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AFRICANS IN THE DIASPORA: THE DIASPORA AND AFRICA

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ONGOING AFRICAN DIASPORAS, the recent growth of Atlantic and diasporic studies, the globalization of capital and culture, the technological revolution and the breakdown in information boundaries, all these have necessitated a rethinking of the African diaspora and its changing meanings. The nature and composition of the African diaspora have undergone significant changes over time: from the forced migration of African captives of the Old and New Worlds to the voluntary emigration of free, skilled Africans in search of political asylum or economic opportunities; from a diaspora with little contact with the point of origin (Africa) to one that maintains active contact with the mother continent; all culminating in the birth of a unique African who straddles continents, worlds and cultures. Today, Africans are found in non-traditional points of migration such as Israel, Japan, Taiwan, New Zealand and Australia. In this diasporic flux, many sociological givens have been challenged and/or transformed: the boundedness of culture and religion; the definition of citizenship; and state-civil society relations, among other things. Intriguing continuities also persist in the existence of trading diasporas within and outside Africa and in the unfortunate survival of forms of unfree labour in Africa and beyond.

When the editors of *African Affairs* invited me to write something thoughtful and provocative on the more contemporary African diasporas and their impact on Africa, they gave me quite wide terms of reference. I have chosen to examine the changing nature of diaspora over time—with more emphasis on the twentieth century—and its ramifications for African religions and cultures, for the redefinition of political communities, and for the economic potential of the free flow of skilled Africans and African financial capital for African development. Joseph Harris has emphasized the ways in which diasporas 'affect the economies, politics, and social dynamics of both homeland and the host country or area'.[1] As an historian, I have chosen to dwell on the historical experience of diaspora rather than on the equally important discourse on diaspora that is current in literary and cultural studies, a discourse which nonetheless informs some of the issues examined in this essay, as well as its conceptualization. The

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[1] Joseph E. Harris, 'The dynamics of the global African diaspora', in Alusine Jalloh and Stephen E. Maizlish (eds), *The African Diaspora* (Texas A & M University Press, Arlington, TX, 1996), p. 7.

essay also provides some discussion of internal African diasporas, including the significant presence of Asian-Indian and Lebanese diasporas within Africa.

Defining diaspora

The present flourishing of diasporic studies and journals underscores a conscious thinking about or intellectualizing of the diaspora. This development was greatly facilitated by several international conferences sponsored by UNESCO in the late 1970s on the 'African Slave Trade' (1978), 'Cultures of the Caribbean' (1978), and the 'African Negro Cultural Presence in the Caribbean and in North and South America' (1980). Howard University provided the first institutional framework for the study of the African diaspora when it convened its First African Diaspora Studies Institute (FADSI) in 1979. This endeavour culminated in a seminal publication, *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora* (1982), which presented a conceptual framework for the study of the African diaspora as well as several stimulating case studies from Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas.[2] Since 1989 an African Diaspora Research Project (ADRP) has existed at Michigan State University. Its activities are covered in a newsletter appropriately entitled *Connexions*. The 1999 annual conference of the American Historical Association in Washington DC featured diaspora and Atlantic history as its theme. The 1990s have witnessed the birth of new diasporic journals such as *Diaspora* and *Exchange* in addition to older journals like the *Journal of Black Studies*. *Public Culture* and the revived *Transition* are devoted to the history and current production of transnational cultures. And orthodox, non-diasporic journals such as *African Affairs* have become interested in the African diaspora. But what is the African diaspora?

The term 'diaspora' originally or historically was used to refer to the Jewish dispersion. Today, as William Safran points out, it shares space or is used as a metaphorical designation to describe alien residents, expellees, political refugees, expatriates, immigrants, and ethnic and racial minorities.[3] Safran provides a six-point list of criteria for defining diaspora, that is worth quoting in full:

> (1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original 'center' to two or more 'peripheral', or foreign, regions; (2) they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland—its physical location, history, and achievements; (3) they believe they are not—and perhaps cannot be—fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; (4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal

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[2] Joseph E. Harris (ed.), *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora* (Howard University Press, Washington, DC, 1982).

[3] William Safran, 'Diasporas in modern societies: myths of homeland and return', *Diaspora,* **1,** 1 (1991), pp. 83–99.

> home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return—when conditions are appropriate; (5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and its safety and prosperity; and (6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship.[4]

In Safran's opinion, the Jewish diaspora represents the 'ideal type' of diaspora, though other dispersions—Maghrebi, Armenian, Turkish, Palestinian, and Greek—may qualify for the diaspora designation.

However useful a prototype for diaspora, the Jewish dispersion was a unique historical event and should not define the nature or essence of subsequent dispersions. As James Clifford argues, diasporic communities may exhibit two or more features of Safran's criteria and, importantly, societies may wax or wane in diasporism.[5] Diaspora communities may thus exhibit different aspects of Safran's criteria at different points in time. To take the African diaspora in the New World as an example, from the sixteenth century Africans were certainly dispersed from the African continent to two or more foreign regions; they retained a collective memory, vision or myth of the homeland.[6] Racism makes people of African descent feel alienated in the Americas; some regard Africa as their true home and the place of their eventual return—witness Marcus Garvey's 'back to Africa movement'; and African-Americans are committed to restoring Africa as a place of safety and prosperity, especially through Pan-Africanism. These different diasporic responses have waxed and waned over time. Clifford consequently provides a more accessible definition of diaspora or diaspora communities.

> It involves dwelling, maintaining communities, having collective homes away from home . . . Diaspora articulates, or bends together, both roots *and* routes [travel] to construct . . . alternate public spheres, forms of community consciousness and solidarity that maintain identifications outside the national time/space in order to live inside, with a difference.[7]

'Imagining' the homeland is a potent force in diasporic communities, and diaspora cultures mediate 'in a lived tension, the experiences of separation and entanglement, of living here and remembering/desiring another place'.[8]

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[4] Safran, 'Diasporas in modern societies', pp. 83–4.

[5] James Clifford, 'Diasporas', *Cultural Anthropology,* **9**, 3 (1994), pp. 305–6.

[6] David Scott highlights how, in the interwar period, Afro-Americans reclaimed in various inflections—Garveyism, Pan-Africanism, the Harlem Renaissance—'a past called Africa', and placed it 'in the foreground of their assertions of cultural identity and community'. David Scott, 'That event, this memory: notes on the anthropology of African diasporas in the New World', *Diaspora,* **1**, 3 (1991), p. 273.

[7] Clifford, 'Diasporas', p. 308.

It is important to remember that diasporas often occur within the broader context of political economy, that is, a demand for labour. Ruth Simms Hamilton, director of the ADRP at Michigan State University, highlights the demand for labour in the emerging modern world as one of the crucial factors accounting for the ongoing geo-social displacement of African peoples. The exigencies of global capitalism have sucked Africans into a global labour market for the past five centuries: from the slave-worked plantations of the New World to the transitory black labourers who built railroads and other infrastructural developments like the Panama Canal in South, Central, and North America in the second half of the nineteenth century; to the African soldiers who fought in both world wars and worked in factories in France after the Second World War; to the contemporary brain-drain of African professionals and academicians to the West.[9]

It is this paradigm of political economy that has great utility in explaining twentieth-century African diasporas or the voluntary, ongoing emigration of Africans from the African continent. The 'diaspora' has become an important economic and political resource base for Africans as well as a stage for redefining one's social identity.[10] Going 'abroad' in Africa has been extended from the original conception of 'overseas' to going outside one's homeland or country. It has become entwined with the notion of going to 'hustle' or seek one's fortune—preferably in a country where one's efforts are not witnessed or supervised by one's kin. For the Ghanaian this could mean the Ivory Coast, Botswana, England or North America. In the contemporary global context in which African governments are dependent on Western financial institutions for the running of their economies, at the micro-level the economic survival and prosperity of families have become equally dependent on having family members in the diaspora. Menial jobs that an African would decline back in the homeland are eagerly sought in the West as valuable foreign currencies translate into comfortable incomes in devalued homeland currencies. Constraints on black social mobility in Europe, for example, have led to the description of London (or the United Kingdom) as 'the leveller'. It erases all class distinctions African immigrants brought from their homelands. The educated and the semi-literate, the highborn and the lowborn, rub shoulders as they vie for the same menial jobs. 'Success' in the immigrant community comes to depend on one's exertions, and material accumulation is open to all. A

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[8] Clifford, 'Diasporas', p. 311.

[9] *Connexions,* **3,** 1 (1991), pp. 2–3 (newsletter of the African Diaspora Research Project).

[10] See, especially, Gerrie ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise: African Christians in Europe* (Cardiff Academic Press, Cardiff, 1998).

Twi proverb states that *ôdehye, wônnoa wonni, sika ne asɛm* ('high birth is not food; money is all that matters').[11] Thus, the diaspora is also an important space to remake one's self, even to overcome the social liabilities of birth. The successful migrant returns home as an 'upper class' citizen, respected for her/his wealth. This longing for home, these dreams of a triumphant return, are captured in the phrase Ghanaians abroad often use for work: *di paa* (Twi: 'to do menial labour'). This phrase is even used by some Ghanaians with desk jobs, as the return home and self-employment in the homeland remain the ideal. Many Africans abroad struggle to accomplish this feat of a successful return, and for many who discover to their chagrin that Western streets are not paved with gold, longing for home or nostalgia becomes an even more powerful memory and emotion.[12]

Thus, there have been several phases of the African diaspora, varying in time and space. Joseph Harris points to the primary, secondary, tertiary, and circulatory phases of the African dispersion.

> The primary stage is the original dispersion out of Africa [especially through the slave trade]; the secondary stage occurs with migrations from the initial settlement abroad to a second area abroad; the tertiary stage is movement to a third area abroad; and the circulatory stage involves movements among the several areas abroad and may include Africa.[13]

This article makes no pretence to a comprehensive coverage of these four phases of the African dispersion. An arbitrary division of a study of the changing nature of diaspora into the pre-nineteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries is offered in the following pages. I examine the different 'trajectories' or 'routes' of the original African diaspora, for the resultant global dispersion of African communities would influence the direction of travel in the circulatory phase—especially in the twentieth century. I seek to tease out the identities and experiences of some Africans in the pre-nineteenth century diaspora in order to underscore the diversity of experiences in the diaspora. Even at the height of the international slave trade, free Africans also travelled in the Old and New Worlds. The nineteenth-century abolition of the slave trade and slave emancipation enhanced mobility, and 'diaspora', infused by 'travel', assumed more complex dimensions.[14] Travel was not necessarily autonomous or voluntary at this stage, as the military conscription of colonial Africans during the two world wars illustrates. Political, economic, and social turmoil and decline in post-colonial Africa underpin the current global dispersion of Africans from the African continent. What is most significant about this twentieth-century dispersion is the ties Africans outside Africa retain with their home countries—politically, economically, socially, and culturally. It is a tense, ambivalent, yet cultivated relationship, as both sides appreciate the material and cognitive value of the link but have been transformed by the experience of separation. Africans in the homeland and in the diaspora thus often differ in their evaluation of politics, economics, culture, and society. In this century, Africa and its diaspora exist in a closer physical union than in any previous period.

