

BIAFRAN AFRICAN RUNAWAYS IN 18TH-CENTURY JAMAICA AND SAINT-DOMINGUE: EVIDENCE FOR AN ATLANTIC AFRICAN ECUMENE

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Abstract

The African Diaspora may be studied as a set of sub-diasporas, and therefore as partial extensions of African history. Runaway slave advertisements in eighteenth-century Jamaica and Saint-Domingue (Haiti) include many Africans from the hinterlands of the Bight of Biafra, mostly called “Eboe” (or “Ibo”) and “Moco” in the diaspora. They provide evidence for understanding Atlantic Africa as a “world” (an ecumene), as well as for the significance of enslaved Igbo in the transatlantic Biafran African diaspora, and for the historical consequences of slaving in Igboland, especially for the ancient Nri civilization.

INTRODUCTION

IN APRIL OF 1793, FOUR African slaves in western Jamaica — three men and one woman — ran away together from Perseverance-Hall plantation in Trelawny parish, part of a larger group *en marronage* and in an apparently well-laid plan to escape the colony. They were “all of the Eboe country, and have been in the island near two years.”² These four “Eboe” were also exceptionally tall, especially for diasporic Igbo slaves. Two of the men, Commodore and Scotland, were fully six feet tall, with the former also described as “a plausible fellow, [and] speaks good English.” The third, Bacchus, was 5 feet 10 inches, and even the woman Bessy was taller than most men, much less women, at 5 feet 6 inches. Bacchus, however, was the most notable. He was identified as “a Bruchee,” that is, as a kind of Eboe with a distinctive ‘country mark’ on his forehead. In Jamaica this disfiguring hachure was known as “the Breechee/Bruchee cut,”³ while in historical Igboland the ennobling *ichi* cut was the outward sign of being *mgburichi* [mbreechi] — literally “cut-face,” figuratively spiritual royalty — within the ancient and pacifist Nri civilization (founded c.1,000 CE).⁴ These four unusually tall Igbo runaways, one of whom was *Íchiè*, and another who had learned in less than two years to “speak good English,” also invited at least four other slaves from a nearby plantation — Spotfield

Estate—to escape (three apparently took the offer), as well as yet another runaway from Trelawny, for a total of eight.⁵ A ninth slave, also likely Igbo and also from Spotfield Estate, refused to go with them, and then informed on the group of runaways. As their master wrote in his advertisement seeking their capture, “it is conjectured they are all together, as they endeavoured to persuade another Negro belonging to Spotfield to abscond with them, who refused, and informs that their intention was to go to the Spaniards, and that a canoe was to be in waiting for them at the Point.”⁶

At about the same time, in 1788, on the French sugar island of Saint-Domingue, we may see another example of *grand marronage* by a group of Igbo slaves in the transatlantic diaspora. Five men, all “Ibo” and all owned by the same master, and all branded the same (“on the left side of the breast, nearly illegible PICOT”) all ran away together. They had been in the colony for only a year, and therefore “do not speak creole very well.” But they had all wound up on the same plantation, and within a year they had become *nèg mawon* (black maroons) together, and in fact one of these Ibo *marrons* was even named Toussaint.⁷

ATLANTIC AFRICA AS ECUMENE

The early modern Black Atlantic may be studied as a diaspora of sub-diasporas, and therefore as extensions of African history (at least in part) in the Americas, as a flood of recent transnational/transatlantic studies on peoples from all the major Atlantic African regions clearly demonstrates.⁸ In a classic essay Sidney Mintz (1996) offered a most useful metaphor for thinking about the multiethnic and transnational Caribbean region as a ‘world’ (*oikoumenē*), or, quoting Alfred Kroeber as a “great historic unit” (if not, however, simply as a ‘culture-area’). Even though Mintz sees this ‘world’ as essentially fractured and hyper-hybrid, the result of “processes of cultural stripping and rebuilding,” of modernism before modernity, one may extend this organizing metaphor to encompass Atlantic Africa.⁹ In thinking beyond culture-area concepts, Mintz asks, “The question then becomes one of which kinds of categories can serve useful classificatory anthropological purposes.”¹⁰ One of these useful historical categories for Atlantic Africa, is “nations” (‘countries’). To echo Mintz and his belief that “the Caribbean *oikoumenē* is real” (sic),¹¹ the Atlantic African ecumene also *was* real, that is, that it *did* in fact matter historically whether one was Igbo or Mungola or Coromantee or whatever in the diaspora, or in archaic “American-African” history, particularly in the long era of the transatlantic slave trade. While noting that ethnicity was always in motion (and was never ‘tribal’), we may indeed study Atlantic Africans along with Atlantic Creoles, and, we may do so historically and rigorously.¹²

With the exquisite control over the numbers and historical patterns of the transatlantic slave trade effected through the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade* database (1999/2010)—a remarkable scientific advance the potential of which is only just barely being realized—it is now possible to follow “waves” of people, or at the least, flows of enslaved people in the aggregate from the several African coasts of the slave trade throughout the Atlantic world with much greater reliability and precision.¹³ For the Americas, runaway slave advertisements in colonial newspapers, especially in the Caribbean, will be one way, perhaps the most important way, to illuminate historical Atlantic Africa as *ecumene*. These materials, though still widely scattered and thus archivally fugitive, are a key resource because they often identify Africans by their putative on-the-ground ethnicity and because they necessarily reflect particular, individual experience in all its fluidity and contingency. For the Caribbean especially, and even with the rise of the Internet and digital resources, and with several significant caveats, Gad Heuman’s observation from the mid-1980s on the heuristic usefulness of runaway advertisements/notices and their relative lack of utilization outside of U.S. history, still holds largely true today.¹⁴ These primary source materials have not been ignored by Caribbeanists, but they have been used largely for anecdotal purposes or for local studies.¹⁵

In Caribbean historiography, runaway advertisements have been used perhaps most extensively by historians of Haiti, though often for limited purposes.¹⁶ Jean Fouchard and the ‘Haitian School’ generally saw in *marronage* the glowing tinder of a universal revolutionary spirit, the teleology of *petite marronage* and *grand marronage*, of slave resistance and Haitian Revolution.¹⁷ A ‘French School’, perhaps best represented by Gabriel Debien and J. Houdaille in the 1960s, saw *marronage* as essentially phenomenological or *ad hoc*, and sought to use these materials to uncritically identify the ‘tribal’ origins of the Francophone Antilles populations.¹⁸ In contrast, for Jamaica (which has its own potential teleology of fugitive slaves and Maroon communities) there has been almost no use made of runaway slave advertisements, for any purpose, teleological or otherwise.¹⁹

The major question becomes, what may runaway slave advertisements and notices tell us about diasporic Africans (and creoles too, of course)? And in the specific case, what may they tell us about the sub-diaspora of Africans from the Bight of Biafra?

