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THE PEOPLING OF AN AFRICAN SLAVE PORT: ANNAMABOE AND THE ATLANTIC WORLD

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Abstract

Annamaboe, located on the Gold Coast in modern-day Ghana, was a sleepy Fante fishing village when Dutch traders arrived there in 1638. The arrival of the Europeans ushered Annamaboe into the Atlantic world and brought fundamental changes to the town's physical landscape, economic and cultural life, and literally to its DNA as Europeans and Africans formed relationships that gave rise to a substantial mixed-race population. Like other Atlantic towns and cities, Annamaboe grew as a conduit for trade. Its traders funneled African trade goods —primarily enslaved peoples but also gold, maize and other provisions — to Europe and the Americas and it brought in a variety of products from Europe and around the world in exchange — fabrics, metals, manufactured goods, alcohol and tobacco — and distributed those goods into the interior. The Atlantic world is defined by the movement of goods, ideas and peoples around it, and much of that movement operated through the urban hubs that grew up around the Atlantic. Much of the scholarship on the Atlantic world has focused on the North Atlantic, particularly on the British Atlantic. This article's focus on an African Atlantic port offers an important corrective to that bias, a necessary one if we are to fully comprehend that world.

Keywords

Annamaboe – Gold Coast – African Port City – Atlantic Slave Trade – Atlantic World.

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O POVOAMENTO DE UM PORTO ESCRAVISTA AFRICANO: ANNAMABOE E O MUNDO ATLÂNTICO

Resumo

A cidade deAnnamaboe, localizada na Costa do Ouro, na atual Gana, era uma pequena vila de pescadores quando os holandeses ali chegaram pela primeira vez em 1638. A chegada de europeus introduziu a cidade ao mundo atlântico e promoveu mudanças fundamentais na geografia, economia e vida cultural de Annamaboe, inclusive literalmente no seu DNA, visto que europeus e africanos formaram relacionamentos que criaram uma população mista numerosa. Semelhante a outras cidades e vilas Atlânticas, Annamaboe cresceu se tornou um nódulo importante em redes de trocas comerciais. Seus mercadores encaminharam produtos africanas—pessoas escravizadas, principalmente, mas também ouro, milho, e outras provisões—para a Europa e as Américas e ajudaram a introduzir e distribuir pela região produtos advindos da Europa e do resto do mundo—tecidos, metais, produtos manufaturados, álcool e tabaco. O mundo atlântico se define pela movimentação de bens, ideias e pessoas, e grande parte dessa movimentação se fez a partir de centros urbanos que se desenvolveram ao longo da costa atlântica. Grande parte da literatura sobre o mundo atlântico tende a focar o Norte Atlântico e o Atlântico britânico em particular. Esse artigo, ao centrar a sua análise em um porto atlântico africano, oferece uma importante perspectiva, necessária à melhor comprehensão daquele mundo, e que busca corrigir essa tendência.

Palavras-Chave

Annamaboe – Costa do Ouro – Cidade Portuária Africana – Tráfico Atlântico de Escravos – Mundo Atlântico.

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Annamaboe, located on the Gold Coast in modern-day Ghana and known today as Anomabo, originated as an indigenous African town and according to oral tradition, grew out of the migration of the Fante from the interior to the coast probably in the fifteenth century. In the pre-colonial period it was a part of the political and cultural unit that historians have referred to as Fanteland, the Coastal Coalition known to the British in the eighteenth century as the "Fantee Nation." Each of those Fante states was governed by a chief magistrate called the chief caboceer, derived from the Portuguese *cabeceira* meaning "head," and under him were chiefs and prominent traders, also known as caboceers.[3] By the eighteenth century it was the largest city in that nation, and it served as the major outlet for the export of enslaved Africans from the Gold Coast. All told, roughly ten percent of the enslaved Africans shipped out of Africa across the Atlantic left from the Gold Coast. My study of Annamaboe joins a growing body of literature on pre-colonial African urban history and the burgeoning interest in the comparative study of Atlantic port cities. Historians of African cities have tended to focus on colonial and post-colonial urban centers, but a number of more recent studies have examined African coastal cities with pre-colonial roots including Ouidah, Lagos, and Benguela. All of these cities, including Annamaboe, can be characterized as "second generation" pre-colonial towns that emerged as centers of coastal trade

3 On the Fante Nation and its government see SPARKS, Randy. Where the Negroes Are Masters: An African Port in the Era of the Slave Trade. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014. P. 7-21. SHUMWAY, Rebecca. The Fante and the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2011. p. 10-11, 94, 119. "Copy of a Treaty Concluded at Cape Coast Castle between England and the Fantee Nation, on Feb. 6, 1753," The London Magazine, Or, Gentleman's Monthly Intelligence. p. 482. vol. 22. The term also appeared in advertisements for slave sales as it did in the Orleans Gazette and Commercial Advertiser, July 5, 1806. Like many coastal nations engaged in the slave trade, the Fante state centralized as a result to the need to control trade routes and the trade itself and expanded due in part to their access to new military technology. See MANN. Kristin. Slavery and the Birth of an African City: Lagos, 1760-1900. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010. p. 8-9.

