Re-Mapping Africa

Redefining African Regions for Linking Open-Source Data

Henry B. Lovejoy, Paul E. Lovejoy,
Walter Hawthorne, Edward A. Alpers,
Mariana Candido, Matthew S. Hopper

Abstract: In recent years, an increasing number of online archival databases of primary sources related to the history of the African diaspora and slavery have become freely and readily accessible for scholarly and public consumption. This proliferation of digital projects and databases presents a number of challenges related to aggregating data geographically according to the movement of people in and out of Africa across time and space. As a requirement to linking data of open-source digital projects, it has become necessary to delimit the entire continent of precolonial Africa during the era of the slave trade into broad regions and sub-regions that can allow the grouping of data effectively and meaningfully.

Résumé: Au cours de ces dernières années, un nombre croissant de bases de données d'archives en ligne contenant des sources liées à l'histoire de la diaspora africaine et de l'esclavage est devenu librement et facilement accessible pour les universitaires et le grand public. Cette prolifération de projets et de bases de données numériques pose un certain nombre de problèmes liés à l'agrégation géographique de données traitant de la circulation des personnes en Afrique et en dehors du continent à travers le temps et l'espace. Pour relier les données de ces projets

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Henry B. Lovejoy, Assistant Professor, University of Colorado Boulder, hlovejoy@colorado.edu; **Paul E. Lovejoy**, Distinguished Research Professor, York University, plovejoy@yorku.ca; **Walter Hawthorne**, Professor, Michigan State University, walterh@msu.edu; **Edward A. Alpers**, Professor Emeritus, UCLA, alpers@history.ucla.edu; **Mariana Candido**, Associate Professor, University of Notre Dame, mcandido@nd.edu; **Matthew S. Hopper**, Professor, California Polytechnic State University, mshopper@calpoly.edu

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numériques au code source ouvert, il est devenu nécessaire de diviser tout le continent africain à l'époque de la traite des esclaves en de vastes régions et sous-régions permettant le regroupement des données de manière efficace et significative.

Introduction[1]

A major problem with how scholars analyze the history of precolonial Africa stems from a lack of maps of the continent, especially in making sense of geography from an African perspective. Available maps from the slave trade period misrepresent the continent, however, since most were made from limited contemporary observations and informally gathered information. The European merchants, missionaries, and other observers who were the source for early maps frequently had no training in cartography and were restricted to what they saw or how they interpreted information they heard along the coast. There seems to have been a degree of continuity in the ethnic composition of coastal populations over time, as Paul Hair's study of the upper and lower Guinea coasts reveals, which allows the identification of changes and shifts in the demography of population movements.[2] Further inland, it is more difficult to reconstruct political changes and migrations, but extensive research enables the identification of changes in the *longue durée* of the political landscape during the period of the trans-Atlantic, Saharan, and Indian Ocean slave trades. The absence of reliable cartographic data, however, has impeded historical reconstruction. As a result, some scholars of the precolonial period refer to colonial and postcolonial boundaries to locate states and the locations of ethnic groups which gives the impression that they existed in a timeless setting. This practice arose out of the necessity to establish points of reference, but poor cartography shapes our historical interpretation of Africa and its global impact.

The current emphasis in studying Africa and the slave trade focuses on a biographical approach based on database projects, such as *Enslaved: People of the Historic Slave Trade* (www.enslaved.org) and its partner websites.[3]

[1] We would like to thank Daniel Domingues da Silva, David Eltis, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, Paul Lachance, Jonathan Miran, and members and partners of *Enslaved: People of the Historical Slave Trade* for their critical input and feedback.

[2] Paul E.H. Hair, "Ethnolinguistic Continuity on the Guinea Coast," *Journal of African History* 8–2 (1967), 247–268, 248.

[3] The initial partner projects for *Enslaved* include: *Dictionary of Caribbean and Afro-Latin American Biography*. http://hutchinscenter.fas.harvard.edu/DCALAB, directed by Henry Louis Gates Jr., Franklin Knight and Steven J. Niven; *Legacies of British Slave-ownership*. http://www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs/, directed by Keith McClelland; *Liberated Africans*. http://liberatedafricans.org/, directed by Henry B. Lovejoy; *Freedom Narratives*. https://freedomnarratives.org/, directed by Paul E. Lovejoy; *Slave Biographies*. https://slavebiographies.org/, directed by Gwendolyn Midlo Hall and Walter Hawthorne; *Slave Societies Digital Archive*. https://slavesocieties.org/, directed by Jane Landers; *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, directed by David Eltis.

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These digital initiatives have the potential of addressing deficiencies in demographic reconstruction but not unless the inadequate reference to colonial and postcolonial boundaries can be overcome. Until now, much research into the slave trade has relied on coastal divisions largely derived from the observations of slave traders. Hence, Philip Curtin proposed a consciously simple schema in his influential slave trade census published in 1969, which involved the following eight coastal divisions: Senegambia, Sierra Leone, Windward Coast, Gold Coast, Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra, West Central Africa, and Southeast Africa.[4] For fifty years, these regions have become a standard method in which to conceive of precolonial Africa, especially after their incorporation into the powerful tool *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, which was adopted to test Curtin's remarkable contribution in attempting to estimate the scale and direction of the forced migration of Africans to the Americas (http://slavevoyages.org/).

Curtin's schema has proven useful in plotting where enslaved people left Africa, but critics have noted that this approach has serious weaknesses that require reflection and revision.[5] On one hand, Curtin did not cover the entire continent or delimit interior regions. On the other, he used modern-day boundaries and contemporary terms of the slave trade, such as Sierra Leone and Windward Coast, as designations for coastal regions of departure for the enslaved population.[6] Although there is no direct association between Curtin's coastal regions and the interior from where enslaved people originated, it is still possible to interpret events in the interior as they relate to slave trade data, as Paul Lovejoy attempted in 1983.[7] Updating his analysis in three editions as more data became available, Lovejoy examined the significance of the trans-Atlantic, Saharan, and Indian Ocean slave trades from where estimated populations leaving the continent probably originated. Similarly, Gwendolyn Midlo Hall shows weaknesses in the *Voyages* divisions because "designations for African regions as well

[4] Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969).

[5] See, for example, the criticism of the *Voyages* regions in the special issue of *African Economic History* 38 (2010).

[6] Paul E. Lovejoy, "Extending the Frontiers of Transatlantic Slavery, Partially," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 40–1 (2009), 57–70, 63.

[7] Paul E. Lovejoy, *Transformations in Slavery: A History of Slavery in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011 [1983]). More recently: David Eltis and David Richardson, *Atlas of the Transatlantic Slave Trade* (New Haven CN: Yale University Press, 2010) have also attempted to project the estimates on coastal origins into the interior but with very little detail. Compare, for example, with: Paul E. Lovejoy, *Jihad in West Africa during the Age of Revolutions* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2016), 138–144; Paul E. Lovejoy, "The Jihād Movement and the Development of 'Second Slavery' in West Africa in the Nineteenth Century," in: Dale Tomich (ed.), *The Second Slavery in Global Perspective* (Binghamton NY: SUNY Binghamton Press, forthcoming).