BIAFRAN DATASET: JAMAICA AND SAINT-DOMINGUE

Jamaica and Saint-Domingue (Haiti) were two of the largest slave societies in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world, and both were important sites of the transatlantic Biafran African diaspora, especially for enslaved Igbo but

also including so-called Moco, Bibí (Ibibio), and Calaba or Carabalí (Calabars). For Jamaica, the Bight of Biafra was the single largest source of captives, with some 250,000 Biafran Africans (Eboe, Moco) taken to the island, nearly all after 1750. In Saint-Domingue, though Biafrans (Ibo, Moco, Bibí) were always a tiny minority (5 to 8 percent) of importations, they had a clear cultural influence, in for example bringing new and enduring Igbo *lwa* to Haitian vaudou.²⁰

For Jamaica there is a compilation of some 7,500 runaway slaves (1718-1817), mostly from 1775-1795 and 1810-1817, about half of whom were Africans, which includes 910 Biafran Africans (550 Eboe, 358 Moco, and 2 Calabar).²¹ This discussion will focus on 381 Biafrans in Jamaica from 1775-1795 as well as a similar cohort of 377 unique individuals from Saint-Domingue (1766-1790).

For Saint-Domingue, the French historian Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec has compiled and put online a remarkable anthology of 10,860 advertisements from *Les Affiches Americaines* (1766-1790), containing information on some 14,845 slaves.²² The entire collection is in French, and though this anthology includes many duplicated (multiply listed) individuals, it is a signal achievement.²³ I have translated from the French all of the Biafran Africans (329 Ibo, 37 Bibi, 5 Moco, 1 Gabon) in Le Glaunec's online collection.²⁴

A combination of the two cohorts yields a dataset of 758 unique (unduplicated) Africans from the Bight of Biafra in a comparable time-frame (Jamaica 1775-1795; Saint-Domingue 1766-1790), which was also the apex of the transatlantic slave trade to each colony, respectively.

DEMOGRAPHY

These materials, firstly, document that indeed Igbo (Eboe, Ibo) were the most numerous group enslaved in the Bight of Biafra hinterland, though others such as so-called Moco, Bibí, and Calaba, and even an occasional enslaved person from as far away as Gabon, were transported in some numbers. In the combined dataset, Igbo made up 72 percent of the sample, or an Igbo ethnicity ratio [ER] of 253.²⁵ The proportion of Moco in Jamaica was much higher, however, accounting for 45 percent, though Igbo were still a majority with an ER of 122. In Saint-Domingue, which had greater putative diversity (four named groups from the hinterlands of the Bight of Biafra), Igbo were fully 88.6 percent of the sample, or an Igbo ER of 776, and totally dominated that population statistically. In the generation of the slave-trade apex, then, it would appear that Moco were sent disproportionately to Jamaica, where they made up a sizeable plurality of the Biafran population in contrast to the concentration of Igbo in Saint-Domingue. The overall percentage of Igbo (70-75 percent or more of diasporic Biafran Africans in the combined Jamaica/Saint-Domingue da-

taset) is in line with other Atlantic colonies, such as Guadeloupe (79.5 percent) and Louisiana (69.5 percent).²⁶ Overall one may estimate that in general, Igbo comprised about 75 percent of the Biafran African diaspora, with an even higher percentage in the eighteenth century.

In other ways, these populations of Biafran African runaways in Jamaica and Saint-Domingue were rather similar. Among all sub-groups, men predominated, with a combined sex ratio of 351 (males per 100 females) among Biafrans in Jamaica and 396 in Saint-Domingue. The gender imbalance was most pronounced among Moco and Bibí. In Jamaica the sex ratio among Moco was 406, and among the admittedly small number of 42 Bibí/Moco in Saint-Domingue the sex ratio was 600. In both cases, nearly all Biafran runaway slaves were adults through there were a substantial number of teen-aged runaways, called “man-boys” and “woman-girls” in Jamaica, some as young as 12 or 13 years old.

COUNTRY MARKS

One useful category, whether for Professor Mintz’s “classificatory anthropological purposes” or for our “interpretive historical purposes,” are so-called ‘country marks’, including filed teeth. In village culture, these incisions, cicatrices, tattoos, and shaped teeth, marked the individual as one of “us” and thus served as a primary indice of local ethnicity, as well as of free-born (*amadi*) rather than slave-born (*ohu*) status. As an Igbo elder (Obi Nwokobia, born c.1901) of Ogboli-Ibusa in Anioma (western Igboland) explained in an oral history recorded in the 1970s:

In the olden days the faces of our people were marked. Anyone who went around unscarified ran the risk of being kidnapped. Ibusa had a peculiar face mark, Ogwashi had theirs and every other group had its own. To be unscarified indicated that one had no home town and was liable to capture.²⁷

Along with circumcision (female as well as male, which apparently was nearly universal among Igbo at least), clan marks conferred status as adults, and as free-born, and made one handsome and beautiful. Europeans, however, came to see such marks as “tribal” and thus as “savage” and often assumed they could identify one kind of African from another by these embodied cultural signs, which whites thought were regional or national (that is, meta-ethnic) rather than local.

For example, from his observations of various Africans in the Danish West Indies in the 1760s, the German missionary C.G.A. Oldendorp wrote (in what in part reads like a description of Igbo *mgburichi*):

The national marks of the Karabari and Ibo consist of horizontal incisions on the forehead. The former bear just such a straight incision, from the ends of which extend two others slanting upward. The latter [Ibo] have an inch-wide strip of skin flayed away across the entire forehead from one ear to the other in such a manner that the eyebrows are removed from one ear to the other in such a manner that the eyebrows are removed along with it. This design is a privilege reserved only for notables, giving them a frightening appearance. Other Negroes of this nation bear incisions around the eyes, which radiate from focal points to an outer circumference.²⁸

Capt. John Adams (*fl.*1786-1800), based on his experience as a slaver on the coast of Calabar in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, wrote that “the ordinary mark of the Heebo [is] formed by numerous perpendicular incisions on each temple, as if the operation of cupping had been often performed.”²⁹