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[11] C. A. Akrofi, *Twi Mmebusɛm: Twi proverbs with English translations and comments* (Waterville Publishing House, Accra, n.d.), p. 60.

[12] The celebration of 'triumphant' returns in Mande culture, or the myth of the homeland, is critically examined in Manthia Diawara, *In Search of Africa* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1998).

[13] Joseph Harris, 'Introduction', in Harris (ed.), *Global Dimensions*, pp. 8–9.

[14] Here I endorse the distinction Clifford draws between 'diaspora' and 'travel'. Travel does not necessarily imply dwelling and maintaining communities away from home. But diaspora is serviced by travel: in its origination, in its continuing reinforcement by new arrivals, and in the maintenance of links between the diaspora and the homeland. Clifford, 'Diasporas'; and James Clifford, *Routes: Travel and translation in the late twentieth century* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1997).

Pre-nineteenth-century African diaspora

As Patrick Manning emphasized in his influential *Slavery and African Life* (1990), there were three major streams of slave trade in Africa's history: an internal African slave trade, the Atlantic slave trade, and the Muslim or Asian slave trade. The result would be the dispersed presence of Africans in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas. The African diaspora in the New World—North, Central, and South America and the Caribbean—has received much scholarly attention because of the significant visible presence of vocal black constituencies. In all, almost 10 million Africans were landed in the Americas during the slave trade from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries.[15] These Africans were employed mostly on plantations and in mines.[16] This forced dispersion of Africans in the New World was connected to the rise of a new economic system in the Mediterranean and the Atlantic islands off the shores of West Africa: the plantation complex. Financed initially by Italian capital, the Portuguese and the Spanish would pioneer the quest for tropical lands ideal for this new economic system. Based on sugar cultivation and slave labour, the plantation complex underpinned the Western demand for African slaves that ended only in the early 1900s.[17]

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[15] Philip Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A census* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1969). The exact figure given by Curtin in 9.566 million people. Joseph Inikori (ed.), *Forced Migration: The impact of the export slave trade on African societies* (Hutchinson, London, 1981) revises Curtin's estimates and argues for a higher figure of 15.4 million. Harris endorses Inikori's figures. Harris, 'Dynamics of the global African diaspora', p. 11.

[16] Readers can consult the vast literature on the Atlantic slave trade and slavery in the New World. David Northrup, *The Atlantic Slave Trade* (D. C. Heath, Lexington, 1994) provides a useful compendium of excerpts from influential works on the Atlantic slave trade. Good studies of slavery in the Americas include Herbert Klein, *African Slavery in Latin America and the Caribbean* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1986); Stuart B. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian slavery* (University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL, and Chicago, 1992); Richard S. Dunn, *Sugar and Slaves: The rise of the planter class in English West Indies, 1624–1713* (W. W. Norton, New York, 1972); Robert William Fogel, *Without Consent or Contract: The rise and fall of American slavery* (Norton, New York, 1989); and David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2000).

Africans were also present in Europe from the Middle Ages.[18] Irish records suggest that a number of Africans were captured in a Viking raid on North Africa in 862 AD and carried to Dublin, where they were known as 'blue men'.[19] Black servants became a mark of status among the British aristocracy. Two black ladies occupied responsible positions in 1507 at the court of King James IV of Scotland, and Elizabeth I employed Africans at her court as entertainers.[20] Folarin Shyllon estimates that probably hundreds of blacks lived in London in the sixteenth century, enough to cause official disquiet and royal orders in 1596 and 1601 expelling blacks from the realm. The measures were unsuccessful, and in eighteenth-century Britain black communities existed in London, Liverpool, Bristol, Hull, Manchester, Bedfordshire, and Yorkshire, among other places.[21] The presence of destitute blacks in Britain was to encourage the resettlement scheme in Sierra Leone at the end of the eighteenth century. An insignificant number of 400 blacks participated in the Sierra Leone scheme; most chose to remain in Britain. From the fifteenth century, African communities, both free and enslaved, existed in Lisbon, Barcelona, Cadiz, Valencia, Lyon, Orleans, Nantes, Marseilles, Paris, Venice, and Rome.[22]

Less well publicized is the African presence in Arabia, the Persian Gulf, and Asia. It was believed that African slaves in the Arab world were mostly eunuchs, slave-soldiers, and domestics, categories that did not facilitate their biological reproduction;[23] hence the apparent absence of separate black communities in the Middle East. Ralph Austen estimates that about 9 million Africans were sent north to the Muslim world through the trans-Saharan slave trade: 6 million between 600 and 1600, and 3 million between 1600 and 1900.[24] And as Joseph Harris and, more recently, Edward Alpers have demonstrated, these Africans did not disappear without a trace.[25] Old African communities continue to exist in India, Pakistan, Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Oman, and Yemen. Joseph Harris examined the slave trade from the Red Sea and Swahili coasts to the Arab world and Asia (the Indian Ocean slave trade). The Indian Ocean slave trade peaked in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with the Omani Arab occupation of the island of Zanzibar and parts of the Swahili coast. This period coincided with the introduction of clove and coconut (copra) plantations into East Africa and the intensification of date cultivation and pearl diving in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf.[26] Many of these African slaves were absorbed into the plantation economy in Zanzibar and its mainland domains.[27] For the nineteenth century, Ralph Austen calculates that about 800,000 Africans were removed from the African continent through the Indian Ocean trade, about 500,000 for the Red Sea coast and a little over 300,000 for the Swahili coast.[28] With French connivance, the Indian Ocean slave trade continued into the late nineteenth century, with Mauritius and Réunion being major importers of East African slaves.

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[17] Philip D. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990) and Sidney W. Mintz, *Sweetness and Power: The place of sugar in modern history* (Penguin Books, New York, 1985).

[18] Hans W. Debrunner, *Presence and Prestige: Africans in Europe* (Basler Afrika Bibliographien, Basel, 1979), pp. 17–32.

[19] Folarin Shyllon, 'Blacks in Britain: a historical and analytical overview', in Harris (ed.), *Global Dimensions*, p. 171.

[20] Shyllon, 'Blacks in Britain', p. 171.

[21] Shyllon, 'Blacks in Britain', pp. 172–7. On the early history of Africans in Britain, see also Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The history of black people in Britain* (Pluto, London, 1984) and David Killingray, 'Africans in the United Kingdom: an introduction', in David Killingray (ed.), *Africans in Britain* (Frank Cass, Ilford, 1994), pp. 2–4.

[22] Harris, 'Dynamics of the global African diaspora', p. 10.

[23] See, for example, Daniel Pipes, *Slave Soldiers and Islam: The genesis of a military system* (Yale University Press, New Haven, CT, 1981).

[24] Ralph Austen, *African Economic History* (James Currey, London, 1987), ch. 2.

Before Joseph Harris, few scholars examined the East African slave trade to Asia. African slaves in Asia mostly came by way of the Arab world, though some slaves and possibly freemen (especially traders) came directly from the regions of the Horn of Africa. Ethiopian kings exchanged presents—including slaves—with kings in Asia, especially the Mughuls.[29] African slaves in Asia—known as Habshis and Siddis—served as sailors, dock workers, domestics, and soldiers. In the last capacity, some African soldiers came to wield enormous influence in Indian states such as Bengal in the late fifteenth century and in Ahmandnagar and Hyderabad in the sixteenth. Indeed, the island of Janjira, about forty-five miles south of Bombay, was a Siddi stronghold until 1834, when Britain declared the island subject to British power. Between 1616 and 1760 the Siddis of Janjira with their powerful navy served as the effective guardians of the northwest coast of India. And Malik Ambar, a Habshi, rose to become the virtual head of the Muslim state of Ahmadnagar between 1607 and 1626.[30] Pashington Obeng's current research documents the presence of

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25. Joseph E. Harris, *The African Presence in Asia: Consequences of the East African slave trade* (Northwestern University Press, Evanston, IL, 1971); Edward Alpers, 'The African diaspora in the Northwest Indian Ocean: reconsideration of an old problem, new directions for research', *Comparative Studies in South Asia, Africa and the Middle East,* **17,** 2 (1997), pp. 61–80 and 'Recollecting Africa: diasporic memory in the Indian Ocean world', *African Studies Review*, forthcoming.
26. Alpers, 'Recollecting Africa'.
27. Alpers, 'African diaspora in the Northwest Indian Ocean'.
28. Ralph Austen, 'The 19th century Islamic slave trade from East Africa (Swahili and Red Sea Coasts): a tentative census', in William Gervase Clarence-Smith (ed.), *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (Frank Cass, London, 1989), pp. 21–44.
29. Harris, *African Presence in Asia*, pp. 34–5.
30. Harris, *African Presence in Asia*, ch.6.

Siddi or Habshi communities, such as Sirsi, Yellapur, and Mundgod, in the Indian state of Karnataka.[31]

Free Africans in the pre-nineteenth-century African diaspora

It is important not to homogenize space and experience in the pre-nineteenth-century African diaspora. Alongside the forced migration of African slaves to the Old and New Worlds, free Africans travelled the slave routes as sailors, merchants, tourists, and students. The maritime Kru of Liberia and the Mina or Elmina of the Gold Coast were renowned for their navigational skills and were often used as canoemen by European trading ships along West Africa.[32] European captains with crew cut down by illness often hired Kru and Mina sailors for the return trips to Europe, these African sailors returning to Africa on later voyages. From the fifteenth century extensive trade relations between Europeans and Africans along the West African coast had nurtured mercantile communities in places such as St Louis, Goreé, Cape Coast, Accra, and Ouidah. Intermarriages between African elite families and European merchants cemented trading interests, and the mulatto products of these unions were often provided with a Western education in fort schools in West Africa or in Europe.[33]

Trade and diplomatic missions were sent from African states to Europe from the sixteenth century. African linguists were sent to England in 1555 to learn the English language to facilitate trade.[34] In 1658 the king of Allada, on the Slave Coast, sent an embassy to Spain requesting Christian missionaries. The Spanish acceded to this request in 1660.[35] Ray Kea argues that:

> The growth of cultural capital among the prominent and wealthy families and lineages in the 'grand emporium' [the Gold Coast in this context, though applicable to West Africa] was indicative of the increasing complexities of stratification, on the one hand, and the extension of social power in time and space, on the other. These processes remind us that an unbounded global space existed mainly as a function of specific kinds of power and capacity. The rich

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[31] Pashington Obeng, 'The wood belongs to us too: Afro-Indians of Karnataka,' *Renewal* (August 1998), pp. 3–5.