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as for ethnicities varied among European slave traders."[8] Grouping people according to ethnonyms recorded in historical sources has drawbacks because ethnographic generalizations may relate more to language than ethnicity. For example, the term "Lucumí" is generally equated with Yoruba in Cuba. However, this term can refer to diverse people who probably spoke the language but came from regions beyond Yorubaland.[9] Similarly, the term "Bambara" referred to an ethnolinguistic group, but by the eighteenth century took on "wider, vague, generic meanings" for diverse people brought down the Senegal and Gambia Rivers.[10] At other times, primary records use place names to distinguish ethnolinguistic groups. Hence, "Borno" appears at times as an ethnic category, when in fact it was a political state whose dominant language was Kanuri but included several distinct people and languages. Similarly, East African ethnonyms such as "Mozambiques" or "Inhambanes" provide little information other than the port from which enslaved Africans departed. Local studies of Africa and the Americas during the slave trade era (cited herein) have revised interpretations of the ethnonyms in different places, periods, and languages.

The biographic turn in the study of the global African diaspora now requires redefining the entire continent to allow for other migratory patterns not only within Africa, but also across the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean and Red Seas, and overland via the Middle East. The present attempt to branch away from Curtin confronts problems arising from expanding datasets that require some degree of collation inclusive of, but beyond *Voyages*. This process requires mapping uncertain historical data involving the movements of enslaved people according to GIS techniques and practices.[11]

[8] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Slavery and African Ethnicities in the Americas: Restoring the Links* (Chapel Hill NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 2005), 46–47.

[9] Robin Law, "Ethnicity and the Slave Trade: 'Lucumi' and 'Nago' as Ethnonyms in West Africa," *History in Africa* 24 (1997), 205–219; Sylviane A. Diouf, *Servants of Allah. African Muslims Enslaved in the Americas* (New York: New York University Press, 1998); Mariza Carvalho Soares, "From Gbe to Yoruba: Ethnic Change and The Mina Nation in Rio de Janeiro," in: Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (eds.), *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004), 231–247; Sandra Lauderdale Graham, "Being Yoruba in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro," *Slavery and Abolition* 32–1 (2011), 1–26; Henry B. Lovejoy and Olatunji Ojo, "'Lucumi,' 'Terranova,' and the Origins of the Yoruba Nation," *Journal of African History* 56–3 (2015), 353–372.

[10] Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, "Africa and Africans in the African Diaspora: The Uses of Relational Databases," *American Historical Review* 115 (2010), 136–150, 142; Walter Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil: Culture, Identity, and an Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600–1830* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[11] Select literature on the topic of mapping uncertainty includes: Jingxiong Zhang and Mike Goodchild, *Uncertainty in Geographical Information* (New York: Taylor and Francis, 2002); Anne K. Knowles, "Emerging Trends in Historical GIS," *Historical Geography* 33 (2005), 7–13; Onno Boonstra, "Barriers Between Historical GIS and

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Our continental model shares some features with the regional maps that Patrick Manning developed to project population estimates of Africa from 1650 until 1950.[12] The ongoing challenge is therefore to situate data related to the origins and destinations of people on a standardized map, which inevitably means making decisions that are political and/or ethnographic.[13] Although the laborious process of generating a series of maps illustrating temporal geographical transformations to Africa has begun, a static map of the continent with defined inland spaces is immediately required to link a network of open-source data in more meaningful ways.[14] In consideration of the politics and ethnicities of precolonial Africa, our proposed divisions attempt to follow continental ecosystems surrounding patterns in vegetation, elevation and/or sources of water.

To achieve a clearer sense of the geographical structure of slavery and the slave trade, this article provides a rationale for a new regional vocabulary for precolonial Africa, which begins with Africa and then divides into the following five broad regions: 1) North Africa; 2) West Africa; 3) West Central Africa; 4) East Africa; and 5) Southern Africa. There is also a sixth

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Historical Scholarship," *International Journal of Humanities and Arts Computing* 3–1/2 (2010), 3–7; Jordi Martí-Henneberg, "Geographical Information Systems and the Study of History," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 42–1 (2011), 1–13; Anne K. Knowles, "Why We Must Make Maps: Historical Geography as a Visual Craft," *Historical Geography* 42 (2014), 3–26; Chad Gaffield, "Map Quests: Scaling the Past in the Digital Age," *Perspectives on History* (2016), https://www.historians.org/publications-and-directories/perspectives-on-history/october–2016/map-quests-scaling-the-past-in-the-digital-age, accessed 4 September 2018; Anne K. Knowles, "Historical Geographic Information Systems and Social Science History," *Social Science History* 40–4 (2016), 741–750.

[12] Patrick Manning, "Replication Data for: African Population Estimates, 1850–1960" (2009), World-Historical Dataverse [Distributor]V1 [Version], http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/15281, accessed 31 August 2018; Patrick Manning, "African Population: Projections, 1850–1960," in: Karl Ittmann, Dennis D. Cordell and Gregory H. Maddox (eds.), *The Demographics of Empire: The Colonial Order and the Creation of Knowledge* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2010), 245–275.

[13] Select literature related to discussions on how all maps are inherently political include: David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan and Trevor M. Harris, *The Spatial Humanities: GIS and the Future of Humanities Scholarship* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2010); Michael Dear, Jim Ketchum, Sarah Luria and Douglas Richardson, *GeoHumanities: Art, History, Text at the Edge of Place* (London: Routledge, 2011); Alexander von Lünen and Charles Travis (eds.), *History and GIS: Epistemologies, Considerations and Reflections* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2013); Ian N. Gregory and Alistair Geddes, *Toward Spatial Humanities: Historical GIS and Spatial History* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2014); David J. Bodenhamer, John Corrigan and Trevor M. Harris, *Deep Maps and Spatial Narratives* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2015).

[14] Henry B. Lovejoy, "Mapping Uncertainty: The Collapse of Oyo and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, 1816–1836," *Journal of Global Slavery* (forthcoming).

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group for islands. Subsequently, these divisions can then be further divided into twenty-four sub-regions and six island clusters to reflect extant historical data (Map I and Table I). While this new schema will be contentious for some, it is imperative to keep in mind that this map is purposefully designed to be expansive because in many circumstances more geographic data exist, which often refer to precolonial states, ethnolinguistic groups, territories, provinces, cities, towns, villages, municipalities, trade routes, roads, markets, buildings, vegetation, elevation, and sources of water. Depending on the type of historical evidence available, data may reside in more than one of the proposed sub-regions.

Historiography of African Regions

Before justifying our divisions, it is necessary to point out that "region" has multiple meanings. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines it as "a sub-division of the earth" or "any area, space, or place of more or less definite extent or character."[15] Accordingly, regional boundaries overlap, which creates

Map 1. Proposed African Regions



[15] "Region, n." *Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/161281, accessed 4 February 2019.

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Table I. Flowchart of Controlled Vocabularies of African Regions

<North Africa and Red Sea (x4)
<Mediterranean North Africa
<Nile Valley and Red Sea
<Eastern Sudan
<Sahara
<West Africa (x8)
<Senegambia
<Upper Guinea Coast
<Western Savanna
<Central Savanna
<Forests of West Africa
<Voltaic Region
<Bight of Benin
<Bight of Biafra
<West Central Africa (x4)
<Loango Coast
<Kwanza North
<Kwanza South
<Central Interior
<East Africa (x5)
<Horn of Africa
<Great Lakes
<East African Coast
<East Central Africa
<Madagascar
<Southern Africa (x3)
<Southern Veld
<Southeastern Africa
<Kalahari
<Islands (x6)
<Canary Islands
<Cape Verde Islands
<Gulf of Guinea Islands
<St. Helena Island
<Comoro Islands
<Mascarene Islands

practical difficulties in mapping because it is impossible to establish perfect borders which everyone could agree upon. In practice, however, GIS software demands fixed polygons in which to position data. The contradiction of having to establish firm lines for large and ambiguous areas raises questions related to how to delimit a region and how much regions change over time.