The eighteenth-century Jamaica/Saint-Domingue dataset includes 89 individuals (or about one in eight) who were described as having some kind of country mark—29 in Jamaica, and 60 in Saint-Domingue.³⁰ Although there does seem to be a general pattern of Igbo having country marks around the temples and on the forehead, Igbo were also marked on other parts of the body, and Moco too were also marked on the face—including temples and forehead—though more generally on the body (arms, chest, stomach, even the legs, and the back). In Saint-Domingue for example, in 1766 two newly arrived Igbo runaways, one a man named Jupiter and the other a woman named Rose (both aged 20-22), both had the same country mark: “grooves on the forehead from one ear to the other.”³¹ In 1769, however, another Igbo man, named Mentor, was described as having “a cross and several incised Country marks on the chest & on the arms”; or Darius (about 28 years old) who in 1777 had “his country marks on the belly.”³² Perhaps more typical was the Igbo man Jacques (aged 18-20), who in 1773 was described as “having incised marks of his country on the temples.”³³ Igbo in Jamaica also demonstrated a wide variety of country marks and locations on the body, as for example an unnamed newly arrived man in 1792 who “has his country marks very full on his breasts and face,” or a newly imported woman in 1793 named Patience who had “her country marks on her forehead, breast, and arms,” or, rather unusually an unnamed woman newly arrived in 1793 who “has her country marks on her back.”³⁴

In fact, country marks on runaway Biafrans were surprisingly rare in these records, if oddly uniform in their prevalence. Only about 8 percent of Biafrans of both sexes in Jamaica (9 percent for Eboe, both men and women), and 16 percent of both sexes in Saint-Domingue (15 percent of

Ibo, both males and females) were so identified. Moco and Bibí in Saint-Domingue were much more likely to be described as “ayant marques de son pays” (25 percent of an admittedly small sample of 42 individuals), and were much more likely in Jamaica *not* to have country marks noted (only 10 out of 126 Moco runaways).

Equally surprising is the relatively young age of some of those who were marked, especially in Saint-Domingue. For example, one Igbo boy named Lavolonté, who was 14 years old in 1782, had “his country marks on his arms”; in 1783 an unnamed Igbo girl, 16 years old and “young & pretty” had “her country marks on her face & filed teeth,” and in the same year [1783] an even younger Moco girl named Angélique, aged 13 to 14, was described as “having black enough skin, & her country marks at both eyes & to the belly, of average height, not speaking easily in the language of this country”; or in 1784, a newly arrived and unnamed Igbo boy, 12 to 14 years old, with “his country marks on his face & very much on his stomach.”³⁵

Having country marks itself was no guarantee that the master recognized the particular African ethnicity of an individual slave. There were several who were marked, but their master was not sure exactly what ‘country’ they were from. In 1785 a 15-year old boy, newly imported to Saint-Domingue and “branded on the right arm with the ship mark LB, intertwined...having four front teeth filed down,” was called “Bibi or Ibo”; later that year, Nicolas, about 45 years old, with “two small country marks on the left cheek” was identified as “Nago or Ibo” [Yoruba or Igbo].³⁶ Even when the master knew a slave very well, or at least well enough to describe him closely and to give other personal information—such as the particular slave ship that brought him to the island—sometimes the master (or merchants in the trade) could not say for sure what kind of African he owned:

15 July 1786: Castor, Ibo, or Bibi, originating in the cargo of the ship the *Superbe*, Capt. Leblanc,³⁷ height of 5 feet 5 inches, with his country marks on his temples, the teeth pointed; the fingers of the left hand crooked by disability, with scars on the thigh from gunshots. Give notice to Messrs Pre & L’Seguineau brothers, Merchants in this city, or to Messrs Navarias sons & Accaré, Merchants at Cayes, responsible for the sale of the cargo from which said Negro came.³⁸

In Jamaica in the last quarter of the eighteenth century, however, there was a country mark that was widely known throughout the island to signify a particular kind of Igbo: the “Breechee” or “Bruchee” cut. I have documented seven such Igbo *ÍchiII*, all men, in Jamaica between 1777 and 1793.³⁹

Tom, a Breechee Negro, to Blake. 3/19 [1777]

Taken up, a few days ago, a new Negro man, a Breechee of the Eboe country, marked *GT*. [1777]

Harry, a new Negro of the Eboe country, a Bruchee, with filed teeth, about 5 ft. 7 or 8 in. high, well made, speaks but little English, and is marked on the right shoulder *T R I*, the letters *TR* in one. [1785]

Somerset, a Breeche, to Barret, 5 fet. 1/2-in high. 10/16 [1791]

Scipio, an Eboe Bruchee, new Negro, marked *THARP*. 6/14 [792]

Bacchus [with three other named Igbo, four unnamed others referenced] is a Bruchee, 5 ft. 10 in. high...They are all of the Eboe country, and have been in the island near two years. [1793]

Britain, an Eboe, with the Bruchee cut on his forehead...slender and black, about 26 or 28 years old, and talks tolerable English. [1793]

Throughout the Atlantic African world from the 1750s through the 1850s the several historical descriptions of Ibo *ichi* (or *mgburichi*) are remarkably consistent.⁴⁰ The mark heavily disfigured the forehead, creating a “thick *weal* across the lower part of the forehead” (Equiano, describing “Em-brenché”); an “inch-wide strip of skin flayed across the entire forehead from one ear to the other” (Oldendorp); “after the healing has taken place the skin hangs over the eyes for a considerable space” (Aneaso/Monteath); “the skin brought down from the hair to the eye-brows” (Adams, “Breeché”); “numerous cuttings on the forehead, which greatly disfigure the countenance” (Baikie, “’tschi or Bretsh”). The *hachure* signified “a mark of grandeur...importing the highest distinction” (Equiano); “a privilege reserved only for notables” (Oldendorp); “highly honoured” (Aneaso/Monteath); “exalted rank” (Adams); “confined to the families of the wealthy...and entitles the possessor to respect” (Baikie).