[32] See, for example, George Brooks, *The Kru Mariner in the Nineteenth Century: An historical compendium* (University of Delaware Press, Newark, 1972); Robert Smith, 'The canoe in West African history', *Journal of African History,* **11,** 4 (1970), pp. 513–33; Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa 1550–1750: The impact of the Atlantic slave trade on African society* (Clarendon, Oxford, 1991); and C. W. Gutkind, 'Trade and labour in early precolonial African history: the canoemen of southern Ghana', in Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch and Paul Lovejoy (eds), *The Workers of African Trade* (Sage, Beverley Hills, CA, 1985), pp. 25–49.

[33] Good studies on Euro-African commerce and society along the West African coast include Margaret Priestley, *West African Trade and Coastal Society* (Oxford University Press, London, 1969) and George Brooks, 'The *Signares* of Saint-Louis and Gorée: women entrepreneurs in eighteenth century Senegal', in Nancy J. Hafkin and Edna Bay (eds), *Women in Africa: Studies in social and economic change* (Stanford University Press, Stanford, CA, 1976).

[34] Shyllon, 'Blacks in Britain', pp. 171–72.

[35] Law, *Slave Coast of West Africa*, p. 124.

> and powerful had access to this space. The travelers, whether students or tourists, did not hunger for meat and money. They had special capacities for mobility, and they had the opportunity to acquire desirable commodities.[36]

Thus an eighteenth-century letter from Liverpool (1788) reported that:

> There are at present about fifty Mullatto and Negro children, natives of Africa, in this town and its vicinity, who have been sent here by their parents to receive the advantage of a European education . . . These children are sent here chiefly from the Windward and Gold Coasts, where Europeans more generally reside, who being in the habit of sending their children here for education, their example is followed by such of the natives as their neighbours can conveniently support the expense.
>
> Exclusive of those who are sent here for education, many adults visit this country from motives of curiosity, and parents send their children occasionally from almost all parts of that coast, to receive some advantage and improvement, by observing the manners and customs of civilized society, (or as they phrase it 'To learn sense and get a good head').[37]

The educational careers in Enlightenment Europe of West Africans such as Anton Wilhelm Amo (c. 1703–54), Frederick Pedersøn Svane (c. 1710–90), Christian Jacob Protten (1715–69), Jacobus Eliza Johannes Capitein (1717–47), and Philip Quaque (c. 1741–1816)—incidentally all from the Gold Coast—may significantly advance our understanding of the West African conception and articulation of modernity.[38]

It needs to be highlighted, as a conclusion to this sub-section, that there was also an internal African diaspora in the pre-nineteenth-century period, and that the pre-colonial era witnessed the movement of traders, clerics, and slaves beyond their cultural and linguistic homes. The depredation of the slave trade with its concomitant raids and kidnapping, for example, made Malinke life insecure before the rise of Sundiata in the thirteenth century, as Malinke kidnapped fellow Malinke for sale to foreign merchants. Claude Meillassoux cites Wa Kamissoko, a Mande praise-singer's account of those insecure days: 'If today there are so many Malinke in the Sahel or in the Sosso, it is the Malinke themselves who are the main cause'.[39] Though Sundiata has gone down in history as the founder of Mali, in Malinke traditions it is perhaps for ending brigandage and insecurity among the Malinke that he is best remembered.[40] Soninke and Wangara traders (*dyula* or *juula*) and clerics roamed the savanna and savanna-woodlands of West Africa from the fourteenth century, extending old trans-Saharan trade routes and opening new ones. They also extended the frontiers of Islam, establishing towns such as Buna and Begho, important commercial entrepots as well as centres of learning.[41] In the course of the pre-colonial era, other professional traders such as the Hausa kola traders and Fula cattle traders emerged.[42] These migrant traditions have extended into the colonial and post-colonial periods.[43]

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[36] Ray A. Kea 'Modernity, African narratives, and social identity in the eighteenth century Atlantic world' (Paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Conference, Chicago, 1998), p. 13.

[37] Kea, 'Modernity, African narratives and social identity', pp. 12–13.

[38] Kea, 'Modernity, African narratives and social identity'; Marilyn Sephocle, 'Anton Wilhelm Amo,' *Journal of Black Studies,* **23**, 2 (1992), pp. 182–7; and Magnus Sampson, *Makers of Modern Ghana*, vol. 1 (Anowuo Educational Publications, Accra, 1969), pp. 37–43.

[39] Claude Meillassoux, *The Anthropology of Slavery: The womb of iron and gold* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1991), p. 145.

Community and culture in the diaspora

The study of African cultural 'survivals' or 'transformations' in the diaspora during slavery and its aftermath has attracted much attention since the middle of the twentieth century. Such studies have moved from endeavours to locate specific survivals (still intact) of African culture to the more nuanced study of their transformation or recreation of African cultures in the New World—albeit, maintaining an 'African spirit'. Brazil, with its large African population and its limited repatriation of ex-slaves to West Africa in the 1830s, has received considerable scholarly attention since the 1930s.[44] Brazil was also the site of spectacular slave rebellions informed by African social organization and methods of warfare.[45] African religious influences in the Americas—in the light of black political disenfranchisement during slavery and its aftermath—have also provided a fertile field for the study of African cultural survivals and transformations. Fascinating studies exist on *vodun*, *candomblé*, and *santeria*, providing important parallels for studies on culture and religion among the more recent, but also politically weak or disenfranchised, African immigrants in the West—to be discussed below.[46]

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[40] Meillassoux, *Anthropology of Slavery*, pp. 146–7.

[41] See Ivor Wilks, 'Wangara, Akan, and the Portuguese in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', in Ivor Wilks, *Forests of Gold* (Ohio University Press, Athens, OH, 1993), pp. 1–39; Paul Lovejoy, 'The role of the Wangarawa in Central Sudan', *Journal of African History,* **19,** 2 (1978), pp. 173–93; and François Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants: Soninke labour diasporas, 1848–1960* (James Currey, Oxford, 1997).

[42] Paul Lovejoy, *Caravans of Kola: The Hausa kola trade 1700–1900* (Ahmadu Bello University Press, Zaria, 1980) and Alusine Jalloh, 'The Fula trading diaspora in colonial Sierra Leone', in Jalloh and Maizlish, *African Diaspora*, pp. 22–38.

[43] See, especially, Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants.*

[44] Early works include E. Franklin Frazier, 'The Negro in Bahia, Brazil', *American Sociological Review,* 7 (1942), pp. 465–78; Lorenzo Turner, 'Some contacts of Brazilian ex-slaves with Nigeria, West Africa', *Journal of Negro History,* **27** (1942), pp. 55–67; and Melville Herskovits, *The Myth of the Negro Past* (Beacon Press, Boston, MA, 1941). For a review of this literature, see Tiffany Ruby Patterson and Robin D. G. Kelley, 'Unfinished migrations: reflections on the African diaspora and the making of the modern world', *African Studies Review*, forthcoming.

[45] See, for example, João J. Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim uprising of 1835 in Bahia* (Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, MD, 1993); Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels*; Dale T. Graden, ' "This city has too many slaves joined together": the abolitionists crisis in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, 1848–1856', in Jalloh and Maizlish (eds), *African Diaspora*, pp. 134–52; and John Thornton, *Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World 1400–1680* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1992), Part II.

In the US South, West African material culture often proved more relevant to the environmental setting than did European technology. The importance of slaves from the Sene-Gambian region to the development of rice cultivation in South Carolina, and the role of slave mariners and their dugout canoes in river and coastal communication, has been examined.[47] And for African slaves in the United States, Christianity was infused with an African spontaneity and exuberance that were cathartic, while folk beliefs, tales, and songs retained their function as elliptic, and thus safe, forms of social criticism.[48] Afro-American ingenuity ensured the forging of 'family life' during slavery, though slave marriages had no legal recognition, and slave parents thus possessed no legal rights in respect of their children. In the process, an African-American culture and identity emerged, and a new consciousness of race erased previous, distinct African ethnic identities.[49]

African cultural presence has also been documented for the Arab world and Asia even in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. African percussion rhythms, musical instruments, and songs are evident in Saudi Arabia, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates, areas which received significant numbers of African slaves from the Red Sea and Swahili coasts before the twentieth century.[50] African cultural influence is also strong in religion and healing, language, and folkways. Two of the principal forms of music and dance among the Omani, *at-tanburah* (aka *an-nuban*) and *az-zar*, clearly derive from northeast Africa. The latter is related to *zar*, the most widespread form of indigenous spirit possession in the Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia. All adepts of *zar* possession in southern Iran were of African descent.[51] And Swahili words permeated the language of Arabic-speaking crew on board ships in the Persian Gulf in the 1930s.[52]

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[46] See, for example, Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American art and philosophy* (Random House, New York, 1983); George Brandon, *Santeria from Africa to the New World* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 1993) and Sandra T. Barnes (ed.), *Africa's Ogun: Old world and new* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 1997).

[47] See, for example, Peter H. Wood, ' "It was a negro taught them": a look at African labour in early South Carolina', *Journal of Asian and African Studies,* **9,** 3–4 (1974), pp. 160–79; Lawrence W. Levine, 'African culture and U.S. slavery,' in Harris (ed.), *Global Dimensions*, pp. 127–35; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The development of Afro-Creole culture in the eighteenth century* (Louisiana State University press, Baton Rouge, LA, 1992); and Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American seamen in the age of sail* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, MA, 1997).

[48] See, for example, Levine, 'African culture and U.S. slavery'; and John W. Blassingame, *The Slave Community: Plantation life in the antebellum South* (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1979).

[49] Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging our Country Marks: The transformation of African identities in the colonial and antebellum South* (University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill, NC, 1998).

[50] Alpers, 'African Diaspora in the Northwest Indian Ocean'.

[51] Alpers, 'Recollecting Africa'.