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The practice of grouping slave trade data into regions has been a methodological procedure that has been pursued effectively for a long time. Curtin defined his regions as:

> The first of these is the conventional Senegambia, little changed from the sixteenth century and including the present-day Gambia and Senegal. A second region can be labelled Sierra Leone, but it would take in a good deal more than the present country. Instead, it would extend from the Casamance in the north to Cape Mount in the south, including the coastlines of Guinea-Conakry, Guinea-Bissau, and a very small part of Senegal and Liberia as well.
>
> The third region would be the line of open breakers along the east-west coast from Cape Mount to Assini – mainly the present day Ivory Coast and Liberia. The eighteenth-century English called it "Windward Coast," a term sometimes used for the area on the other side of Sierra Leone. A fourth region, the Gold Coast, presents no serious problem. In English usage at least, it has remained stable over several centuries as the coastal stretch from Assini on the west to the Volta in the east, roughly coterminous with the present-day Republic of Ghana. Here the Europeans build the greatest concentration of fortifications anywhere on the African coast – drawn by the gold trade to the interior and the existence of a series of rocky points with moderately safe landing beaches on the lee side, or by an occasional lagoon or river mouth where lighters could load or unload in security.
>
> Further east, coastal terminology is less stable over time, with terms like "oil rivers" or "the slave coast" used at some periods but not at all. A fifth division, however, can be seen in the geographic Bight of Benin, taken here to include everything from the Volta to the Benin River. The core of this region in the eighteenth century was the somewhat narrower "slave coast" of present-day Togo and Dahomey. In the same way, the Bight of Biafra can be taken as a sixth region, centered on the Niger Delta and the mouth of the Cross and Duala rivers to the east. Its bounds were the Benin River on the west and Cape Lopez to the south, in present-day Gabon. Then, from Cape Lopez south to the Orange River a number of different trading regions existed in fact, but the data are not sufficient to distinguish among them. The term Central Africa will therefore be used here as a seventh unit, through the term "Angola" in its broadest sense had the same meaning. Finally, the eighth region is the coast of southeastern Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to Cape Delgado and including the island of Madagascar. In fact, few slaves were ever sold from the coast south of the present-day country of Mozambique, and the term Mozambique was sometimes used for the whole region.[16]

These divisions were needed to attach slave ship departure data from Africa to produce regional estimates of the number of people transported across the Atlantic. This coastal distribution inferred inland spaces, incorporated European terms and used modern-day boundaries.

[16] Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade Census*, 128–130.

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The *Voyages* database contains nearly 36,000 individual ships leaving Africa projected onto nine comparable regions that Curtin established in 1969. They are: Senegambia and Offshore Atlantic, Sierra Leone, Windward Coast, Gold Coast, Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra and Gulf of Guinea Islands, West Central Africa and St. Helena, Southeast Africa and Indian Ocean Islands and "Other Africa."[17] As defined in *Voyages*:

> Senegambia is anywhere north of the Rio Nunez. Sierra Leone comprises the Rio Nunez to just west of Cape Mount inclusive. The Windward Coast is defined as Cape Mount up to and including the Assini River. The Gold Coast runs east of here up to and including the Volta River. The Bight of Benin covers the Rio Volta to Rio Nun, and the Bight of Biafra, east of the Nun to Cape Lopez inclusive. West-central Africa is defined as the rest of the western coast of the continent south of this point, and South-east Africa anywhere east of the Cape of Good Hope.[18]

Clearly, the continued use of Curtin's terminology is persistently awkward despite allowing for regional overlap. In Curtin's census there is no discussion of how European maps about Africa were abstractions. As a result, many of the maps we continue to rely on have "sought to engulf African space into the symbolic system of western European representation. The map was therefore an indispensable instrument of territorial appropriation, organization, management, and then exploration."[19] Additionally, the main unit of analysis is the slaving voyage, not the people whose inland origins can sometimes be determined. Ethnonyms documented by slave traders and owners oftentimes referred to languages that can be associated with regions and/or ports of embarkation.

We fully recognize how much Curtin and *Voyages* revolutionized the field of African and African diaspora studies. Their regions have been accepted as a standard means to understand when and where people boarded slave ships at 180 principal places of slave purchase (Appendix I).

[17] "Guide: Understanding and Using the Online Database and Website," in: *Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database*, http://slavevoyages.org/documents/download/VoyagesGuide.pdf, published in May 2008. See also metadata values in http://slavevoyages.org/voyage/search and http://slavevoyages.org/assessment/estimates, accessed 31 August 2018.

[18] David Eltis, "Construction of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database: Sources and Methods: Geographic Data," in: David Eltis *et al.*, *Voyages*, http://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/understanding-db/methodology–10, published online in 2010.

[19] Catarina Madeira Santos, "Administrative Knowledge in a Colonial Context: Angola in the Eighteenth Century," *British Journal for the History of Science* 43–4 (2010), 539–556, 551.

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Nevertheless, more and more data are being amassed that connect the global slave trade, especially in terms of the movement of people inland and where they traveled in the world. These new datasets, which oftentimes align well with *Voyages*, will certainly bring further insight into the geographic distribution for Africa especially as more data is generated for a continental historical GIS project.[20]

Proposed Regions and Sub-Regions

Building upon Curtin and *Voyages*, we have modified the divisions in six key ways: 1) regionalizing the entire continent; 2) using terms that reference geographical features; 3) adjusting coastal start and endpoints; 4) establishing inland territories based on continental ecosystems; 5) sub-dividing larger areas; and 6) separating offshore islands. The remainder of this article explains the five regions and twenty-four sub-regions, as well as six island groupings.

Region 1

North Africa and Red Sea consists of the northern-most territories of the continent along the shores of the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Red Sea. It includes the modern nation-states of Ethiopia, Sudan, Eritrea, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Western Sahara, Mauritania, and parts of countries that stretch into the Sahara, such as, Mali, Niger, and Chad.

Mediterranean North Africa includes sections of the former Egyptian, Roman, Ottoman and Almoravid provinces along the continental coast of the Mediterranean. It extends a few hundred kilometers inland where larger populations of people reside. It includes the Mahgreb and Atlas Mountain range, but not the Nile delta, Nile valley and oases to the south. The coastline stretches from Agadir in Morocco to Egypt, not including the Nile delta. Berbers and Arabs are the dominant ethnolinguistic groups in this area.[21]

Nile Valley and Red Sea comprises several circuits of exchange from major slave supplying areas. The Ottomans drew upon the Nile valley, Ethiopia and the savanna west of the confluence of the White and Blue Nile as far as Darfur and Wadai, as well as the Ethiopian highlands and

[20] Lovejoy, "Mapping Uncertainty."

[21] Ehud Toledano, *The Ottoman Slave Trade and its Suppression, 1840–1890* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982); John O. Hunwick and Eve Troutt Powell, *The African Diaspora in the Mediterranean Lands of Islam* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2002); Gillian Weiss, *Captives and Corsairs: France and Slavery in the Early Modern Mediterranean* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2011).

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lowlands along the Red Sea. Slaves from these supplying areas, including Oromo, Sidama, Käfa, Magi, Gamu, Gimira, Gofa, Wälaytta, Kullo and Konta, were found in Zeyla, Berbera, Tajura, Massawa, Sawakin (and from there shipped to Arabia, the eastern Mediterranean, the Persian Gulf, Iran, and South Asia). This sub-region includes Silwa, Faiyum, Bahariya, Farafra, Dakhla, Kharga, and al Atrun, as well as the Afar depression. It amalgamates the north/south trade routes along the Red Sea, the Sahara crossings, and the Nile valley, but also the east/west trade to the Eastern Savanna sub-region.[22]

Eastern Savanna incorporates Wadai, Darfur and Kordofan west of the Nile valley and includes the region of the Sudd and the sources of the northern tributaries of the Congo River basin. The region corresponds includes the western part of modern Sudan, the Republic of South Sudan, much of Chad and the Central African Republic. Besides the inhabitants of Wadai and Darfur, it included nomadic Arabs as well as Sara, Dinka, Nuer, and Shilluk.[23]

Sahara encompasses the planet's largest desert, which extends to the Atlantic in the west from the Atlas Mountains to the Senegal River and the Nile River in the east. This arid ecosystem had sparse populations, including people who had been enslaved further south, and significant trade routes.