In historical Igboland, *ichi* marks were a core sign of the ancient civilization of Nri, and specifically of the highest titles of the Ozo society, whose initiates represented (and enacted) the sacred power of the *Eze Nri* (Priest-King of Nri) through ritual cleansing (*ikpu alu*) and peace-making, wielding the *ofò*, staff of ancestral authority, and the *otonsi*, spear of peace. At Nri, a traditional song during the cutting ceremony evoked the symbolic associations of *ichi* with peace-making and spiritual royalty:

Ichi child give me food so I will not die of hunger
Nwaichi nyem ma aguu egbunem
Facial scar for kings, facial scar for first sons
*Ichi Eze, ichi Nwadiokpala.*⁴¹

According to one of the last surviving *Mgburichi* of Nri, Ichie Okoye Mmefu (b. c.1914) Nri distinguished between two grades of *ichi*: the *Mgburichi* with full ritual powers represented by the *otonsi* (spear of peace), and the *Azunri* (“at the back of Nri”) without *otonsi* but sharing the same exalted status among the outlying settlement areas, that is, among communities descended from Nri or culturally allied with the Nri civilization.⁴² At Nri itself, they traditionally recognized two kinds of *Ichi* marks: the full-face form (*Mgbuzu ichi*, ‘facial marks for the rulers of Nri’) which was agonizing to endure and traditionally performed only on those from royal lineages; and *Ntuche* (*ichi Nwadiokpala*), consisting of a few lines of marks on the forehead and radiating across each temple.⁴³ These historical distinctions, between *mgburichi* / *azunri* or *Mgburichi* / *Ntuche* may be the root of the Breechee/Bruchee difference in eighteenth-century Jamaica, or alternatively, “Bruchee” in Jamaica may simply have been a homonym of “Breechee,” itself the anglicization of Igbo *Mgburichi*.

In any case, the historical connection was with the ancient Nri civilization, for whom the shedding of human blood in anger was the greatest abomination. *Mgburichi* are remembered as universally respected because they “were regarded as Nri men”:

They were respected throughout Igboland. We have facial marks (*ichi*) that distinguish us from other Igbo people, and this served as a passport, enabling us to travel unharmed at a time when human beings were essential commodities. People with *ichi* marks were regarded as Nri men, and were not enslaved. It was probably because of this that some parts of Igboland started to wear *ichi*.⁴⁴

The fact that Igbo “Breechee” show up in Jamaica among runaways from 1777-1793, and perhaps as early as the 1760s in the Danish West Indies, is significant. It is a concrete sign that the transatlantic slave trade had reached all the way to the Nri heartland in the Anambra valley of northern Igboland, and, that by the 1770s (if not earlier) the social violence wrought by slaving and the Aro *agawhu* (merchant-warlords) was violating even the ancient sacred authority – and the personal safety – of titled “Nri men,” who no longer were preserved from capture or kidnapping and enslavement.⁴⁵ The orature of the reigns of *Eze Nri* in the eighteenth century evoke a larger narrative of crisis and calamity, of social violence and slaving, of drought and famine, from the murder of *Eze Nri* Ezimilo (official r.1701-1723) to the long-term famine and drought under his successor *Eze Nri* Ewenetem (official r.1724-1794) when slave-trading was ubiquitous and the first Aro settlements were established in the Nri heartland. Toward the close of the century, the situation around Nri itself had become dire. In the 1790s, a newly consecrated but aged *Eze Nri*, Nri

Añua, agreed to abdicate in favor of a young firebrand, Enweleana of Ezekammadu, who upon becoming *Eze Nri* was driven by his desperate times to the ultimate abomination of organizing a war, the *Amakom* ('defense of the land') against the Aro *agawhu* Okolie Ijoma (d.1820s) of Ndikelionwu.⁴⁶ The oldest remembered age-grade at Nri is from Obeagu, the village of both Nri Añua, and Nri Enweleana – *Ochi Ogu* [Ochogu] [Who Wants War] – which can be dated to the 1790s.⁴⁷

Advertisements for Biafran runaways in eighteenth-century Saint-Domingue and Jamaica, then, underscore the significance of Igbo among captives from the Bight of Biafra hinterland. For Jamaica, the appearance of "Breechee" Igbo in the 1770s-1790s suggest that by the last quarter of the century even *mgburichi* – the famed "Nri men" of Igboland – were no longer safe.

CONCLUSION

As a social "category" in the Atlantic African ecumene, being Igbo was historically meaningful. Slaves from Biafran Africa were identified (and clearly also self-identified) as Eboe or Moco or Bibí and so forth not strictly on the basis of phenotype – in each group complexions included red and yellow as well as black, and some were tall while others were short, and country marks varied widely, that is, there was just as much physical diversity *within* any one named group as *between* groups – nor strictly on the basis of language, as indeed many slaves, African as well as Creole, were multilingual. For example, in Jamaica in 1792 a "new Negro [i.e., newly imported] man of the Eboe country, [who] answers to the name of Colin, ... speaks Moco, and may probably pass as of that country."⁴⁸ In Saint-Domingue in 1784, a runaway woman named Marie was identified as "Ibo or Cramanti [Coromantee]" because she "speaks the two languages."⁴⁹ Perhaps most interesting of all was a runaway man in western Jamaica in 1791, named Brutus, who "calls himself a creole, but is supposed to be from Africa, as he talks both the Eboe and Coromantee languages very fluently."⁵⁰

Even among those whose transatlantic journey took them to first one American plantation region then to another, or, those who crossed the Atlantic as infants (so-called "salt-water creoles"),⁵¹ being "Eboe" still mattered. In Saint-Domingue in 1785, for example, four slaves all ran away from the same plantation on the same day: they were a mixed bunch, with one creole man, one Meserable man, one Congo man, and one Igbo woman "25 years old, with the feet bothered by chiggers, [who] left with a chain collar." Her name was Margueritte, and though identified as Igbo she "came from Mississippi."⁵²

Nearly a decade after the abolition of the British slave trade, a runaway woman in Jamaica named Bessy turned herself in to the St. George parish workhouse (1816), on the eastern end of the island. Apparently she had a rather complicated story to tell the workhouse jailor. Initially she said that she was “an Eboe” and that she had belonged to a master living at Black River, a region in western Jamaica, but that he had died. A week later, the St. George jailor revised his description of Bessy, apparently based on new information she provided:

BESSY, formerly said she was an Eboe, but now found out to be a salt-water creole, and that she belonged to a Gentleman at Black River, since dead, but does not know his name, marked with *WB* on left shoulder; she came in of her own accord, and has no owner.⁵³

This runaway slave Bessy, after apparently making her way literally from one end of Jamaica to the other *en marronage*, claimed not to know her owner’s name, or rather, she claimed that she had no owner. She did claim, however, an identifiable ethnic African identity, saying that she was “an Eboe.” One presumes that Bessy had found her personal claim useful in her harrowing journey across Jamaica as a runaway slave. One also presumes that being “an Eboe” was socially meaningful among the enslaved people in Jamaica, as indeed the case seems to be throughout the Atlantic world. To grasp such diasporic claims to a specific ethnic African identity and to understand them historically, we need to see these ‘nations’ and ‘countries’ as artifacts of an Atlantic African ecumene.