In India, Siddis maintain visible though underprivileged communities. In Hyderabad in Pakistan, African musical instruments, folk songs, and dances continue to inform Chaush culture, and some Swahili words are still present in their Urdu language.[53] In the 1953 Indian Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi, a group of thirty-four Siddi folk dancers performed Chaush dances:

> The Assamese Naga dances, unrivalled in their beauty and fantastic costume; and the equally savage and superbly rhythmic war dance of the African Bodyguards of Nizam of Hyderabad—a piece of Africa transplanted in the 14th century into India, and never absorbed.[54]

The language of this newspaper report captures the exoticization of the Siddi and Chaush cultures in twentieth-century India. Pashington Obeng's ongoing research on Siddis in Karnataka indicates that the Siddis' right to land in this Indian state is not even recognized, emphasizing the perception of them as foreigners in spite of their existence in India for centuries.[55] Though Siddis in the state of Gujarat have been accorded official recognition under the 'Scheduled Tribes' scheme, their existence is no less abject.[56] It is the reality of such disempowerment among African communities in the diaspora that underpins the continued saliency of African culture, which paradoxically reinforces their outsider status.

Abolition, emancipation, and nineteenth-century African dispersions

The abolition of the slave trade in the nineteenth century opened new routes in the African diaspora. It led directly to the founding of new settlements such as Sierra Leone, Bathurst (Banjul), and Liberia in West Africa, with the repatriation of Africans from Britain, Nova Scotia, Jamaica, and the United States to the African continent. In the 1830s some ex-slaves from Brazil were deported to the coast of West Africa, taking up residence in towns in Ghana, Togo, the Republic of Benin and Nigeria. In the course of the nineteenth century, emancipation facilitated the return of ex-slaves to Africa, and the return of the 'Bombay Africans' to Kenya in the late nineteenth century provides a good example. Although individual freed slaves had returned to Africa before the nineteenth century, Ayuba Suleiman Diallo (aka Job ben Solomon) being a good

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52. Alpers, 'African Diaspora in the Northwest Indian Ocean'.
53. Harris, *African Presence in Asia*, p. 112.
54. *Statesman* (New Delhi), 28 January 1953. As cited in Harris, *African Presence in Asia*, p. 112.
55. Obeng, 'Afro-Indians of Karnataka'.
56. Alpers, 'Recollecting Africa'.

eighteenth-century example,[57] the nineteenth century witnessed a substantive reconnection between Africa and Africans in the diaspora. This reconnected link would be reinforced by African travels between Africa and the New World, and within Africa.[58]

Denmark abolished the slave trade for its subjects and within its possessions in 1792, a measure followed by Britain in 1807, and then by other Western countries. But the trade would persist into the late nineteenth century as the century also witnessed economic expansion in Brazil, Cuba, Puerto Rico, Mauritius and Réunion. In 1787, a group of 400 blacks from Britain were resettled on the Sierra Leone Peninsula. This initial party was reinforced in 1792 by about 1,000 blacks from Nova Scotia in Canada.[59] In 1800, maroons who had been defeated by the British in Jamaica requested repatriation to Sierra Leone. Between 1807 and 1850, some 40,000 African recaptives rescued by the British naval squadron from slave ships off the West African coast were also settled in Sierra Leone. The descendants of these settlers, known as *Krios*, would play a significant role in Christian evangelism, education, commerce, and the colonial civil service in anglophone West Africa over the course of the century.[60] The more limited British settlement at Bathurst, founded in 1816, also arose from the abolition of the slave trade but had more modest ramifications in its significance for the African diaspora.

The founding of Liberia in 1822 represented another major landmark in the history of the African diaspora. African-American disillusionment with the prospects of racial equality in America, and the growing yet anomalous presence of free blacks, facilitated an important collaboration between the white-led American Colonization Society (established in 1816) and free African-Americans desirous of returning to Africa. The outcome was a pioneer settlement, Cape Mesurado, later renamed Monrovia. Liberia became independent from the American Colonization Society in 1847 and represented—together with Ethiopia—a symbol of hope for an autonomous and progressive African future.

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57. Philip Curtin, 'Ayuba Suleiman of Bondu', in Philip Curtin (ed.), *Africa Remembered* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1967). Another liberated slave in the second half of the eighteenth century, Olaudah Equiano, became an active abolitionist in England. On his life, see Olaudah Equiano, *Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano* (Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 1996).

58. For a fascinating study of some of the dynamics of this reconnected link between the diaspora and Africa in the nineteenth century, see J. Lorand Matory, 'The English professors of Brazil: on the diasporic roots of the Yoruba nation,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, **41** 1 (1999), pp. 72–103.

59. Robin W. Winks, *The Blacks in Canada: A history* (McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal and Kingston, 1997), chs. 2–3.

60. Christopher Fyfe, *A History of Sierra Leone* (Oxford University Press, London, 1962); E. Frances White, *Sierra Leone's Settler Women Traders: Women on the Afro-European frontier* (University of Michigan Press, Ann Arbor, MI, 1987).

The 'Bombay Africans' in Kenya provide an important example of African returnees from the Indian Ocean world. The British chose Aden, Bombay, and the Seychelles as depots for resettling Africans liberated from slave ships in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean during the second half of the nineteenth century. In 1854 the Church Missionary Society founded an African Asylum at Nasik, about a hundred miles from Bombay. Subsidized by the Bombay government, African boys and girls were cared for and taught at the Asylum. Some of these Africans became missionaries and helped to establish missions in East Africa. In 1874 the Asylum was closed, and its students sent as missionaries to Mombasa on the coast of Kenya.[61] They were settled in what became known as Freretown, and the new community was run along the Nasik lines with the establishment of a free, industrial, Christian settlement as its objective. In contrast to the Sierra Leone and Liberian settlers, the 'Bombay Africans' had been born in Africa, having been removed only in the preceding twenty years. Other Africans from Bombay later joined the Freretown community, and, like the Krios of Sierra Leone, the 'Bombay Africans' came to play important roles in education, Christian evangelism, and African politics in East Africa through the 1930s.[62]

In contrast to the resettlement projects in Sierra Leone, the Gambia, Liberia, and Kenya, the return of ex-slaves from Brazil to West Africa was relatively autonomous and unaided by political establishments. The Brazilian returnees mostly consisted of freed slaves and slaves deported from Brazil for their supposed involvement in the slave revolt of 1835—the 'Revolt of the Malês.[63] An estimated 3,000 left Brazil for West Africa, settling mainly in Lagos, Badagry, Ouidah, and Accra. They reinforced the presence of Brazilian trading families such as the de Souzas and the D'Almeidas, who had relocated to West Africa in the eighteenth century. Several of the nineteenth-century returnees became small-scale traders or practised artisan crafts they had acquired in Brazil.[64] The Brazilian presence in nineteenth-century West Africa strengthened conduits of trade and the exchange of goods and people between Brazil and West Africa. It represented, perhaps, the first active link between Africans in Africa and those in the New World diaspora. The rather vibrant political, economic, and social climate of nineteenth-century Africa was curtailed at the close of the century with the colonial partition.[65] Colonialism would add its overlay of new routes in the African diaspora and enlarge the European presence within Africa. European commercial agents would eliminate the Krios and the Brazilians as commercial middlemen, but colonialism would in turn support Lebanese and Asian-Indian diasporas within Africa. The Indian presence in East Africa, however, predated colonial rule.

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[61] Harris, *African Presence in Asia*, pp. 66–76.

[62] A. J. Temu, 'The role of the Bombay Africans (liberated Africans) on the Mombasa Coast 1874–1904', *Hadith,* **3** (1971), pp. 52–81; and Harris, 'Comparative Approach', in Harris (ed.), *Global Dimensions*, pp. 117–22.

[63] Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil*; Graden, 'Abolitionist crisis in Salvador'; and S. Y. Boadi-Siaw, 'Brazilian returnees of West Africa', in Harris (ed.), *Global Dimensions*, pp. 291–308.

[64] Boadi-Siaw, 'Brazilian returnees of West Africa'.

Colonialism and the lure of the metropole

The colonial era witnessed an increase in travel between African colonies and the metropoles. Much of this travel was conceived as transient, and Africans often saw their sojourn in the metropole as temporary. The numbers of African students who proceeded to the metropole to study increased significantly. To take the example of Britain, the number of African students rose from the estimated 45 in 1927 to 70 in 1940. By the early 1950s, there were reported to be 2,000 students in Britain.[66] Patterns of rural-urban labour migration within Africa were extended to encompass the colonial metropoles. Hence, Kru sailors who had migrated from Liberia to Freetown (Sierra Leone) in the nineteenth century extended their migration to British ports like Liverpool and Bristol that serviced trade between Britain and West Africa. A visible Kru community emerged in Liverpool from the late nineteenth century, regularly in touch with the Kru community in Freetown through the stream of Kru sailors that traversed the shipping routes.[67] The number of Africans—born in Africa or of immediate African parentage—living in Britain stood at 4,540 in 1911. It increased slightly to 5,202 by 1931, but had doubled to 11,000 by 1951.[68] These figures would be dwarfed in comparison with the post-colonial African migration to Britain.

The extension of rural-urban African migration to incorporate colonial metropoles has been brilliantly examined in the case of Soninke migration to France. François Manchuelle highlights the cultural and historic underpinnings of Soninke labour migration with its roots in the dispersion of Soninke traders and clerics from the mediaeval period. The Soninke thus responded positively to the economic opportunities of French colonialism in Senegal, taking up wage labour in the groundnut export sector (*navetanes*) and becoming *laptots* (sailors) in French employ.[69] They entered factory work in Senegal in the 1930s. With the demand for labour during the reconstruction of post-Second World War France, the Soninke made the next logical step from Dakar to French ports like Marseilles. Significantly, as Manchuelle convincingly argues, it was the Soninke aristocracy that comprised the early labour migrants in Soninke society. With the environmental deterioration of the Soninke homeland—and building on a 'tradition' of economic migration—Soninke elites migrated in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to seek external wealth that would enable them to maintain their elite status back at home.[70] This valuable insight cautions us not to posit artificial chasms between African migration in the colonial era and that of the post-colonial one. And it provides an important historical precedent for the emigration of professional and elite Africans in the independent era in search of greener pastures overseas. The aim of maintaining elite status back at home was common to both colonial and post-colonial African dispersions.

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[65] The presence of European colonies in Africa predated the partition of the late nineteenth century. The Spaniards and the Portuguese had colonized the Atlantic islands of the Canaries, Madeira, Cape Verde, São Tomé, and Fernando Po in the fifteenth century and coastal Angola became a Portuguese colony in the sixteenth century. The Cape (South Africa) was annexed by the Dutch in 1652. The British declared Sierra Leone and Lagos as colonies in 1807 and 1861 respectively.