[22] Mordechai Abir, "The Ethiopian Slave Trade and its Relation to the Islamic World," in: John R. Willis (ed.), *Slaves and Slavery in Muslim Africa*, volume 2 (London: Frank Cass, 1985), 123–136; Abussamad H. Ahmad, "Darita, Bagemdir: An Historic Town and Its Muslim Population, 1830–1889," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 22–3 (1989), 439–451; William G. Clarence-Smith (ed.), *The Economics of the Indian Ocean Slave Trade in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Frank Cass, 1989); Mathew S. Hopper, *Slaves of One Master: Globalization and Slavery in Arabia in the Age of Empire* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2015); Jonathan Miran, "Red Sea Slave Trade in the 19th Century," in: Siegbert Uhlig and Alessandro Bausi *et al.* (eds.), *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, volume 4: O-X (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010), 674–676; Eve M. Troutt Powell, *Tell this in My Memory: Stories of Enslavement from Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Empire* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012); Terence Walz and Kenneth M. Cuno (eds.), *Race and Slavery in the Middle East: Histories of Trans-Saharan Africans in Nineteenth-Century Egypt, Sudan, and the Ottoman Empire* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2010).

[23] Rex S. O'Fahey and Jay Spaulding, *Kingdoms of the Sudan* (London: Methuen, 1974); Mohamed Ibrahim Nugud, Asma M. Abdel Halim and Sharon Barnes, *Slavery in the Sudan: History, Documents, and Commentary* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); George M. La Rue, "Land Documents in Dār Fūr Sultanate (Sudan, 1785–1875), Between Memory and Archives," *Afriques* 7 (2016), http://journals.openedition.org/afriques/1896; George M. La Rue, "Seeking Freedom in Multiple Contexts: An Enslaved Sudanese Woman's Life Trajectory, ca. 1800–1834," *Journal of Global Slavery* 2–1 (2017), 11–43.

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Region 2

West Africa incorporates much of Curtin's coastal distribution for aggregating trans-Atlantic slave trade data from the Senegal River southward to the Bight of Biafra. It involves the countries of Senegal, The Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Togo, Benin, Nigeria, Cameroon, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon, and parts of Mali and Niger.

Senegambia sub-region incorporates the basins of the Senegal and Gambia Rivers, including the source of those rivers in the Fuuta Jalon highlands. In some ways, the sub-region is an extension of the western savanna region to the coast and included major sources of gold in the Senegal River valley. The area was largely Muslim and historically witnessed the earliest jihads in West Africa that began in the late seventeenth century and continued throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The key ethnonyms include Wolof (Jolof), Serer, Mandinka, Susu, Bambara, and Fulbe (Fula, Peul).[24] The enslaved were mostly embarked at St. Louis, Gorée, and the Gambia River.

Upper Guinea Coast incorporates the coast to the south of the Casamance River as far as Cape Mesurado. This sub-region was bounded in the east by the Fuuta Jalon highlands along the many rivers that originate there. The sub-region broadens into the interior south of the highlands. The coastal boundaries extend from the south of the Casamance to Cape Mesurado. This area is distinguished from Senegambia because of lower elevation and heavier rains, which give this region a distinctive riverine ecosystem that includes mangrove swamps where rice cultivation predominated and whose southern interior provided kola nuts for shipment into the savanna.[25] The ethnolinguistic groups included Diola (Jola), Balanta, Papel, Brame, Bijago, Biafada, Nalu, Baga, Susu, Temne, Bullom, Mende, and Vai.[26] In historical sources, the ethnonym "Guiné" often indicated origins from either Senegambia or the Upper Guinea Coast. The enslaved departed from Bissau, Cacheo, Rio Nunez, Rio Pongo, Îles de Los, Bunce Island in the Sierra Leone River, Sherbro Island, and the Gallinhas.

[24] Hair, "Ethnolinguistic Continuity;" Boubacar Barry, *Senegambia and the Atlantic Slave Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); George E. Brooks, *Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2003); George E. Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000–1630* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1993).

[25] See the pioneering work of Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1970).

[26] Hair, "Ethnolinguistic Continuity;" Walter Hawthorne, *Planting Rice and Harvesting Slaves: Transformations along the Guinea-Bissau Coast, 1400–1900* (Portsmouth NH: Heinemann, 2003); Hawthorne, *From Africa to Brazil.*

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Western Savanna corresponds to an inland section of the sahel and savanna east of the Senegal River basin toward the source of the Volta River below the great inland bend in the Niger River near Timbuktu. Historically known as the western Sudan, we avoid the use of "Sudan" to prevent confusion with modern countries. The bulk of this territory was formerly the center of Mali, which was later incorporated into Songhay.[27] After the collapse of Songhay in the 1590s, the region was dominated by smaller states, especially the Bambara states of Segu and Kaarta, until the jihad movement overthrew these states in the nineteenth century. In the Americas enslaved people from this region were identified as Mandingo or Mandinga, that is, Mandinka, although others were often referred to as Bambara (Bamana) who were not considered to be Muslims but who spoke the same language.

Central Savanna includes the savanna and sahel downstream from the great bend in the Niger River south of Timbuktu to the confluence with Benue River and eastward to the Lake Chad basin.[28] This area of sahel and savanna was known as the Central Sudan. It includes the heart of the Songhay Empire, the various Hausa states (which were consolidated into the Sokoto Caliphate after 1804), Borgu, Nupe, Kanem-Borno, the Jos Plateau, and areas in between. The most numerous languages were Hausa and the Kanuri of Borno, but also included numerous other ethnic groups, including Nupe, Gwari, and various groups in the Jos Plateau.

Forests of West Africa is the term used here to refer to the area that comprises much of modern-day Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire. In slave trading terms, this region was known as the Windward Coast because it was to the windward of the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin, but it was also variously known as the Ivory Coast, Grain Coast, and Kru Coast. The proposed coastal boundaries in our schema stretch from Cape Mesurado to the Bandama River as far as Grand Bassam. The northern boundary is the southern fringes of the savanna. The distinctive feature of this region is the forest, which was a principal source of kola nuts that were traded northward. Key ethnonyms include Kru, Kissi, Gouro, Bete, and others who were sometimes known in the Americas as Gangá.[29]

Voltaic Region extends from Grand Bassam in the west to the Volta River and northward to the headwaters of the White and Black Volta Rivers and includes what often is referred to as Gold Coast. It includes the gold deposits and kola producing areas. In the early eighteenth century, the Asante kingdom emerged as the dominant state in this region and controlled most of the slave trade via European forts at Elmina, Cape Coast,

[27] Lovejoy, *Jihād in West Africa*.

[28] Lovejoy, *Jihād in West Africa*.

[29] Hair, "Ethnolinguistic Continuity;" Jelmer Vos, "The Slave Trade from the Windward Coast, The Case of the Dutch, 1740–1805," *African Economic History* 38 (2010), 29–51; Adam Jones and Marion Johnson, "Slaves from the Windward Coast," *Journal of African History* 21–1 (1980), 17–34.