Appendix:

Historical Descriptions of Mgburichi

1750s (Equiano): “My father was one of those elders or chiefs I have spoken of, and was styled Embrenché; a term, as I remember, importing the highest distinction, and signifying in our language a mark of grandeur. This mark is conferred on the person entitled to it, by cutting the skin across at the top of the forehead, and drawing it down to the eye-brows; and, while it is in this situation, applying a warm hand, and rubbing it until it shrinks up into a thick *weal* across the lower part of the forehead...Those Embrenché, or chief men, decided disputes and punished crimes; for which purpose they always assembled together.”⁵⁴

1760s (Oldendorp): “[An] inch-wide strip of skin flayed across the entire forehead from one ear to the other in such a manner that the eyebrows are removed from one ear to the other...This design is a privilege reserved only for notables, giving them a frightening appearance.”⁵⁵

1790s (Aneaso/Monteath): "Each tribe has its own special sign; that of the Eboe tribe is one of the most difficult and painful, as the skin is loosened from the head, that after the healing has taken place the skin hangs over the eyes for a considerable space. Although the operation is very painful and the loss of blood so great that those standing around can see and hear the blood running, the suffering subject, for the sake of his honour must not make the slightest noise, or give any token of feeling. When the cutting is accomplished, the wounds were rubbed with powder and salt, and to the one tatoed was given a piece of yam or corn cake, which he must eat, and apparently enjoy, as though he felt no pain. After some time, when the wounds have been healed, and the lad comes for the first time into company, there is great rejoicing and festivity. He is highly honoured; receives many presents, and can obtain any rich woman whom he desires, for his wife."⁵⁶

1780s-1790s (Capt. Adams): "A class of Heebos, called Breeché, and whom many have erroneously considered to be a distinct nation, masters of slave-ships have always had a strong aversion to purchase; because the impression made on their minds, by their degraded situation, was rendered more galling and permanent from the exalted rank which they occupied in their own country, and which was thought to have a very unfavourable influence on their ship-mates and countrymen in misfortune ... Breeché, in the Heebo language, signifies gentleman, or the eldest son of one, and who is not allowed to perform in his own country any menial office. He inherits, at his father's death, all his slaves, and has the absolute control over the wives and children which he has left behind him. Before attaining the age of manhood, his forehead is scarified, and the skin brought down from the hair to the eye-brows, so as to form a line of indurated skin from one temple to the other. This peculiar mark is distinctive of his rank, the ordinary mark of the Heebo being formed by numerous perpendicular incisions on each temple, as if the operation of cupping had been often performed."⁵⁷

1850s (Baikie): "I inquired particularly after a supposed district or tribe, mentioned by Clarke and some other writers, as I'tshi or Bretsh, but found that this was a misapplication of the term. There is no place of this name, but I'tshi, which means 'cut-face' refers to certain individuals who are marked by numerous cuttings on the forehead, which greatly disfigure the countenance. I fell in with one of these I'tshi, who confirmed all this, and told that it is confined to the families of the wealthy. As far as I could gather, it is only males who are thus hideously tatoed, though in I'gbo it is reckoned becoming, and entitles the possessor to respect."⁵⁸

NOTES

1. An earlier draft of this article was presented at the African Studies Association 55th Annual Meeting, Philadelphia, PA, 29 Nov. – 1 Dec. 2012. I thank the panel participants (Joseph C. Dorsey, Edda L. Fields-Black, and J. Akuma-Kalu Njoku), and several later readers, particularly Nwando Achebe, for their helpful suggestions as I revised the original paper. Parts of this essay were also included in the paper I presented at the Igbo Studies Association 11th International Conference, Enugu, Nigeria, 27-29 June 2013; and in revised and expanded form in Douglas B. Chambers, *The Igbo Diaspora in the Era of the Slave Trade: An Introductory History* (Glassboro, NJ: Goldline and Jacobs Publishing, 2014).

2. *Cornwall Chronicle*, 17 April 1793.

3. See for example, the unnamed runaway man in Trelawny in 1777, newly imported, who was “a Breechee of the Eboe Country,” and who had been branded *G T* (likely a ship’s brand) (*Cornwall Chronicle*, 14 April 1777); or the St. James parish runaway in 1793 named Britain, “an Eboe, with the Bruchee cut on his forehead” (*Cornwall Chronicle*, 2 Aug. 1793).

4. (quote) William Balfour Baikie, *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the rivers Kwora and Binue, Commonly known as the Niger and Tsadda, in 1854* (London: John Murray, 1856; repr. London: Frank Cass and Co., 1966), 310. For Nri, see A. E. Afigbo, *Ropes of Sand: Studies in Igbo History and Culture* (Ibadan, Nigeria: University Press Ltd., 1981), 151-152; M. Angulu Onwuejeogwu, *An Igbo Civilization: Nri Kingdom & Hegemony* (London: Ethnographica, 1981), 11, 14-15; Douglas B. Chambers, *Murder at Montpelier: Igbo Africans in Virginia* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2005), 31-32.

5. Though only the four from Perseverance-Hall were identified by ethnicity, it seems quite likely that all eight were Igbo. There is no record of adverts for the other four referenced runaways.

6. *Cornwall Chronicle*, 17 April 1793.

7. My translation. From Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec, *Marronage in Saint-Domingue (Haïti): History, Memory, Technology* (2010) [digitized anthology], online at <http://www.marronage.info/en/index.html> (accessed January 2012). The original source is *Les Affiches Americaines*, 30 Aug. 1788:1788-08-30 – Thélémaque, Laurent, Toussaint, Phaéton & Zaïre, de nation Ibo, depuis un an dans la Colonie, ne parlant pas bien créole, étampés sur le côté gauche du sein, presque illisiblement PICOT, sont partis marrons pendant la nuit du 30 au 31 juillet dernier de l’habitation du sieur Picot au Borgne: en donner des nouvelles audit Sieur sur son habitation, ou à Mrs de Russy, Poitier & compagnie, négociants en cette ville.

30 Aug. 1788: Thélémaque, Laurent, Toussaint, Phaéton & Zaïre, of Ibo nation, in the Colony for a year, do not speak creole very well, branded on the left side of the breast, nearly illegible PICOT, ran away during the night of 30 to 31 July last from the plantation of Mr Picot of Borgne: give any

news to the said Sir on the plantation, or to Messrs de Russy, Poitier & company, merchants in this city.