[66] Hakim Adi, 'West African students in Britain, 1900–60: the politics of exile', in Killingray (ed.), *Africans in Britain*, pp. 107–8.

[67] Diane Frost, 'Ethnic identity, transience and settlement: the Kru in Liverpool since the late nineteenth century', in Killingray (ed.), *Africans in Britain*, pp. 88–106.

[68] D. Killingray, 'Introduction', in Killingray (ed.) *Africans in Britain*, p. 2.

But not all travel outside the colony or between colony and metropole was voluntary, as African recruitment and deployment during the First and Second World Wars illustrate. The First World War signalled the effective imposition of colonial rule, as African colonies were drawn into the war effort through taxes, food and cash crop production, and conscription. Colonial conquest and rule required the establishment of the colonial African army.[71] This nucleus would be enlarged significantly during both World Wars. France made more liberal use of its African subjects during the First World War, sending 450,000 soldiers to the war arena in Europe and a further 135,000 wartime workers to French factories.[72] 65,000 men from North and West Africa died on active service in Europe. And about 100,000 more Africans—most of them carriers—died in East Africa, largely from disease rather than from armaments.[73]

A similar deployment of African troops was witnessed during the Second World War, though this time sub-Saharan Africa was not an arena of war. The entry of Italy into the war transformed North and Northeast Africa into war zones. 80,000 African troops from French colonies were in France, a quarter of whom lost their lives during the

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[69] Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*.

[70] Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*.

[71] On the colonial military, see Myron Echenberg, *Colonial Conscripts: The Tirailleurs Sénégalais in French West Africa, 1857–1960* (Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 1991); Timothy H. Parsons, *The African Rank-and-File: Social implications of colonial military service in the King's African Rifles, 1902–1964* (Heinemann, Portsmouth, NH, 1999).

[72] See the special issue on the First World War in the *Journal of African History,* **19,** 1 (1978).

[73] Andrew Roberts, *The Colonial Moment in Africa* (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1990), p. 16.

German invasion in May 1940.[74] After the collapse of France, the French army was basically an African army based in Africa. British African troops were used in northern Africa and Burma.[75] Some Africans, desirous of becoming pilots, actively sought enlistment in the British Royal Air Force (RAF), when admission was opened to British African subjects in March 1941. A total of some 50 West Africans were recruited into the RAF during the Second World War. A few, such as Flight Sergeant Akin Shenbanjo of Nigeria, were even awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal.[76] But the deployment of African servicemen outside their colonies was temporary and the majority returned to their homes on demobilization. Service during the wars broadened the horizons for the future dispersion of Africans, but did not expand the African diaspora through settlement. Post-war reconstruction in Europe encouraged the immigration of North Africans. Gradually, African communities expanded in Europe as African migrants gravitated to the colonial or former colonial metropoles: Algerians, Senegalese and Malians in France, Somalians in Italy, Zaireans in Belgium, and so on. The number of Africans in France rose from a mere 2,000 in 1953 to 22,000 in 1963. But much of this migration was still regarded as temporary, and was economically motivated.[77]

Colonial sidekicks: the Lebanese trading diaspora in West Africa

Just as colonial rule facilitated the movement of Africans within the wider empire, so it underpinned the entry of new, foreign commercial classes into Africa. To call the 'Lebanese' (a term often used broadly to incorporate other Levantine communities in West Africa) 'colonial sidekicks' is not to demean them, but only to acknowledge the obvious: colonial rule eased their entry into Africa and assigned them a retail role in the colonial economy. In the age of scientific racism when colonial governments pushed Africans out of commerce and the upper echelons of the colonial service, the Lebanese were in the right place at the right time. The hostility of indigenous elites to Lebanese encroachment was exacerbated by the instrumentality of colonial presence in the Lebanese emergence as an important commercial class in Africa. The Lebanese represent an important case study of Africa as a receiving area for non-African diasporas; Asians in East and South Africa are another significant example. Though not present in huge communities, the Lebanese were present in West Africa in numbers that exceeded the tiny European colonial presence. Unlike colonial officers, who came to Africa on 'tours of duty', Lebanese traders often came to settle, established families, and created Lebanese social networks.

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[74] Basil Davidson, *Modern Africa: A social and political history* (Longman, London, 1989), p. 63.

[75] David Killingray and Richard Rathbone, 'Introduction', in David Killingray and Richard Rathbone (eds), *Africa and the Second World War* (Macmillan, London, 1986), pp. 1–19.

[76] Roger Lambo, 'Achtung! The Black Prince: West Africans in the Royal Air Force, 1939–1946', in Killingray (ed.), *Africans in Britain*, pp. 145–63. African-American soldiers were among the US troops stationed at US military bases in Germany after the Second World War. Germany's brief colonial contacts with Africa brought a few Africans to Germany. This population was enlarged through the presence of black soldiers in occupied Germany. Some soldiers married German women or had children with German women. On Afro-Germans, see Reinhold Grimm and Jost Hermand (eds), *Blacks and German Culture* (University of Wisconsin Press, Madison, WI, 1986); Carolyn Hodges, 'The private plural selves of Afro-German women and the search for a public voice', *Journal of Black Studies*, **23**, 2 (1992), pp. 219–34. For an earlier black presence in Germany see Peter Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, edle Mohren* (Junius, Hamburg, 1993).

[77] Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*, pp. 212–13; Gerrie ter Haar, 'Strangers in the promised land, African Christians in Europe', *Exchange*, **24**, 1 (1995), p. 3.

West Africa was not the actual destination of the first Lebanese immigrants, who were fleeing poverty and religious persecution in their homeland in the second half of the nineteenth century. They were bound for the United States or South America.

> When the gates were closed to them in the United States prior to the First World War, many Lebanese began to look elsewhere. Since the route of emigration was from Beirut to Marseilles, the first few, because of ignorance or deceit on the part of shipowners, landed in Dakar as early as the 1860s. The Lebanese thus began to move down the coast, the first arriving in Freetown in 1893.[78]

The Lebanese dispersion extended to Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria by the first decade of the twentieth century.[79] With little capital, the initial phase of Lebanese settlement was far from easy. In Nigeria the Lebanese were street peddlers, even supplementing their meagre earnings through street singing and musical performances.[80] Through frugality, low-overhead costs by using the family as the unit of trade, enormous personal sacrifice, and shrewd business practices, the Lebanese in West Africa gradually emerged as a significant entrepreneurial class. As colonial rule and the colonial economy became more established, governments and large European wholesale firms came to view the Lebanese as an important cog or intermediary in the extension of commerce. They came to represent the retail link between European wholesalers and African consumers. They extended the cash economy by penetrating the interior and establishing direct contacts with African agricultural producers. They created

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78. Neil O. Leighton, 'The political economy of a stranger population: the Lebanese of Sierra Leone', in William A. Shack and Elliott P. Skinner (eds), *Strangers in African Societies* (University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 1979), p. 86; White, *Sierra Leone's Settler Women Traders*, p. 63. On the Lebanese in Sierra Leone, see also H. Laurens van der Laan, *The Lebanese Traders in Sierra Leone* (Mouton Publishers, The Hague, 1975).

79. Toyin Falola, 'Lebanese traders in Southern Nigeria, 1900–1960', *African Affairs,* **89**, 357 (1990), pp. 523–53; Chris Bierwirth, 'The Lebanese communities of Côte d'Ivoire', *African Affairs,* **98**, 390 (1999), pp. 79–99. The Abdallah and Kriam families settled in Lomé and Keta (Gold Coast) in the early twentieth century. By the Second World War, Joseph Abdallah had emerged as a leading merchant and contractor in Keta. Interview with Joseph Kingsley Abdallah, Keta, 16 October 1996.

80. Falola, 'Lebanese traders', 529.

new consumer tastes by diversifying goods on sale in the interior. And they received colonial protection for their crucial role in the colonial economy.[81]

But in entering the retail trade—or commerce at the bottom end—the Lebanese became involved in direct competition with African traders. The remarkable and rapid transformation of the Lebanese into an entrepreneurial class quickly made them an object of antagonism for African traders and some chiefs. In southwest Nigeria, the towns of Ijebu, Abeokuta, and Ife organized to resist the entry of Lebanese traders in the 1930s.[82] Asantehene Prempeh I returned from twenty-eight years of exile (1896–1924) to find Syrian and Lebanese business interests well established in Kumasi. This was a shock for the Asantehene, who had been exiled at the moment of annexation when no Syrians or Lebanese lived in Kumasi. In 1930 he used the occasion of a commission of inquiry into the liquor trade and consumption to criticize Syrian ownership of 'magnificent buildings at Kumasi' and restaurants, as well as their hold on retailing.[83] In Sierra Leone the Lebanese dispossessed Krio traders of the indigenous kola and rice trade by the end of the 1910s. African animosity to Lebanese aggrandizement resulted in the anti-Lebanese riots in Sierra Leone in July 1919.[84] An important aspect of African nationalism and economic empowerment would involve the expropriation or the expulsion of Lebanese business interests. As Ali Mazrui highlights, 'racially and ethnically distinct strangers are at their most vulnerable in situations of inchoate class formation'.[85] The Lebanese preference for endogamy made them visible as a separate, accumulating class.

Lebanese economic interests were well entrenched by the independence era. They owned more than 50 percent of the modern buildings in Abidjan and had diversified into light manufacturing and the service industries.[86] In Sierra Leone they controlled the diamond business.[87] In Senegal the largest transport owner in the 1960s was the Lebanese Antoine Khoury.[88] In Kumasi the Lebanese were prominent in retailing, the timber industry, and the sale of motor vehicle spare parts. But the colonial protector was gone, and the economic prosperity of a racial minority conflicted with African nationalist aspirations. In the independence era Lebanese businesses have been discriminated against by African governments; governments make them scapegoats for economic failures, and they have been denied political participation and integration through stringent naturalization laws. Chris Bierwirth's observation that in 'contemporary Côte d'Ivoire, politics remains strictly for Africans' holds true for other West African countries.[89] The Lebanese have been expelled from Guinea and victimized in the Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars. Some who fled from Sierra Leone headed for The Gambia, where by 1999 they controlled several supermarkets, hotels, and restaurants in the Greater Banjul area. The Lebanese are often the victims of extortion by governments, and they feel compelled to sponsor public projects as a sign of their good faith towards their adopted countries.[90] Regarded as strangers by African societies and unwilling to assimilate culturally, Lebanese and Indians have been victims of systematic discrimination and expropriation by several African governments. The climax was, perhaps, the expulsion of Asians from Uganda by Idi Amin in 1972.[91] As Africans migrated to the West and other points in the global African diaspora in search of wealth in the post-independence era, the Lebanese and Asian cases, perhaps subconsciously, provided valuable insights into the vexed issues of accumulation and assimilation in the diaspora.