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Anomabu, Koromantyn, Christianborg, and more than a dozen other fortified castles.[30] The main ethnic group was Akan, including Asante, Akwamu, and Fante, as well as Ewe. In the Americas, the enslaved were often referred to as Cormanti or Mina.

Bight of Benin, often referred to as the Slave Coast in contemporary European sources, extends from the Volta River eastward to the western Niger River delta and was bounded in the west by the Atakora Mountains and in the east by the Niger River below the confluence with the Benue River. The northern boundary shades into the central savanna.[31] From the middle of the seventeenth century until its collapse in 1817–1836, the principal state was Oyo, which included parts of Nupe and Borgu as well as much of Yorubaland. The key ethnonyms include Yoruba, who were referred to as Lucumí in Cuba, Nago in Brazil, Aku in Sierra Leone, as well as Allada, often referred to as Arará or Jeje in the Americas, Mina, Mahi, and other Gbe language speakers. The Edo-speaking Benin Kingdom was in this subregion. The most important slave port was at Ouidah, but other places on the lagoon system behind the coast were also departure points, from Little Popo in the west to Lagos in the east.

Bight of Biafra incorporates the interior of the central and eastern Niger Delta and the Cross River but extends southward to the Gabon estuary. In terms of the trans-Atlantic slave trade, Igbo and Ibibio supplied most of the enslaved, who were known in the Americas as Carabali. Other ethnonyms referred to Efik, Ijaw, Fang, and various people on the interior grasslands north of Mount Cameroon.[32] The two main slave ports were Bonny in the Niger Delta and Calabar on the Cross River.

[30] John Kofi Fynn, *Asante and its Neighbours, 1700–1807* (Evanston IL: Longman, 1971); Kwasi Konadu, *The Akan Diaspora in the Americas* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010); Ivor Wilks, *Asante in the Nineteenth Century: The Structure and Evolution of a Political Order* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1975); Ivor Wilks, *Forests of Gold: Essays on the Akan and the Kingdom of Asante* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 1993).

[31] Isaac Adeagbo Akinjogbin, *Dahomey and Its Neighbours* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967); Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs (eds.), *Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World* (Bloomington IN: Indiana University Press, 2004); Robin Law, *The Oyo Empire, c.1600-c.1836: A West African Imperialism in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade* (Brookfield: Gregg Revivals, 1993 [1977]); Robin Law, *The Slave Coast of West Africa, 1550–1750: The Impact of the Atlantic Slave Trade on an African Society* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1991); Henry B. Lovejoy, "Redrawing Historical Maps of the Bight of Benin Hinterland, c. 1780," *Canadian Journal of African Studies* 47–3 (2013), 446–463.

[32] See, for example: Carolyn 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); David Imbua, Paul Lovejoy and Ivor Miller (eds.), *Calabar on the Cross River: Historical and Cultural Studies* (Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 2017).

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Region 3

West Central Africa includes Angola and both the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, extending northward to the Central African Republic, southern Gabon and eastward to Zambia. Nearly half of all enslaved people in the trans-Atlantic slave trade, or approximately 5.7 million people, were put on board slave ships at places of embarkation between the Gabon estuary and ports north of the Kalahari. The region is predominately Bantu in terms of linguistic identification and has often been called West Central Africa. It is divided into four sub-regions: the **Loango Coast**, to the north of the Congo River, and two sub-regions to the south of Congo River, **Kwanza North** and **Kwanza South**, and, finally, a **Central Interior** region further inland from the coast. The Kwango, Kasai, and Kubango rivers were inland boundaries.[33] While the Kingdom of Kongo was clearly a unified state, there were the states of Ndongo, Matamba, Kassanje, and smaller ones north of the Kwanza river. People there spoke Kimbundu, but the degree of cultural and linguistic unity is unclear. The Kwanza South region was characterized by small polities and decentralized groups, such as Kisama or Ndombe. Ovimbundu did not emerge as a term and identity until the end of the nineteenth century.[34] In most historical data, "Congo" and "Angola" were common, but these designations suggest nothing more than an individual originated somewhere in the broader region and must be treated as such. Due to a vast array of other ethnonyms associated with the region, however, dividing this region into four parts is worthwhile. The broader area covers Angola and both the Republic of Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, extending northward to the Central African Republic, southern Gabon and eastward to Zambia.

[33] Jan Vansina, *Kingdoms of the Savanna* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966); Joseph C. Miller, *Way of Death: Merchant Capitalism and the Angolan Slave Trade, 1730–1830* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988); Linda M. Heywood (ed.), *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002); Linda M. Heywood and John K. Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles, and the Making of the Foundation of the Americas, 1585–1660* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Roquinaldo Amaral Ferreira, *Cross-Cultural Exchange in the Atlantic World: Angola and Brazil during the Era of the Slave Trade* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012); Mariana P. Candido, *An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World: Benguela and its Hinterland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Daniel B. Domingues da Silva, *The Atlantic Slave Trade from West Central Africa, 1780–1867* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017).

[34] Beatrix Heintze, "Historical Notes on the Kisama of Angola," *Journal of African History* 13–3 (1972), 407–418; Mariana P. Candido, "Slave Trade and New Identities in Benguela, 1700–1860," *Portuguese Studies Review* 19–1 (2011), 59–75; Candido, *An African Slaving Port,* 309–310; Jessica A. Krug, *Fugitive Modernities: Kisama and the Politics of Freedom* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2018).

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Loango Coast incorporates the region between Cape Lopez at the Gabon estuary to Cabinda, north of the Congo River. It refers to the Mayombe region, characterized by dense jungle and the northern tributaries of the Congo River, including the Loango Kingdom, Kakongo, and Ngoyo.[35] Ethnonyms included: Ngoyo, Kakongo, Mboma, Muburi, and Teke.

Kwanza North extends from the Congo River, its southern tributaries and the Kwanza River to the Dande River basin and historically included the Kingdom of Kongo and the port of Ambriz.[36] Designations include Kongo, Yaka, and Ndembu, and south of the Dande River, Ndongo, Matamba, and Kassanje. The major port, Luanda, was located on the southern frontier of the Kongo kingdom, which was a unified state. Other states include Ndongo, Matamba, Kassanje, among other smaller ones. On the Kwanza North, people spoke Kikongo and Kimbundu, but the degree of cultural and linguistic unity is unclear. Other ethnonyms were Angola, Njinga, Libolo, Kasanje, Kalandula, Songo, Kisama, and Dongo.[37]

Kwanza South indicates the territory between the Kwanza River and the town of Namibe, formerly Moçamedes, on the northern fringes of

[35] Martin, *External Trade of the Loango Coast*; Phyllis Martin, "Power, Cloth and Currency on the Loango Coast," *African Economic History* 15–1 (1986), 1–12; Stacey Sommerdyk, "Rivarly on the Loango Coast: A Re-Examination of the Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade," in: Arlindo Manuel Caldeira (ed.), *Trabalho Forçado Africano. O Caminho de Ida* (Porto: CEAUP, 2009), 105–118; Filipa Ribeiro da Silva and Stacey Sommerdyk, "Reexamining the Geography and Merchants of the West Central African Slave Trade: Looking Behind the Numbers," *African Economic History* 38 (2010), 77–105.