8. Recent published studies in English, organized by Atlantic African coastal region: For **Upper Guinea**, see Walter Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); James H. Johnston, *From Slave Ship to Harvard: Yarrow Mamout and the History of an African American Family* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). For **Gold Coast**, see Kwasi Konadu, *The Akan Diaspora in the Americas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Rebecca Shumway, *The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011). For the **Bight of Benin**, see Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs, eds., *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); Kristin Mann and Edna G. Bay, eds., *Rethinking the African Diaspora: The Making of a Black Atlantic World in the Bight of Benin and Brazil* (London: Frank Cass, 2001); James H. Sweet, *Domingos Alvares, African Healing, and the Intellectual History of the Atlantic World* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011). For the **Bight of Biafra**, see Carolyn A. Brown and Paul E. Lovejoy, eds., *Repercussions of the Atlantic Slave Trade: The Interior of the Bight of Biafra and the African Diaspora* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2011); Douglas B. Chambers, *The Igbo Diaspora in the Era of the Slave Trade: An Introductory History* (Glassboro, NJ: Goldline & Jacobs Publishing, 2014); Chima J. Korieh, ed., *Olaudah Equiano & The Igbo World: History, Society, and Atlantic Diaspora Connections* (Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press, 2009); Randy J. Sparks, *The Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2009). For **West-Central Africa**, see Ras Michael Brown, *African-Atlantic Cultures and the South Carolina Lowcountry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); T.J. Desch Obi, *Fighting for Honor: The History of African Martial Art in the Atlantic World* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2008); Roquinaldo Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Linda M. Heywood, ed., *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002); James H. Sweet, *Recreating Africa: Culture, Kinship, and Religion in the African-Portuguese World, 1441-1770* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2006); Jason R. Young, *Rituals of Resistance: African Atlantic Religion in Kongo and the Lowcountry South in the Era of Slavery* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 2007).

9. (quote) Sidney W. Mintz, "Enduring Substances, Trying Theories: The Caribbean Region as *Oikoumenê*," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 2, 2 (1996), 289-311, quotations from 293, 298.

10. *Ibid.*, 292; to which one might add, "and useful interpretive historical purposes."

11. *Ibid.*, 297.

12. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005). See also Douglas B. Chambers, "Ethnicity in the Diaspora: The Slave-Trade and the Creation of African 'Nations' in the Americas," *Slavery and Abolition* 22, 3 (2001), 25-39. For examples of the generative power of this basic approach, see the essays in the following edited volumes: Paul E. Lovejoy, *Identity in the Shadow of Slavery* (London: Continuum, 2000); Paul E. Lovejoy and David V. Trotman, eds., *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora* (London: Continuum, 2003); José C. Curto and Paul E. Lovejoy, *Enslaving Connections: Changing Cultures of Africa and Brazil during the Era of Slavery* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2004).

13. David Eltis, Stephen D. Behrendt, David Richardson, and Herbert S. Klein, eds., *The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Database on CD-ROM* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). The expanded beta version is available online at www.slavevoyages.org (2010). Hereafter referred to as TAST (1999). The 1999 CD-ROM and the 2010 online database have now entirely superseded Curtin (1969) and represent the culmination of his pioneering effort to systematically quantify the transatlantic slave trade; Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

14. Heuman, "Introduction," in Gad Heuman, ed., *Out of the House of Bondage: Runaways, Resistance and Marronage in Africa and the New World* (London: Frank Cass, 1986), 1-2.

15. For published examples see: Hilary Beckles, "From Land to Sea: Runaway Barbados Slaves and Servants," in Heuman, ed., *Out of the House of Bondage*, pp.79-94; Jerome S. Handler, "Escaping Slavery in a Caribbean Plantation Society: Marronage in Barbados, 1650s-1830s," *New West Indian Guide* 71, 3/4 (1997), 183-225; Gad Heuman, "Runaway Slaves in Nineteenth-Century Barbados," in Heuman, ed., *Out of the House of Bondage*, 95-111; Jocelyne Jacquot, "Historiographie du marronage à la Martinique: de l'objet de polémique au sujet d'étude," *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire de la Guadeloupe* 116-118, 2-4 (1998), 75-91; David Barry Gaspar, "Runaways in seventeenth-century Antigua, West Indies," *Boletín de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe* no.26 (1979), pp.3-13; N.A.T. Hall, "Maritime Maroons: Grand Marronage from the Danish West Indies," in Verene A. Shepherd and Hilary McD. Beckles, eds., *Caribbean Slavery in the Atlantic World: A Student Reader* (Kingston, Jamaica: Ian Randle Publishers, 2000; orig. publ. 1985), pp.905-918; Wim Hoogbergen, "Marronage and Slave Rebellions in Surinam," in Wolfgang Binder, ed., *Slavery in the Americas* (Würzburg, Germany: Königshausen und Neumann, 1993), 165-195 Vincent di Ruggiero, "Le marronage an Guadeloupe à la veille de la Révolution française de 1789," *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire de la Guadeloupe* 116-118, 2-4 (1998), 5-64; Diana Paton, *No Bond but the Law: Punishment, Race, and Gender in Jamaican State Formation, 1780-1870* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2004); U.B.

Phillips, "A Jamaica Slave Plantation," *American Historical Review* 19, 3 (1914), pp.543-558; Folarin Shyllon, "Slave Advertisements in the British West Indies," *Caribbean Studies* 18, 3/4 (1978-1979): 175-199.

16. For an excellent consideration of these issues, see Jason Daniel, "Marronage in Saint Domingue: Approaching the Revolution, 1770-1791" (M.A. thesis, History, University of Florida, 2008).

17. Fouchard, *The Haitian Maroons: Liberty or Death*, trans. by A. Faulkner Watts (New York: Edward W. Blyden Press, 1981; orig. publ. as *Les Marrons de la Liberté*, 1972); also Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990). Fouchard's numbers are flawed by serious methodological problems, resulting in multiple-counting of many individuals; see David Geggus, "On the Eve of the Haitian Revolution: Slave Runaways in Saint Domingue in the year 1790," in Gad Heuman, ed., *Out of the House of Bondage: Runaways, Resistance and Marronage in Africa and the New World* (London: Frank Cass, 1986), 112-128.

18. See for example: Debien, "Les origines des esclaves des Antilles," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 23, 3/4 (1961), pp.363-387; Debien, "Les origines des esclaves des Antilles, II, A Saint-Domingue, Les marrons autour du Cap en 1790 et en 1791," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 27, 3/4 (1965), 755-799; Debien, "Les origines des esclaves aux Antilles," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 29, 3/4 (1967), pp.536-558; Debien and J. Houdaille, "Les origines des esclaves aux Antilles," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 26, 1/2 (1964), 166-211; M. Delafosse and Debien, "Les origines des esclaves aux Antilles," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 27 (1965), 319-371; J. Houdaille, "Origines des esclaves des Antilles," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 26, 3/4 (1964), 601-675; Houdaille, R. Massio and Debien, "Les origines des esclaves aux Antilles," *Bulletin de l'Institut francais d'Afrique noire*, Ser. B, 25, 3/4 (1963), 215-266.