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[81] This common picture emerges from the available studies on the Lebanese in West Africa. See, for example, Leighton, 'Political economy of a stranger population'; White, *Sierra Leone's Settler Women Traders*; Falola, 'Lebanese traders'; Bierwirth, 'Lebanese communities'; and Said Boumedouha, 'Adjustment to West African realities: the Lebanese in Senegal', *Africa,* **60,** 4 (1990), pp. 538–49.

[82] Falola, 'Lebanese traders', pp. 540–4.

[83] Public Record Office, Kew, (PRO) CO 96/692/657. Evidence of Nana Prempeh, Kumasehene, Report of the 1930 Commission on Alcohol.

[84] Leighton, 'Political economy of a stranger population', pp. 88–90; White, *Sierra Leone's Settler Women Traders*, pp. 69–70.

[85] Ali Mazrui, 'Casualties of an underdeveloped class structure: the expulsion of Luo workers and Asian bourgeoisie from Uganda', in Shack and Skinner (eds), *Strangers in African Societies*, p. 261.

[86] Bierwirth, 'Lebanese communities', pp. 91–2.

[87] Leighton, 'Political economy of a stranger population', pp. 91–95; Jalloh, 'Fula trading diaspora', pp. 31–32.

[88] Boumedouha, 'Lebanese in Senegal', p. 540.

Political and economic chaos in independent Africa and international African migration

African independence translated into an enhanced positive presence of Africans in the international arena. As part of the apparatus of the nation-state, African diplomatic embassies were established in Europe, Asia, and the Americas. Entrusted with the image of their countries, embassies were maintained in a fashion that upheld the dignity of African countries. But the euphoria of political independence was not accompanied by economic independence, and the earlier optimism of modernization theorists gave way to the more pessimist dependency theory of the 1970s. The fall in commodity prices for tropical products on the world market from the late 1950s set the larger context of economic decline. Strapped governments were unable to deliver on the grandiose

[89] Bierwirth, 'Lebanese communities', p. 93.

[90] Bierwirth, 'Lebanese communities'; Falola, 'Lebanese traders'; Boumedouha, 'Lebanese in Senegal'.

[91] See M. Twaddle (ed.), *The Expulsion of a Minority: Essays on the Ugandan Asians* (Athlone Press, London, 1975); and Jessica Kuper, ' "Goan" and "Asian" in Uganda: an analysis of racial identity and cultural categories', in Shack and Skinner (eds), *Strangers in African Societies*, pp. 243–59.

promises made at independence. The Sahelian drought between 1968 and 1974 taxed the finances of already weak countries that framed the Sahara. The petroleum crisis of the 1970s felled African countries still standing, with the exception of the lucky few such as Nigeria, who were exporters of oil.

Already in the mid-1960s an unpropitious trend had emerged in African politics—military coups. Nigeria and Ghana registered the first coups in 1966 against the background of economic decay and frustrated expectations. Civil war in Biafra (Nigeria) and the current Democratic Republic of the Congo in the 1960s previewed the civil chaos that has wracked independent Africa. Consequently, new waves of political and economic refugees have streamed out of Africa towards the West. In this current dispersion, African migration is not necessarily towards the former colonial metropoles. Sweden, because of its liberal policy towards political refugees, has become an attractive place for Eritreans, Ethiopians, Somalians, and Ugandans.[92] The adoption of uniform, rigid immigration laws by the European Union has turned the coasts of southern Italy and Spain into important points of entry into continental Europe.[93] Africans are smuggled in from the North African coast by fast boats.[94] Consequently, large West African communities have developed in cities such as Rome, in addition to older Somalian communities.

The Ghanaian diaspora

To examine the implications of the recent international dispersion of Africans, I have selected Ghana as a case study because of my familiarity with the Ghanaian diaspora and also because of the important emerging literature on this phenomenon. The voluntary sojourn of Ghanaians overseas has a long history.[95] Much of this travel was in search of higher education. In the 1990s it has been estimated that more than 12 percent of the Ghanaian population are living abroad.[96] Gerrie ter Haar affirms that Ghanaians constitute 'the largest African population in Europe, excepting those from North Africa'.[97] This, however, is a recent development, dating to the 1970s. Kwame Nimako, a Ghanaian sociologist at the University of Amsterdam, has highlighted three factors that have contributed to the Ghanaian dispersion from the 1970s. He identifies 1964–84 as a period of economic decay, emphasizing the consequent political instability and pointing to the huge increase in the educated population (a result of compulsory education introduced in 1961) without a corresponding expansion in economic capacity and employment opportunities.[98]

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[92] Roswith Gerloff, 'The significance of the African Christian diaspora in Europe: a report on four meetings in 1997/8', *Journal of Religion in Africa,* **29,** 1 (1999), p. 118.

[93] European states adopted the Schengen Accord in 1985, harmonizing their immigration procedures.

[94] Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, ch. 6.

[95] R. Jenkins, 'Gold Coasters overseas, 1880–1919', *Immigrants and Minorities,* **4,** 3 (1985), pp. 5–52.

[96] Rijk A. van Dijk, 'From camp to encompassment: discourses of transubjectivity in the Ghanaian Pentecostal diaspora', *Journal of Religion in Africa,* **27,** 2 (1997), p. 138.

[97] Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, p. i.

A steady decline from about 1958 in the world price for cocoa, Ghana's leading export, put an effective brake on development projects. In the absence of the long-awaited private foreign investment, Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first Prime Minister, embarked on an unsuccessful state-led industrialization programme.[99] Agriculture—and cocoa, the golden goose—received little priority, and by the mid-1960s it was obvious that the Ghanaian economy was in crisis. Political repression stifled dissent. The stage was set for the military intervention of February 1966. Successive governments would fail to redress the structural deficiencies in the Ghanaian economy, and economic non-performance was aggravated by official corruption. The series of bungling civilian governments and inept military regimes climaxed in the 1979 coup by the junior ranks of the military. This was the dawn of the 'Rawlings era', and the four-month tenure of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council unleashed violence on civil society unseen in the history of Ghana. J. J. Rawlings returned in another military coup in December 1981. Committed to a vague socialist policy, the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) introduced popular justice through People's Tribunals, and empowered Workers' Defence Councils to take command of places of employment. In 1983 Ghana's already weak economy collapsed totally, and in late 1983 the UN Food and Agriculture Organization reported massive hunger. The PNDC government now invited the World Bank to intervene and embarked on a Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) to put the economy on the road to recovery. Required austerity budgets worsened the socio-economic plight of Ghanaians.[100] Because of these conditions, the exodus of Ghanaians abroad for political and economic reasons gathered full steam.

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[98] As cited in Ter Haar, 'African Christians in Europe', p. 4. These observations are confirmed in Margaret Peil, 'Ghanaians abroad', *African Affairs,* **94,** 376 (1995), pp. 345–67.

[99] Tony Killick, 'Manufacturing and construction', in Walter Birmingham, I. Neustadt, and E. N. Omaboe (eds), *A Study of Contemporary Ghana*, vol. 1 (Northwestern University Press, Evanston, IL, 1966), p. 274. Nkrumah's industrialization policy was embarked upon despite the recommendation of William Arthur Lewis, the West Indian economist, in 1952 to give priority to agriculture over manufacturing at that stage of Ghana's economic development.

[100] I have provided a very brief overview of the political economy of Ghana as the context for the contemporary Ghanaian diaspora. For some detailed studies on Ghana's political economy since independence, see A. Adu Boahen, *The Ghanaian Sphinx: Reflections on the contemporary history of Ghana, 1972–1987* (Ghana Academy of Arts and Sciences, Accra, 1989); Douglas Rimmer, *Staying Poor: Ghana's political economy, 1950–1990* (Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1992); and Jonathan H. Frimpong-Ansah, *The Vampire State in Africa: The political economy of decline in Ghana* (James Currey, London and Africa World Press, Trenton, NJ, 1992).

The composition of the Ghanaian diaspora is crucial in understanding its significance for the political economy of Ghana. Manchuelle has underscored that it was the elite classes among the Soninke that initially migrated in search of wealth to maintain their elite status back home.[101] Similarly, early Ghanaian migrants overseas were elites or their wards. Ghanaian emigration from the late 1970s, however, encompassed the professional and non-professional classes, elites and commoners, male and female, on a scale that was stupendous. When Nigeria expelled illegal aliens in early 1983, official estimates put the number of Ghanaian 'returnees' at between 900,000 and 1·2 million.[102] These included university and secondary school teachers, artisans, domestic servants, unskilled labourers, and prostitutes. The figure represented a tenth of Ghana's total population at the time. In addition, Emil Rado estimated that by 1985:

> Ghana seemed to have lost between half and two-thirds of its experienced, top level professional manpower. They have gone to the United Nations and its affiliates, to the oil-exporting countries of the Middle East and the English-speaking countries everywhere. . . .[103]

It was impossible for an impoverished economy to keep its skilled and unskilled labour force. Even sports declined, and Ghanaian footballers sought greener pastures in the professional leagues of Europe. The loss of great and small fortunes by men and women in the late 1970s and early 1980s through price controls, lootings, state appropriation of private businesses, and currency changes generated an insecurity that would remain even with the return of better times. Sons who had expected to inherit wealth found themselves dispossessed. A lesson was learned in the value of self-acquired wealth.[104] Aside from real estate, Ghanaians became uneasy about long-term investment in the Ghanaian economy, preferring trade and the fast turn-around to industry and commercial agriculture.

Emigration to Nigeria, or in popular Ghanaian parlance 'Agege', played a major role in popularizing emigration. The perception that oil-rich Nigeria was overflowing with wealth, and that all types of jobs were available for skilled and non-skilled labour, removed 'international migration' as the preserve of the educated or the professional. Indeed, in Kumasi, a woman's vagina was referred to as her 'Agege'. This was not just a reference to the general belief that Ghanaian women prostituted themselves in Nigeria, it underscored the perception that Agege welcomed all—skilled and unskilled. Some studies on Ghanaian female migrants have established a strong connection between Ghanaian prostitutes in Côte d'Ivoire and the presence of HIV/AIDS in the Eastern Region of Ghana.[105] Going abroad to 'hustle' became the stuff of popular culture that was dramatized in comic opera (concert) and popular literature.[106] In Asante where wealth, political power, and conspicuous consumption have been historically connected, new claimants to 'social status' emerged in this period of scarcity. Petrol shortages erased distinctions between the 'car-ful' and the 'car-less'. All walked. Professionals and ordinary workers patronized 'bend-down boutiques' (second-hand clothing). Families with members in Nigeria were on top in those days of scarcity. The wooden 'divider' that partitioned a single room into chamber-and-hall for commoners in compound houses sported huge 'Exeter' corned-beef cans, oversized packets of 'Omo' detergent, and large cans of 'Peak' milk. Just like furniture, 'provisions' had become ornate decorations because of their scarcity. They were acquired not through money, but through channels of emigration. They were for show, not for consumption.