[36] Beatrix Heintze, "Ngonga a Mwiza: um sobado angolano sob domino português no século XVII," *Revista Internacional de Estudos Africanos* 8–9 (1988), 221–234; Ilídio do Amaral, *O Reino do Congo, os Mbundu (ou Ambundos), o Reino dos "Ngola" (ou de Angola) e a presença portuguesa de finais do século XV a meados do século XVI* (Lisbon: Ministério da Ciência e da Tecnologia/Instituto de Investigação Científica Tropical, 1996); John Thornton, "The Origins and Early History of the Kingdom of Kongo, c. 1350–1550," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 34–1 (2001), 89–120; Beatrix Heintze, *Angola nos séculos XVI e XVII. Estudo sobre fontes, métodos e história* (Luanda: Kilombelombe, 2007); Linda M. Heywood, "Slavery and Its Transformation in the Kingdom of Kongo: 1491–1800," *Journal of African History* 50–1 (2009), 1–22; Cécile Fromont, *The Art of Conversion Christian Visual Culture in the Kingdom of Kongo* (Chapel Hill NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2014); Flávia Maria de Carvalho, *Sobas e homens do rei. Relações de poder e escravidão em Angola (séculos XVII e XVIII)* (Maceió, Alagoas: Edufal, 2015); Heywood and Thornton, *Central Africans, Atlantic Creoles*; Linda M. Heywood, *Njinga of Angola: Africa's Warrior Queen* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 2017).

[37] Kisama people resided along the Kwanza River, so there are Kisama in both regions. Heintze, "Historical Notes on the Kisama," 407–418; Aurora da Fonseca Ferreira, *A Kisama em Angola do século XVI ao início do século XX. Autonomia, ocupação e resistência*, 2 volumes (Luanda: Kilombelombe, 2012); Krug, *Fugitive Modernities*.

[38] Heintze, "Historical Notes on the Kisama," 407–418; Carvalho, *Sobas e homens*.

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the Kalahari. Kisama people, who were organized into smaller political units and decentralized societies, operated as a buffer zone between Kwanza North and South because they resided on both sides of the river in the seventeenth century.[38] The main port was Benguela. Before the eighteenth century, smaller polities prevailed, such as Kakonda. By the early eighteenth century, centralized and militarized states started to consolidate, such as Wambu, Bihe, and Mbailundu. Inland populations were organized into chieftaincies, such as Kakonda, and in highlands, Wambu, Bihe, and Mbailundu. Most of the population spoke Bantu languages, although sources also refer to Khoe and Kung groups in the southern part of the regions (referred as Mocorocas, Mocoando, and Mucuancalas, in Portuguese sources). Ovimbundu emerged as an identity by the end of the nineteenth century.[39] Key ethnonyms were: Benguela, Ndombe (Mundombe), Kakonda, Kilengues, Bihe (Viye), Mbailundu, Nano, Hanya, Kingolo, Kitata, Kisange (Kinsanji), Kipeyo (Cipeio), Fende, Nganguela (Ganguela), Wambu (Huambo), Ciyaka, and Sokoval.

The **Central Interior** is a landlocked area for which there is scarce written evidence. The boundaries in the north overlap with sub-regions of the Nile Valley and Red Sea, Eastern Savanna, and Central Savanna. To the west, we use the Kwango, Kasai, and Kubango rivers as inland boundary markers with the Bight of Biafra, Congo North, Kwanza North, and Kwanza South. In the east it extends to the Great Lakes and East Central Africa and to the south to Southern Africa (see below). There is not much evidence of people from this deep inland region reaching either the east or west coasts of Africa during the era of the transoceanic slave trades.

Region 4

East Africa connects to the Indian Ocean world. However, the southeastern part of this region also tied into the trans-Atlantic slave trade and is reflected in *Voyages* data.[40] It relates to the modern-day countries of South Sudan, Somalia (including virtually independent Somaliland), Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Tanzania, Malawi, Madagascar, and Djibouti, as well as parts of Ethiopia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Zambia, and Mozambique. The coastal belt begins approximately at the Bab-el-Mandeb Strait in the Horn and stretches to the Zambezi.

[39] Linda M. Heywood, "Production, Trade and Power. The Political Economy of Central Angola, 1850–1930," PhD thesis, Columbia University (New York, 1984); Aida Freudenthal, "Benguela - da feitoria à cidade colonial," *Fontes & Estudos* 6–7 (2011), 197–229; Armindo Jaime Gomes, *Os Sobas. Apontamentos Etno-Históricos Sobre Os Ovimbundu de Benguela* (Benguela: GAL, 2002); Mariana P. Candido, "Conquest, Occupation, Colonialism and Exclusion: Land Disputes in Angola," in: José Vicente Serrão *et al.* (eds.), *Property Rights, Land and Territory in the European Overseas Empires* (Lisbon: CEHC-IUL, 2014), 223–233; Candido, *An African Slaving Port.*

[40] Jane Hooper and David Eltis, "The Indian Ocean in Transatlantic Slavery," *Slavery and Abolition* 34–3 (2013), 353–375.

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Horn of Africa reflects the Somali desert and environs. It is bordered inland by the Ethiopian highlands and Rift Valley. Its sparse population was primarily Somali.

Great Lakes form around the large lakes of Turkana, Kyoga, Albert, Edward, Victoria, Kivu, Tanganyika, Rukwa, and Mweru, but not Lake Malawi (which is in East Central Africa). Abdul Sheriff uses the approximate area between the Lomami and Lualaba rivers as the western boundary marker with the Central Interior. This region was a source of enslaved people for the Nile Valley sub-region.[41] Most enslaved people from the Great Lakes were brought to the coast opposite Zanzibar. Some ethnonyms from this large sub-region include Baganda, Banyoro, Manyema, and Nyamwezi.

East African Coast, or Swahili coast, is a relatively thin strip of territory stretching from Mogadishu along the Shabelle River and extending to the Rufiji River and Mafia Island to the south of Zanzibar. It extends no more than about 200 kilometers inland beyond which there is very low population density except in highland areas. It includes numerous trading towns that did not develop strong territorial empires but rather participated in the cyclical monsoons of the trans-Indian Ocean trade.[42] Important ethnonyms for this sub-region include Zigua/Zigula, Zaramo, Nyika, and Somali, and ports of departure such as Mombasa.

East Central Africa lies between the Rufiji and Zambezi Rivers, including the Kilwa Coast. Inland boundaries run along the Rufiji River to the Luwegu confluence, after which it extends westward along the southern shores of Lake Tanganyika and Lake Mweru and then the Luapula river southward until Zumbo. It includes Lake Nyasa (Malawi) and the Zambezi valley. For the most part captives boarded slave ships through Kilwa, Mozambique Island, Angoche, and Quelimane (the latter mostly for the Brazil trade in the early decades of the nineteenth century).[43] The most important ethnonyms

[41] Abdul Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory in Zanzibar: Integration of an East African Commercial Empire into the World Economy, 1770–1873* (Oxford: James Currey, 1987); Henri Médard and Shane Doyle (eds.), *Slavery in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa* (Athens OH: Ohio University Press, 2007).

[42] Sheriff, *Slaves, Spices & Ivory*.

[43] Edward A. Alpers, *Ivory and Slaves: Changing Pattern of International Trade in East Central Africa to the Later Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975); Hideaki Suzuki, "Enslaved Population and Indian Owners Along the East African Coast: Exploring the Rigby Manumission List, 1860–1861," *History in Africa* 39 (2012), 209–239; Hopper, *Slaves of One Master*; Eugénia Rodrigues, *Portugueses e Africanos nos Rios de Sena: Os Prazos da Coroa em Moçambique nos Séculos XVII e XVIII* (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda, 2013); José Capela, "Moçambique e Brasil: Interferência culturais e políticias pela via do tráfico da escravatura," in: Carlos Liberato, Mariana Candido, Paul Lovejoy and Renée Soulodre-La France (eds.), *Laços Atlânticos: África e africanos durante a era do comércio transatlântico de escravos* (Luanda: Museu da Escravatura, 2017), 154–172.