19. See, however, Douglas B. Chambers, "The Links of a Legacy: Figuring the Slave Trade to Jamaica," in Annie Paul, ed., *Caribbean Culture: Soundings on Kamau Brathwaite* (Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2007), 287-312; and Chambers, "Mapping the Black Atlantic: Neo-African Ethnonyms among Runaway Jamaican Slaves, 1776-1817," African Studies Association 53rd annual meeting, San Francisco, CA, 18-21 Nov. 2010 (revised TMs., March 2011), 35.

20. For examples of Igbo as *fanmi*, *nanchon*, and *lwa* in Haitian vaudou (voodoo), see Harold Courlander, *The Drum and the Hoe: Life and Lore of the Haitian People* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1960), 48-49, 84-87, 328. Something like 30-35,000 captives from the Bight of Biafra were taken to St.-Domingue in one generational wave, from 1763-1791.

21. Douglas B. Chambers, "Jamaica Runaway Slaves: 18th Century" (2013). *Documenting Runaway Slaves*. Paper 2. Online at

<http://aquila.usm.edu/drs/2/>; Douglas B. Chambers, "Jamaica Runaway Slaves: 19th Century" (2013). *Documenting Runaway Slaves*. Paper 3. Online at <http://aquila.usm.edu/drs/3/>.

22. Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec, *Marronage in Saint-Domingue (Haïti): History, Memory, Technology* (2010), online at <http://www.marronage.info/en/index.html>. The source newspaper, *Les Affiches Americaines* (Port-au-Prince, 1766-1791), has been digitized in remarkably clear print quality: Digital Library of the Caribbean, George A. Smathers Libraries, University of Florida, online at <http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00000449/00004> (accessed October 2012). A comparison of the two digital resources only underscores Le Glaunec's achievement in compiling and digitizing his collection.

23. For example, a basic search for "Ibo" generates 695 advertisements, which yields 293 unduplicated advertisements.

24. See Douglas B. Chambers, ed., *Enslaved Igbo and Ibibio in America: Runaway Slaves and Historical Descriptions* (Enugu, Nigeria: Jemezie Associates, 2013), 71-136.

25. That is, 253 Igbo per 100 "Other" (non-Igbo).

26. **Guadeloupe** (1770-1789), N=248; 79.5 percent Igbo, 20.5 percent Moco/Ibibio. **Louisiana** (1719-1820), N=524; 69.5 percent Igbo, 11 percent Ibibio/Moco, and 19.5 percent Calabar. Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities* (2005), 131.

27. Obi Nwokobia (b. c.1901) [oral history], of Ogboli-Ibusa, in Elizabeth Isichei, *Igbo Worlds: An Anthology of Oral Histories and Historical Descriptions* (London: Macmillan Education, Ltd., 1977), 35-37, quotation 37. For Ibusa community, see M. A. Onwuejeogwu, *The Traditional Political System of Ibusa*, Occasional Paper of Odinani Museum, Nri, No.1 (n.d. [c.1972]). For a history of western Igbo communities (west of the Niger River), see Don C. Ohadike, *Anioma: A Social History of the Western Igbo People* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1994).

28. Oldendorp, C.G.A. *Oldendorp's History of the Mission of the Evangelical Brethren on the Caribbean Islands of St. Thomas, St. Croix, and St. John*, ed. by Johann Jakob Bossard (1770); trans. and ed. by Arnold R. Highfield and Vladimir Barac (Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma Publishers, 1987), 170.

29. Capt. John Adams, *Sketches Taken During Ten Voyages to Africa, Between the Years 1786 and 1800* (London: Hurst, Robinson, and Co., 1823; repr. New York: Johnson Reprint Corp., 1970), 42.

30. For Jamaica, 19 were Eboe (14 of those were male), and 10 were Moco (9 of whom were male); for St.-Domingue 50 were Ibo (of whom 39 were male), and 10 were Bibi/Moco (9 male).

31. "ayant des raies au front d'une oreille à l'autre"; (22 Oct. 1766).

32. "ayant une croix & plusieurs marques incisives de son Pays sur la poitrine & sur les bras" (15 March 1769); "ayant des marques de son pays sur le ventre" (7 May 1777).

33. “ayant des marques incisives de son pays sur les tempes” (20 March 1773).

34. *Cornwall Chronicle*, respectively, Morant Bay Workhouse (1792) incarcerated 10 Oct.; *Ibid.* (30 April 1793); *Ibid.*, Kingston Workhouse (1793) incarcerated 12 June.

35. Respectively, “ayant des marques de son pays sur les bras” (4 Dec. 1782); “jeune & jolie” “ayant des marques de son pays sur le visage & les dents limées” (29 March 1783); “ayant la peau assez noire & des marques de son pays aux deux yeux & au ventre, d’une taille médiocre, ne s’exprimant pas aisément dans le langage de ce pays” (27 Aug. 1783); “des marques de son pays sur le visage & beaucoup sur l’estomac” (20 Nov. 1784).

36. Respectively, “étampé sur le bras droit de la marque du navire LB, entrelacés ... ayant quatre dents de devant limées” “Bibi ou Ibo” (29 Jan. 1785); “deux petites marques de son pays sur la joue gauche” (20 July 1785).

37. No record of this ship and captain for Saint-Domingue in the TAST (1999).

38. 1786-07-15 – Castor, Ibo, ou Bibi, provenant de la cargaison du navire le Superbe, Capit. Leblanc, taille de 5 pieds 5 pouces, ayant des marques de son pays sur les tempes, les dents pointues; les derniers doigts de la main gauche crochus par infirmité, ayant des cicatrices aux cuisses provenant de coups de fusils. En donner avis à Mrs Pre & L’Seguineau frères, Négocians en cette ville, ou à Mrs Navarias fils & Accaré, Négocians aux Cayes, chargés de la vente de la cargaison d’où provient ledit Nègre.

39. Six from the *Cornwall Chronicle*: Tom, Lucea Gaol (1777), incarcerated 19 March; [Man], 14 April 1777 (Trelawny); Harry, 9 Feb. 1785 (Westmoreland); Scipio, St. James Workhouse (1792), incarcerated 14 June; Bacchus, 17 April 1793 (Trelawny); Britain, 2 Aug. 1793 (St. James); and one from the *Royal Gazette*: Somerset, Morant Bay Workhouse (1791), incarcerated 16 Oct.