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[101] Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*, p. 223.

[102] Lynne Brydon, 'Ghanaian responses to the Nigerian expulsions of 1983', *African Affairs,* **84,** 337 (1985), p. 570. The oil boom in Nigeria in the 1970s underpinned extensive socio-economic development projects and Ghanaians took advantage of the demand for skilled and unskilled labour in Nigeria.

[103] Emil Rado, 'Notes towards a political economy of Ghana today', *African Affairs,* **85,** 341 (1986), p. 563.

[104] As a recent highlife song from 'The Three Stars' puts it, 'Péwo deé' ('seek your own fortune'). Afriko Music Ghana Limited.

The sudden expulsion of aliens from Nigeria inscribed another important lesson upon popular culture. In the hostile atmosphere that characterized the expulsion of Ghanaians from Nigeria, several left their valuables behind in their haste to secure life and limb. The family and community reception of those who brought back nothing was not warm. Those who are not wealthy migrate to acquire wealth to transform the socio-economic conditions of their families back home. The nightmare of Ghanaian migrants is to return home empty-handed. Such a migrant is denied the 'hero's welcome'.[107] Not surprisingly, a large segment of those deported from Nigeria expressed a desire to return there.[108] An extended drought in 1983–4 meant that the deportees returned home at a particularly vulnerable period, and families needed extra resources and not extra mouths.

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[105] See, for example, Akosua Adomako Ampofo, 'Nice guys, condoms, and other forms of STD protection: sex workers and AIDS protection in West Africa' (Paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Columbus, OH, November 1997); and Akosua Adomako Ampofo, 'Women and AIDS in Ghana: "I control my body (or do I)?" Ghanaian sex workers and susceptibility to STDs, especially AIDS', in P. Makwina-Adebusoye and A. Jensen (eds), *Women's Position and Demographic Change in Sub-Saharan Africa* (Ordina Editions, Liège, 1995), pp. 233–51. On the links between migration in search of wealth and AIDS, see Brad Weiss ' "Buying her grave": money, movement and AIDS in northwest Tanzania', *Africa,* **63**, 1 (1993), pp. 19–35.

[106] See, for example, Yaw Brenya, *99 Days in Agege* (Privately printed, Accra, n.d.). Increasingly, popular fiction on life's adventures included a stint in a neighbouring country. See, for example, Victor Amartefio, *Bediako (The Adventurer)* (Privately printed, Accra, n.d.).

[107] This is central to migrant traditions and is not unique to Ghanaians. See Diawara, *In Search of Africa*; Manchuelle, *Willing Migrants*. From the mid-1980s travelling abroad became an important theme in Ghanaian highlife songs. A whole genre of 'burger highlife' emerged as a number of Ghanaian musicians settled in Germany. The hardships of staying overseas and the fear of returning home with nothing feature on several tracks of Amakye Dede's hit album 'Iron Boy' (Mega CD 004), which came out in 1997–8 and was recorded in Germany.

New avenues of emigration opened up for Ghanaians in the 1980s. Free movement between ECOWAS countries continued, but Ghanaians also flooded into Britain, the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Italy, and North America. They took up residence in Japan, and Hong Kong and Taiwan were incorporated into Ghanaian trading networks. They found their way to oil-rich Libya and Saudi Arabia. The collapse of apartheid in the early 1990s made South Africa another receiving area. South Africans, who had fled into exile during apartheid, also returned home. By the mid-1990s, there were 20,000 Ghanaians in Toronto alone, 14,000 in Italy,[109] 15,000 in the Netherlands,[110] and 30,000 in Chicago. These are underestimates as they exclude the large numbers of Ghanaians living illegally in these countries.

Associational life in the diaspora provides an important social environment for survival and nurture for Ghanaians abroad. Two such forms have received scholarly attention: Ghanaian churches and ethnic associations. The explosion of Pentecostalism in Ghana and Africa from the 1970s (the 'charismatic movement') has been documented extensively. The context of socio-economic decline is not irrelevant to this Pentecostal expansion and the Pentecostal 'gospel of prosperity' has mass appeal.[111] The Pentecostal experience has become crucial to the Ghanaian encounter with globalization and modernity.[112] Rijk van Dijk has argued in a recent paper that the Pentecostal agenda is a modern one that celebrates the trans-national and the trans-cultural embodied in international mobility and the expression of emotion. Perhaps the ultimate measure of success for a Pentecostal church in Ghana is the establishment of international branches.[113] In an earlier article, van Dijk examined connections between Pentecostal churches in Ghana and overseas branches, and how these networks facilitate the movement of ideas, commodities, and people in an international Pentecostal world. Thus the would-be migrant commences her/his experience of travel by visiting one of the several Pentecostal prayer camps in Ghana to pray for success in obtaining a visa for the desired European country. The successful immigrant is eased into the host country through the networks of the international branch of the home church.[114] Ghanaian churches sometimes emerge independently in European or North American cities, and these may then seek an affiliation to churches back in Ghana or remain independent. Van Dijk and Gerrie ter Haar have provided us with detailed case studies of Ghanaian churches in Amsterdam and The Hague.[115] In 1995, ter Haar counted 17 Ghanaian churches in the Bijlmer district of southeast Amsterdam.[116] Membership of African churches provides some security in racially hostile European cities. Ghanaian churches serve as information networks for jobs and housing, and these established channels of communication with officialdom assist illegal Ghanaians in securing legal status. African churches are thus an important substitute for kinship and family networks, while extending the emotive religious experience initiated by Pentecostal churches in the homeland.

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[108] Brydon, 'Ghanaian responses', pp. 572–5.

[109] Peil, 'Ghanaians abroad', pp. 349 and 354.

[110] Van Dijk, 'Camp to encompassment', p. 138.

[111] This is highlighted in Akosua Darkwah, 'Opiate, panacea or coping mechanism: the role of faith gospel theology in Ghana's economic development' (Paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, November 1999).

[112] Birgit Meyer, *Translating the Devil: Religion and modernity among the Ewe in Ghana* (International African Institute, London, 1999); Birgit Meyer, ' "Make a complete break with the past": memory and post-colonial modernity in Ghanaian Pentecostalist discourse', *Journal of Religion in Africa,* **28,** 3 (1998), pp. 316–49; Birgit Meyer, 'Commodities and the power of prayer: Pentecostalist attitudes towards consumption in contemporary Ghana', *Development and Change,* **29,** 4 (1998), pp. 751–76; and van Dijk, 'Camp to encompassment'. For the broader African context, see Paul Gifford, *African Christianity: Its public role* (Indiana University Press, Bloomington, IN, 1998).

[113] Rijk van Dijk, 'The musical politics of transnational Pentecostalism in Ghana' (Paper presented at the African Studies Association Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, November 1999).

The significant presence of African churches in a number of European cities encouraged conferences in the late 1990s to examine the implications of the African Christian diaspora for Europe. In 1997 and 1998 four such meetings involving Church bodies and European missiologists were held in Leeds, Västerås (Sweden), Glay/Doubs (France), and Hamburg.[117] Representatives of African churches were invited to this ecumenical endeavour. All bodies recognize the need for Christian ties to transcend the boundaries of race and culture. But overcoming race has not proved easy. Furthermore, some Western Christians have difficulties relating to Pentecostal theology—in its African context—as a legitimate Christian experience. Its presence in Europe is thus disconcerting. As ter Haar points out, 'Eurocentrism so far has prevented many from seeing that a reverse missionary trend has begun'.[118] Christian experience is being reconfigured in profound ways, and the African diaspora is erasing the geographical compartmentalization of religious experience.

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[114] Van Dijk, 'Camp to encompassment'.

[115] Van Dijk, 'Camp to encompassment'; ter Haar, 'African Christians'; and ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*. Ter Haar incorporates a broader discussion of Ghanaian churches in Europe.

[116] Ter Haar, 'African Christians', p. 6.

[117] Gerloff, 'African Christian diaspora in Europe', pp. 115–20.

[118] Ter Haar, 'African Christians', p. 30.

The formation of Ghanaian ethnic and cultural associations abroad is another important diasporal endeavour that has exploded the boundedness of culture. London remains the hub of the Ghanaian overseas diaspora, and a perusal of the social pages of *West Africa* or the more recent *Ghana Review International* would convey the breadth of Ghanaian social networks. The Internet has extended Ghanaian networks and the *Okyeame* website facilitates a worldwide discussion of Ghanaian issues. Ghanaians have emerged as the largest ethnic group on the Broadwater Farm Estate in Tottenham, North London.[119] Indeed, in London it is possible for a Ghanaian to rent a room in the home of a Ghanaian landlord, work for a Ghanaian cleaning company or small business, maintain a Ghanaian diet by shopping in Ghanaian grocery shops, and socialize in exclusively Ghanaian circles. This may be harder to achieve in North America with its more recent Ghanaian diaspora. The oldest Ghanaian ethnic association in the US was only founded in 1982.[120]

The establishment of Asante Associations abroad, with their kings, queen mothers, and wing chiefs, modelled on the traditional Asante political system, has attracted attention in North America. These associations represent the insertion of Asante into the North American context. Asante kings have been installed in Chicago, Houston, Atlanta, Washington DC, New York, New England, and Toronto. The Asantehene (King of Asante) in Ghana endorses these installations, and he is sometimes represented by a deputizing chief from Asante.[121] At the 1998 African Studies Association conference in Chicago, the Asante Association of Chicago staged a traditional durbar for the Ghana Studies Council. The event included the swearing in of a new sub-chief. These ethnic associations function as cultural and benevolent associations. They provide social networks and services similar to those of the Ghanaian churches, but in addition recreate Ghanaian culture in the diaspora. Rites of passage are celebrated in Ghanaian fashion, and bereaved members find membership in these associations a particularly comforting experience. Indeed, diaspora and nostalgia for home heighten for many the relevance of Ghanaian culture. As Pashington Obeng perceptively comments in his study of Asante installations in New England:

> What is intriguing about the redeployment of royal titles in the United States is that some of the key players might not have participated in installation activities when they were in Africa.[122]

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[119] *Ghana International Review* (June 1999), p. 16.

