided European colonial administrators and intellectuals thought through much of the twentieth century, were innate and unchanging. Many people in Upper Guinea were multilingual.[21] People from different groups sometimes married. Some changed locations, moving from one *tchon* to another. Others settled down with people from other ethnic groups, eventually becoming members of that group. As Boubacar Barry writes, "There were Toures, originally Manding, who became Tukulor or Wolof; Jallos, originally Peul, became Khaasonke; Moors turned into Naari Kajor; Mane and Sane, originally Joola, surnames were taken by the Manding royalty of Kabu."[22] In the northeast of Guinea-Bissau, Balanta who interacted and intermarried with Mandinka over time adopted new political structures, cultural styles, and social customs. Their language changed to integrate Mandinka words, and eventually they adopted an identity for themselves that was neither Balanta nor Mandinka. They became Bejaa.[23]

But no Bejaa was only a Bejaa. That is, no Bejaa held one and only one identity – an ethnic identity. Indeed, members of all ethnic groups held multiple and overlapping identities – some more important at times than an ethnic identity. A Papel could identify himself as a member of a rural, village-based community and as a *grumete* (canoe-hand) employed by a white merchant in Bissau. He could work as a *grumete* alongside Balanta, Bijago, Mandinka, and people from other Upper Guinea ethnic groups, joining with them at times in common cause to protest treatment by an employer or to defend an employer's interests against threats from an African landlord. A Papel could wear, like all people in Upper Guinea, protective amulets acquired from Muslim priests. Further, he could attend a multiethnic mass when Catholic priests were in Bissau, and he could visit shrines to Papel ancestral spirits. He could have many identities – identities linked to a very local religion and to Catholicism *and* Islam; identities linked to his profession, village, and ethnicity. Ethnic identities were not the only identities that Upper Guineans possessed, and

[21] Almada noted in the late sixteenth century that Biafada had a word (*ganagoga*) for "a man who speaks all languages." Andre Alvares de Almada, *Brief Treatise on the Rivers of Guinea*, trans. P. E. H. Hair (Liverpool: University of Liverpool, 1984), 1: 23.

[22] Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 35.

[23] Avelino Teixeira da Mota, *Guiné portuguesa* (Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1954), 141; Cornélia Geising, "Agricultura e resistência na história dos Balanta-Bejaa," *Soranda* 16 (July 1993), 125–76; Diane Lima Handem, *Nature et fouconnement du pouvoir chez les Balanta Brassa* (Bissau: Arquivo Histórico do Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisa, 1986), 10–19.