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were: Yao (Mujao, Mujana, Mujava), Makua/Macua, Makonde/Maconde, Bisa, Ngindo, Nyasa/Nyanja, Manganja, and Sena; and it was the location of many Portuguese land grants that have been referred to as *prazos*.[44]

Madagascar was both a source and destination for enslaved captives of diverse cultures.[45] It is grouped into East Africa due to the nature of trade between the large island, the eastern continent and Indian Ocean world.

Region 5

Southern Africa forms the continental cone. It begins at the northern Kalahari around the Cape of Good Hope until the Zambezi River. It relates to Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland, Lesotho, South Africa, Zimbabwe, as well as parts of Angola, Zambia, and Mozambique. The region is divided into **Southern Veld**, **Southeastern Africa**, and the **Kalahari**. Except for Cape Town and around Maputo Bay, most of the coast is sparsely populated until Inhambane, which sent captives to both the Mascarene Islands and the Americas in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.[46] The Kalahari and Namib deserts had low populations.

Southern Veld extends from the Cape of Good Hope, along the coast and inland into the grasslands to the east of the Kalahari to the inland portion of the Zambezi basin. Major ethnolinguistic groups included the descendants of Dutch and other European settlers at Cape Town and environs, known collectively as Boers, as well Xhosa, Sotho, Swazi, Setswana, Bemba, Nyanja, Tonga, and Lozi. The region affected the *mfecane* wars of the nineteenth century and the Great Trek of the Boers into the interior, especially after 1834.

Southeastern Africa refers to the coastal belt from the north of the lower Zambezi basin and south to Maputo Bay, formerly known as Delagoa Bay. The people who inhabited this area included: Sena, Tsonga, Ndau, and the location of many *prazos*.

[44] Allen Isaacman, *Mozambique: the Africanization of a European Institution, the Zambezi Prazos, 1750–1902* (Madison WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 1972).

[45] Gwyn Campbell, *An Economic History of Imperial Madagascar, 1750–1895: The Rise and Fall of an Island Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 213.

[46] Christopher Saunders, "Liberated Africans in Cape Colony in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century," *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 18–2 (1985), 223–239; Nigel Worden and Clifton C. Crais, *Breaking the Chains: Slavery and its Legacy in the Nineteenth-Century Cape Colony* (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1994); Benigna Zimba, Edward Alpers and Allen Isaacman (eds.), *Slave Routes and Oral Tradition in Southeastern Africa* (Maputo: Filsom Entertainment, Lda., 2005); Patrick Harries, "Slavery, Indenture and Migrant Labour: Maritime Immigration from Mozambique to the Cape, c.1780–1880," *African Studies* 73–3 (2014), 323–340; Patrick Harries, "Mozambique Island, Cape Town and the Organisation of the Slave Trade in the South-West Indian Ocean, c. 1797–1807," *Journal of Southern African Studies* 42–3 (2016), 409–427.

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Kalahari, along with the Namib Desert, had low populations, hunters and gatherers and cattle herders living on the margins of the deserts.

Islands

Canary Islands are an archipelago. The main islands are Tenerife, Fuerteventura, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote, La Palma, La Gomera, El Hierro, among other smaller islands and islets. **Cape Verde Islands** can be divided into two groups, the Barlavento Islands or windward islands which include Santo Antão, São Vicente, Santa Luzia, São Nicolau, Sal, and Boa Vista; and the Sotavento Islands or Leeward Islands, which are Maio, Santiago, Fogo, and Brava. The islands had ties with both Senegambia and the Upper Guinea Coast through Bissau and Cacheu. **Gulf of Guinea Islands** had connections with the Gold Coast, Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra and West Central Africa. Fernando Po (now Bioko), São Tomé, and Príncipe form the main island chain as part of a line of volcanoes emerging in the ocean offshore from modern-day Cameroon. In the southern Atlantic, **St. Helena** historically had connections with places in West Central and Southern Africa, especially after 1807 following the British abolition of the Atlantic slave trade.[47] The **Comoro Islands**, consisting of Grande Comore (Ngazidja), Anjouan (Ndzuwani or Nzwani), Mohéli (Mwali), and Mayotte (Maore or Mahori), are located in the Mozambique Channel between Madagascar and the the continent, which means these islands have always been connected to the entire region both as a destination and departure point for enslaved people. Likewise, the **Seychelles** archipelago contains over 100 islands, the most significant being Mahé, Praslin, and La Digue. Finally, the **Mascarene Islands** of Réunion, Mauritius, and Rodrigues were variously occupied by different European powers and significant in the East India trade. A slave trade went to the islands, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[48]

[47] Andrew Pearson, *Distant Freedom: St Helena and the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1840–1872* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016).

[48] Richard B. Allen, "The Mascarene Slave-Trade and Labour Migration in the Indian Ocean during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Slavery & Abolition* 24–2 (2003), 33–50; Richard B. Allen, "The Constant Demand of the French: The Mascarene Slave Trade and the Worlds of the Indian Ocean and Atlantic during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *Journal of African History* 49–1 (2008), 43–72; Vijaya Teelock and Thomas Vernet (eds.), *Traites, esclavage et transition vers l'engagisme: Perspectives nouvelles sur les Mascareignes et le sud-ouest de l'océan Indien, 1715–1848* (Réduit: University of Mauritius, Centre for Research on Slavery and Indenture, 2015).

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Conclusion

This article has proposed a new schema for the regional division of the entire continent of Africa and its offshore islands for the purpose of aggregating data for demographic analysis. Our intention is to establish best practices in assembling large datasets of historical documentation that avoid problems of distinguishing among ethnonyms and languages. We do not propose that *Voyages* and other projects should abandon existing methods of organization, but we do attempt to provide an alternate approach to the Curtin schema for recognizing regions as units of analysis. The controlled vocabulary divides Africa into five broad regions composed of a total of twenty-four sub-regions plus the island clusters. While these geographic territories may be debatable for certain purposes of historical reconstruction and may be far from perfect even for data analysis, a schema is nonetheless required in order to advance the study of Africa and the African diasporas that can benefit from advancements and new methods in digital humanities and biographical data with more granular specificity. Our aim has been to build on the historiography, which begins with Curtin's ground-breaking 1969 census, later adopted by Eltis and the numerous contributors of *Voyages*. That regionalizing must be revised for digital projects that are currently being developed in relation to biographies of enslaved Africans. Our proposed regions and sub-regions cover the whole continent and nearby islands, not just the coast, to facilitate the analysis of complex inland and external migrations and to avoid projecting twentieth-century ethnic identifications into earlier periods.

Efforts to determine the origins of the enslaved population leaving Africa and indeed remaining within Africa have received a new impetus through the collection of biographical information, especially by organizing databases about Africans who were enslaved from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries. Patterns can be discerned that suggest a schema for identifying the broad if necessarily fuzzy regions from where enslaved people came. Until now efforts to establish the origins of the enslaved population have been based on modern political and/or ethnic boundaries which have changed over time. The biographical data make it clear that it is not necessary to relate the backgrounds of enslaved people through references to modern countries which distort our understanding of the past. The data collection related to when and where people came from in precolonial Africa and when and where they went, whether in terms of continental, transcontinental, or transoceanic slave trades, makes it necessary to define regions and boundaries that have a greater degree of historical context than has previously been the case.