[120] Agyemang Atta-Poku, 'Asanteman Immigrant Ethnic Association: an effective tool for immigrant survival and adjustment problem solution in New York City', *Journal of Black Studies,* **27,** 1 (1996), pp. 56–76.

[121] Pashington Obeng, 'Re-membering through Oath: installation of African kings and queens', *Journal of Black Studies,* **28,** 3 (1998), pp. 334–56.

[122] Obeng, 'Re-membering through oath', pp. 336–7.

And as they pour libations and swear the oaths of Asante ancestors in these ceremonies, Asante migrants not only celebrate or recreate Asante culture, they also transpose Asante religion to the New World. Ghanaian communities have added to the multi-cultural nature of American society.

Estimates of Ghanaians living in the United States by the mid-1990s range between 200,000 and 400,000.[123] Peil points out that academics, professionals, footballers, and musicians have been the most successful in the Ghanaian diaspora.[124] Several of the most accomplished academics and professionals are based in the US where they have secured a remarkable degree of social and professional acceptance. Peil observed that Ghanaian men in North America 'often find wives among the Caribbean or African American community rather than sending home for a Ghanaian wife'.[125] The gender distribution of the diaspora over the past two decades reveals that, while men went mostly to the oil-rich Arab states, educated men often went to the US, whereas educated women preferred Europe, especially Britain. For several of these professional men in the US, migration has ceased to be temporary. They have acquired permanent residence or US citizenship,[126] often at the request of the American institutions employing them, which facilitate the permanent residence applications of foreigners in the category of 'aliens with special skills'.

The current 'Immigration Diversity Lottery' may gradually diversify the sociological composition of the Ghanaian diaspora in the US.[127] These Ghanaians have not jettisoned Ghana, for they have family back home. Ghanaians in the United States in the 1990s reportedly remitted between \$250 million and \$350 million annually.[128] Statistics indicate that Ghanaian remittances from abroad far outstripped foreign direct investment in Ghana for every year between 1983 and 1990. Private unrequited transfers rose from a net \$16·6 million in 1983 (compared with foreign direct investment of \$1·6 million) to \$201·9 million in 1990 (foreign direct investment stood at \$14·8 million).[129] These huge remittance figures warranted a trip by Paul Victor Obeng, the Presidential Adviser on Government Affairs, to the US in 1996. His mission was to persuade Ghanaians in the US to invest in the Ghanaian economy.

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[123] Obeng, 'Re-membering through Oath', p. 338, and *Home Front* (October–December 1996), p. 25.

[124] Peil, 'Ghanaians abroad', p. 355.

[125] Peil, 'Ghanaians abroad', p. 353.

[126] The author differs in this respect from Peil, who argues that Ghanaians in the US are not interested in acquiring permanent residence. Peil, 'Ghanaians abroad', p. 360.

[127] For the past seven years or so, the US has operated an annual visa lottery programme designed to diversify and enlarge minorities by granting immigrant status to eligible foreigners. This facility has been extended to several African countries.

[128] Peil, 'Ghanaians abroad', p. 359.

[129] Personal correspondence from Kwesi Botchwey, former Finance Minister for Ghana, 14 December 1999.

> Mr Obeng, who addressed a trade and investment forum of identified Ghanaians with financial resources in US, appealed to them to make a positive contribution to the investment mobilisation efforts back in Ghana. Adequate facilities and institutions, he noted, have been provided by the government to meet the requirements for investments.[130]

In spite of a recorded annual GDP growth rate of 5 percent in 1985–90, and the kudos bestowed on Ghana by the World Bank for its successful implementation of the SAP, the economy was still not self-sustaining. Remittances from Ghanaians abroad and IMF and other international loans were what kept the economy 'buoyant'. Privatization under the SAP had virtually eliminated the contribution of state-owned enterprises to the economy in 1990–95.[131] Direct foreign investment of $120 million in 1996 did not compare favourably with P. V. Obeng's own figure of $400 million remitted by Ghanaians in the US. If the Ghanaian economy needed an infusion of private investment, this was the constituency that needed to be courted,[132] they possessed the financial resources and technical expertise crucial to Ghana's economic recovery programme.

In spite of P. V. Obeng's assurances that adequate facilities and institutions had been put in place for Ghanaian investors, Ghanaian professionals in the US regard dual citizenship as an important insurance if they are to invest in Ghana. Ghana does not accept dual citizenship. The recent US policy of putting expiry dates on permanent residence—a contradiction in terms—encouraged some Ghanaians to acquire US citizenship. The security-conscious Rawlings government has seen neighbouring Côte D'Ivoire and Togo as launchpads for Ghanaian coup plotters. Britain, West Germany, and the US have all—at one time or another—been targets of Rawlings' ire for allowing 'dissident' Ghanaian expatriates to settle in these countries.[133] The current National Democratic Congress (NDC) government led by Rawlings thus views the issue of dual citizenship with some unease. That Article 8 of the 1992 Ghanaian Constitution was amended in 1996 to permit dual citizenship underscores the perceived relevance of Ghanaian expatriates to the economy. And the fact that approval of the modalities to implement this decision remains bogged down in the NDC parliament since 1997 is also an indication of the government's ambivalence.

Today, the African diaspora and the African continent have been reconnected in intimate ways. Since 1996 Ghana has hosted a Pan-African Festival (PANAFEST) celebrating the cultural links between

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130. 'Ghanaians abroad advised to invest in Ghana', *Home Front* (October–December 1996), p. 25.

131. World Bank, *World Development Report: Knowledge for development* (Oxford University Press, New York and Oxford, 1999), p. 222.

132. World Bank, *World Development Report*, p. 230; and *Home Front* (October–December 1996), p. 25.

133. Brydon, 'Ghanaian responses', p. 567.

Africans in the diaspora and West Africa. Tourism is booming in Ghana. The European castles at Elmina and Cape Coast, built during the era of Atlantic trade, have become important sites of pilgrimage for African-Americans. Tourism has rekindled the old connection between African-Americans and Ghana. In the late 1950s and 1960s, African-Americans such as W. E. B. Du Bois and George Padmore settled in Ghana under Nkrumah and are buried there. But the presence of African-Americans has caused a rethinking of the legacy of the slave trade in Ghana. The Emancipation Day events celebrated in the summer of 1999 as part of PANAFEST included rituals of remembering and atonement for African participation in the Atlantic slave trade. During his visit to the US in February 1999 President Rawlings announced that Ghanaian legislators were expected to pass a bill into law that would extend citizenship to African-Americans. Prominent African-Americans such as Isaac Hayes and Steve Wonder are regular visitors to Ghana and reportedly own landed property there. Jet travel, telephone, fax, and the Internet have significantly eased travel and rendered boundaries permeable. Capital, commodities, ideas, and people traverse frontiers on a global scale. As African migrants enter this global arena, their governments have taken tentative steps after them. The boundaries of citizenship, political participation, and economies are all being negotiated. And trends in scholarship indicate that the African diaspora has become central to our understanding of African and world history.

Conclusion

It is difficult to find an appropriate conclusion to a paper that has examined centuries in time and looked at African dispersion from a global perspective. This article represents an African historian's reflection on the history of the African diaspora, rather than an exhaustive examination of the subject. Although the terms of reference from the editors of *African Affairs* recommended an examination of the more contemporary African dispersions and the relevance of this ongoing diaspora to politics, economy, and society, I chose the *longue durée* approach to the subject of the African diaspora. Harris's work has emphasized the several phases of the African diaspora. The global political economy, or, to be precise, capitalist demand for labour, lies at the centre of the global dispersion of Africans. Significant historical changes have also occurred in the nature and composition of the African diaspora. From the forced migration of Africans pre-nineteenth century, we now have their voluntary dispersion on a global scale for economic and political reasons. These contemporary migrants remain connected to the homeland in ways that were not technologically possible in the pre-nineteenth-century era. Wealth flows from the diaspora to the homeland; social identities are remade in the diaspora;

successful returnees redefine their status in the homeland; some migrants have effectively straddled multiple worlds; and African governments have increasingly factored the diaspora into domestic development projects. There is also a sad face to the diaspora, and widespread civil wars in contemporary Africa have produced large refugee camps within Africa and harsh lives for African refugees in the West. In an age of 'free' movement, African refugees are far from free. Gangs and pimps have lured African women into prostitution and domestic servitude in Europe by promises of good jobs. Yet at the close of the twentieth century, Africa and the African diaspora stand fused in ways that have immense political, economic, and social possibilities for the new millennium. And the implications for African studies are profound.

Diaspora has influenced demographic patterns in Africa. An extreme though useful example is the Senegalese village of Darakhala, where most of the adult males have emigrated to work in Italy. These workers sustain those left behind through remittances and sponsor further emigration to Italy.[134] Scholars cannot ignore the effects of such out-migration on the local economy, gender relations, and household structure and organization. On the large scale, African economists must factor remittances from abroad into policy and development planning. As educational standards in African countries decline through weakened economies, economic revival has itself become dependent on an ability to attract back home talented nationals abroad. And the globalization of culture is making it increasingly difficult for anthropologists to find the African 'other', uncontaminated by Western influences.

The conceptual boundaries of African studies must expand to accommodate these shifts. The burgeoning fields of Atlantic and Indian Ocean history include but transcend Africa. Our understanding of African history would be much enhanced through a familiarity with such broad inter-regional networks. Diasporic studies have come to stay, and in the post-Cold War era, when scholars bemoan the marginalization of Africa, African studies is receiving an infusion of new life through its connection to wider regional, continental, and oceanic histories. And as Africanists in the job market are increasingly being asked to teach diasporic studies, I anticipate the incorporation of this demand into our disciplinary coverage.

The phrase 'Fortress Europe' has been coined to describe the current European hostility to non-European immigration. In the past decade the United States has also toughened its stand on illegal aliens. What are the implications for the further dispersions of Africans from Africa? Existing diaspora networks will continue to sponsor the emigration of relatives and friends. But intra-African migration may be strengthened in the coming years. The collapse of educational systems in a number of African countries has put a premium on skilled labour. Such skilled labour will gravitate to new economic opportunities that emerge within Africa. For instance, the recent discovery of oil by São Tomé may attract skilled labour from other African countries, and the globalization of capital may gradually raise remuneration for these workers within Africa.

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[134] Ter Haar, *Halfway to Paradise*, p. 124.