40. See Appendix: Historical Descriptions of Mgburichi, *infra*. The five descriptive sources encompass 1750s Igboland (Equiano); 1767-768 Danish West Indies/Virgin Islands (Oldendorp); 1790s Igboland (Aneaso/Monteath); 1780s-1790s Calabar Coast [Bonny] (Adams); 1850s Niger River (Baikie).

41. Interview with Ichie Anago Okoye (1912-2002), Onwanetilora of Nri & Isinze of Obeagu, who was initiated into Ozo in 1944 (at Nri, April 2002). *Ichi* was discontinued at Nri in the 1940s, and by 2003 there were only three surviving *mgburichi* at Nri (two in Agukwu, and one in Akampkisi). See Prince P. N. Mebuge-Obaa II, “An Oral History Research Project: History of Scarification (Tattoo) in Nri (TMs., 1 May 2002).

⁴² Interview with Ichie Okoye Mmefu (at Nri, December 2003) Chambers Field Notes (II). Technically, Ichie Mmefu is “ichi Nwadiokpala” (Ntuche), having lines of marks on the forehead and corners of each eye, which historically was a lesser form of ichi, though he is Mgburichi. In his account, the Azunri cut “extended down the cheek and down the neck” whereas his

Mgburichi one fanned out around the eyes (like extensive and deep laugh-marks) and included horizontal lines across the forehead (but not a classic massive weal).

43. Ichie Anago Okoye interview (April 2002), in Mebuge-Obaa II (TMs., 1 May 2002).

44. Nkwonto Nwuduaku (b. c.1914) oral history, Enugwu-Ukwu, in Isichei, *Igbo Worlds* (1977), 30-34, quotation, 34.

45. For Aro *agawhu* (bandit, outlaw, crook, hero) and the collapse of the region's moral economy from slaving, which I would suggest was not limited to the nineteenth century, see G. Ugo Nwokeji, *The Slave Trade and Culture in the Bight of Biafra: An African Society in the Atlantic World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 192-194.

46. *Eze Nri* Nri Añua is not included in official king-lists, and therefore has been officially forgotten, but is memorialized by the Añua minimal lineage within UmuNri major lineage of Obeagu by maintaining an "Eze Nri Añua Royal Band" (sponsored by Mr. 'Acrobatic' Onuigbo) (interviews at Nri, March 2005, Chambers Field Notes (III)). The family tradition of *Eze Nri* Nri Añua was related to me by his great-grandson (b.1946), in March 2005. Compare the accounts in Onwuejeogwu, *An Igbo Civilization* (1981), esp. 26-28. Ijoma was the 5th son of Ikeliowu (fl.1750), the founder of Ndikelionwu (the central settlement of the seven confederated Aro colonies in the Awka area, known as Ndienu), an *mgburichi* in the Nri-Awka region who was enslaved by the Aro merchant-warlord, Ufere Mgbokwu Aka, as early as the 1730s: Kenneth Onwuka Dike and Felicia Ekejiuba, *The Aro of South-eastern Nigeria, 1650-1980: A study of socio-economic formation and transformation in Nigeria* (Ibadan: University Press Ltd., 1990), 176-181; Nwokeji, *The Slave Trade and Culture in the Bight of Biafra* (2010), pp. 20 n32, 58, 66, 106, 190-191. See also Chambers, *The Igbo Diaspora in the Era of the Slave Trade* (2014), 18-23.

47. The oldest official age-grade is Oli Okuku (1846-1854): *Tradition and Modernisation in Nri, Vol.II* [Pamphlet, Eze Nri Enweleana II, n.d., c.1989], p.9. Interviews in 2003 with 11 respondents aged 67 to 99 years old in Obeagu village of Nri, however, yielded the names of nine age-grades that predate Oli Okuku, the earliest of which was Ochogu: Prince P.N. Mebuge-Obaa II, "Age Grade/Group (Oral History Project Report)" (TMs., 7 December 2003).

48. *Cornwall Chronicle*, 8 November 1792 (Hanover parish).

49. *Les Affiches Americaines*, 3 Jan. 1784; "Marie, Ibo ou Cramanti, parlant les deux langues". Coromantee was the most common diasporic term for Akan Africans from present-day Ghana.

50. *Royal Gazette*, 6 June 1791 (Black River, that is, St. Elizabeth parish).

51. Though apparently an oxymoron, presumably "salt-water creole" signified someone born during the transatlantic crossing (Middle Passage). For use of the term "saltwater Negro" to signify African-born, in contrast to "creole" or "country-born," see Michael A. Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks: The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum*

South (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 14, 168, 189; and for the various meanings of “creole” see Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 157-158. Among runaways in Jamaica from 1810-1817, there are records of 14 so-called “salt-water creoles” (7 male, 7 female).

52. “âgée de 25 ans, ayant les pieds malingreux de chiques, partie avec une chaîne au col”; “venue du Mississipi [sic]”; *Les Affiches Americaines*, 19 Jan. 1785. Meserable Africans were from present-day Liberia and Sierra Leone.

53. *Cornwall Chronicle*, St. George Workhouse (1816), incarcerated 2 Feb. Compare another example, a boy named James in 1814: “says he came an infant with his mother, from the Eboe [Igbo] country, and belongs to Mr. PARKE, Princess Street, Kingston, no brand-mark.”; *Cornwall Chronicle*, Spanish Town Workhouse (1814), incarcerated 16 May.

54. (1750s Igboland): Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*, ed. Vincent Carretta (New York: Penguin Books, 1995; orig. publ. 1789). Equiano (c.1745-1797), regardless of the supposed controversy over his origins, in his account of Igboland speaks to the c.1750s.

55. (1760s Danish West Indies): Oldendorp, *History of the Mission* (1770/1987), 170.

56. (1790s Igboland): Archibald J. Monteith (Aneaso), “Archibald John Monteith, Native Helper and Assistant in the Jamaican Mission at New Carmel,” ed. J. H. Kummer (c.1854), *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 21, part 1 (1966), 29-51; repr. in Maureen Warner-Lewis, *Archibald Monteith: Igbo, Jamaican, Moravian* (Kingston, Jamaica: University of the West Indies Press, 2007), 286-304, quotation, 287-288. Aneaso (c.1790-1864) was enslaved in 1799 at the age of about 10 years.

57. (1780s-1790s Bonny/Calabar Coast): Capt. John Adams, *Sketches Taken During Ten Voyages* (1823/1970), 41-42.

58. (1850s Niger River): William Balfour Baikie, *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage* (1856/1966), 310.