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Appendix 1

Comparison of *Voyages* "Regions" and data for "Principal Place of Slave Purchase" with proposed Regions for "West Central Africa," "East Africa," and "Southern Africa" with data for "Principal Place of Slave Purchase"

Voyages Region	Proposed Regions for West Africa
Voyages "Principal Place of Slave Purchase"	Voyages "Principal Place of Slave Purchase"
Senegambia and offshore Atlantic	**Sahara**
Arguim	Arguin
Saint-Louis	
Galam	**Senegambia**
Gorée	Senegal River
Portudal	Saint Louis
Joal, or Saloum River	Galam
Gambia	Gorée
Albreda	French Africa (Goree or Senegal)
Cassamance	Portudal
Cacheu	Joal/Saloum River
Bissau	Gambia
Bissagos	Albreda
Rio Grande	Gorée or Senegal
Portuguese Guinea	Senegambia and offshore Atlantic,
Cape Verde Islands	port unspecified
Madeira	
French Africa (Goree or Senegal)	**Upper Guinea Coast**
Senegambia and offshore Atlantic, port	Cassamance River
unspecified	Cacheu River
	Bissau
Sierra Leone	Bissagos Islands
Rio Nunez	Rio Grande
Rio Pongo	Rio Nunez
Iles de Los	Rio Pongo
Scarcies	Iles de Los
Sierra Leone Estuary	Scarcies
Bance Island (Ben's Island)	Sierra Leone Estuary
River Kissey	Bance Island
Banana Islands	Kissey River
Plantain Island	Banana Islands
Sherbro	Plantain Island
Gallinhas	Sherbro Island
Mano	Gallinhas
Cacandia	Mano River
Delagoa	Cape Mount

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Appendix 1 Continued

Voyages Region	Proposed Regions for West Africa
Sugary (Siekere)	Cacandia
Sierra Leone, port unspecified	Delagoa
Côte de Malaguette (Cape Palmas to Windward Coast)	Sugary (Siekere)
	Sierra Leone, port unspecified
Windward Coast	**Forests of West Africa**
Cape Mount	St. Paul River
St. Paul	Grand Mesurado
Grand Mesurado	Petit Mesurado
Petit Mesurado	Junk River
Grand Junk	Bassa
Little Junk	Little Bassa
Bassa	Grand Bassa
Little Bassa	Trade Town
Grand Bassa	Grand Sestos
Trade Town	Rock Sestos
Grand Sestos	Cess
Rock Sestos	Settra Kru
Cess	Tabou
Settra Kru	Sassandra
Tabou	Cape Lahou
Sassandra	Dembia
Cape Lahou	Drouin
Grand Bassam	Ivory Coast
Rio Assini	Windward Coast, port unspecified
Dembia	
Drouin	**Voltaic Region**
Ivory Coast	Grand Bassam
Windward Coast, port unspecified	Assini
	Apollonia
Gold Coast	Axim
Apollonia	Pokesoe
Axim	Elmina
Pokesoe (Princes Town)	Cape Coast Castle
Elmina	Anomabo
Cape Coast Castle	Fort Amokou
Anomabu	Kormantse
Kormantine	Alampo
Alampo	Apam
Apammin	Wiamba

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Appendix 1 Continued

Voyages Region	Proposed Regions for West Africa
Wiamba	Apam
Accra	Wiamba
Christiansborg	Accra
Chama	Shama
Eva	Eva
Gold Coast east of Kormantine	Lay
Gold Coast from Kormatine to Accra	Gold Coast east of Kormantse
Danish Gold Coast	Gold Coast from Kormantse to Accra
Gold Coast, port unspecified	Danish Gold Coast
	Gold Coast, port unspecified
Bight of Benin	
Keta	**Bight of Benin**
Popo	Keta
Little Popo	Little Popo
Grand Popo	Grand Popo
Whydah	Ouidah
Ardra	Ardra
Jaquin	Jakin
Epe	Ekpe
Porto Novo	Porto Novo
Badagri/Apa	Apa
Lagos	Badagry
Benin	Lagos
Rio Forcados	Benin
Oerê	Forcados River
Rio Nun	Warri River
Aghway	Aghway
Amokou	Bight of Benin, port unspecified
Ife	
Lay	**Bight of Biafra**
Legas	Cape Formosa
Costa da Mina	Rio Nun
Bight of Benin, port unspecified	Brass River
	Elem Kalabari
Bight of Biafra and Gulf of Guinea islands	Bundu
Formosa	Bonny
Brass River	Andoni
New Calabar	Kwakwa
Calabary	Calabar
Bonny	Rio del Rey

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Appendix 1 Continued

Voyages Region	Proposed Regions for West Africa
Andony	Bimbia
Quaqua	Cameroons River
Calabar	Corisco
Rio del Rey	Gabon Estuary
Bimbia	Liverpool River
Cameroons	Rio Nazareth
Cameroons River	
Gabon	**Proposed Regions for West Central Africa**
Cap Lopez	
Bilbay	**Loango Coast**
Bundy	Cape Lopez
Liverpool River	Mayumba
Rio Nazareth	Kilongo River
Corisco	Loango
Gulf of Guinea islands	Boary
Fernando Po	Malembo
Princes Island	Cabinda
São Tomé	Congo North
São Tomé or Princes Island	
Costa de Africa (coast around	**Kwanza North**
S Tome/Principe)	Congo River
Bight of Biafra and Gulf of Guinea	Soyo
Islands, port unspec.	Mpinda
	Ambriz
West Central Africa and St. Helena	Penedo
Mayumba	Luanda
Kilongo	
Loango	**Kwanza South**
Boary	Kwanza River
Malembo	Novo Redondo
Cabinda	Quicombo
Congo River	Benguela
Soyo	Salinas
Mpinda	
Ambriz	**Proposed Regions for East Africa**
Penido	
Luanda	**East African Coast**
Coanza River	Mogadishu
Nova Redonda	Mombasa or Zanzibar

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Appendix 1 Continued

Voyages Region	Proposed Regions for West Africa
Quicombo	**East Central Africa**
Benguela	Kilwa
Salinas	Ibo
Alecuba	Quirimba
Ambona	Mozambique
Bomara	Quilimane
Cabo Lopo Gonçalves	
Cape Mole	**Madagascar**
Congo North	Madagascar
Rio Zaire	
Grenada Point	**Proposed Regions for Southern Africa**
West Central Africa and St. Helena	
	Southeastern Africa
Southeast Africa and Indian Ocean islands	Sofala
Momboza or Zanzibar	Inhambane
Zanzibar	Lourenço Marques
Kilwa	Delagoa Bay
Ibo	
Quirimba	**Southern Veld**
Mozambique	Cape of Good Hope
Quilimane	High Veld
Sofala	
Inhambane	**Proposed Islands**
Madagascar	
Lourenço Marques	**Canary Islands**
Delagoa Bay	Canary Islands
Cape of Good Hope	
Costa Leste Occidental	**Cape Verde Islands**
St. Lawrence	Cape Verde Islands
Mascarene Islands	
Mauritius (Ile de France)	**Gulf of Guinea Islands**
Southeast Africa and Indian Ocean islands, port unspecified	Gulf of Guinea islands
	Fernando Po
	Princes Island
	São Tomé
	São Tomé or Princes Island
	St. Helena
	Jamestown
	St. Helena

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Appendix 1 Continued

Voyages Region	Proposed Regions for West Africa
	Comoro Islands
	Comoro Islands
	Mascarene Islands
	Mauritius (Ile de France)

Source: Eltis *et al.*, *Voyages*, accessed 31 August 2018. This appendix is a point of comparison and reference. Please note that attempts were made to organize the "Principal Places of Slave Purchase" data from north to south. Some adjustments for spelling between the two columns have been made, such as Whydah to Ouidah, Jaquin to Jakin, among others.

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