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with Europeans, particularly the slave trade.[4] This paper will explore how Annamaboe's role as a growing slave trading depot impacted its population. Scholars of other West African ports have characterized them as "middleman" communities, both in relation to their position between the exchange of goods and people from the interior to the coast and from European traders to the interior, and in relation to their role as cultural intermediaries.[5] The arrival of the Europeans ushered Annamaboe into the Atlantic World, directly linked Annamaboe to its sister slave-trading cities in Europe and the Americas, and brought fundamental changes to the town's physical landscape, economic and cultural life, and literally to its DNA as Europeans and Africans formed relationships that gave rise to a substantial population of Anglo-Africans.

Annamaboe was a sleepy Fante fishing village when Portuguese traders first arrived along that coast in the fifteenth century. It was not an obvious spot for a port city – it had no natural harbor, and European ships had to anchor a mile offshore in what was called Annamaboe Road while trade goods and people had to be ferried back and forth by canoe. From their impressive base at Elmina, about 30

4 For examples of recent works focused on African cities with pre-colonial roots see LAW, Robin. Ouidah: The Social History of a West African Slaving 'Port': 1727-1892. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004. MANN, Kristin. Op. Cit. CANDIDO, Mariana P. An African Slaving Port and the Atlantic World: Benguela and Its Hinterland. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. For comparative work see CAñIZARES-ESGUERRA, Jorge; CHILDS, Matt D.; SIDBURY, James. The Black Urban Atlantic in the Age of the Slave Trade. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. First-generation towns served as capitals of indigenous African states, sometimes referred to as "palace cities." See MONDJANNAGNI, Comlan Alfred. Campages et villes au sud de al Republic Populalire du Benin. Paris: Collection Agence de Coopération Culturelle et Technique, 1977. p. 295-341. LAW, Robin. Op. Cit., p. 4.

5 LAW, Robin. Op. Cit., p.6; ARNOLD, Rosemary. "A Port of Trade: Whydah on the Guinea Coast," in POLANYI, Karl, ARENSBERG, Conrad M. and PEARSON, Harry W. (org.). Trade and Market in the Early Empires: Economies in History and Theory. Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1957. p. 154-176. POLANYI, Karl. Dahomey and the Slave Trade: An Analysis of an Archaic Economy. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1966. p. 95-139. AUSTEN, Ralph A.; DERRICK, Jonathan. Middlemen of the Cameroons Rivers: The Duala and Their Hinterland, C.1600-c.1960. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. GETZ, Trevor R. Slavery and Reform in West Africa: Toward Emancipation in Nineteenth-Century Senegal and the Gold Coast. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004. p. 17-18.

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kilometers up the coast from the Fante village, the Portuguese traded for gold, and it was their lust for the precious metal rather than slaves that drove them. One of the Portuguese commanders at Elmina left the earliest recorded mention of the Fante in a sixteenth-century document referring to fishing villages called "Fante the Great" and "Fante the Small," though whether or not either of those refers to Annamaboe is unclear. The Portuguese faced little opposition from other European powers until late in the sixteenth century when Spain's rebellious Dutch provinces set up trading posts along the Gold Coast. In 1637 the Dutch managed to capture Elmina and displace the Portuguese. The Portuguese left an important legacy including such cultural changes as the introduction of Christianity and in the trade languages that emerged to facilitate commerce. They introduced citrus fruits, rice and sugarcane from their possessions in the Far East, and maize, tobacco, pineapple, cassava and other fruits and plants from the Americas. In 1624 the Dutch signed a trade agreement with the Fante, and in 1638 they built a lodge or trading post at Annamaboe. In 1679 the English took advantage of Dutch involvement in European wars to supplant them at Annamaboe, built Charles Fort there, and maintained a position as the major player there throughout the era of the slave trade and beyond. The town, which had an estimated population of 6-7,000 by 1680, was primarily a supplier of gold and provisions throughout the seventeenth century. The old Dutch lodge became the residence of the chief caboceer, the town's ruling magistrate, while the English fort loomed over the town. That fort brought a much larger European presence into Annamaboe and contributed to its growth as more and more English ships came to trade there.[6]

6 SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., 1-22. VOGT, John. Portuguese Rule on the Gold Coast, 1469-1682. Athens, GA: University of Georgia Press, 1979. p. 21-59, 89. WARD, W. E. F. A History of the Gold Coast. London: George Allen & Unwin, Ltd., 1948[;. p. 72-87. THORNTON, John. Africa and Africans in the Making of the Atlantic World, 1400-1680. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. p. 64-71. See also KEA, Ray. Settlements, Trade and Politics on the Seventeenth Century Gold Coast. Baltimore, Md.: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982. FEINBERG, Harvey M. Africans and Europeans in West Africa: Elminans and Dutchmen on the Gold Coast during the Eighteenth Century. Transactions of the American Philosophical Society, New Series 79, p. 1-155. 1989.

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Before 1750 the Royal African Company, a joint-stock company chartered in 1672, maintained the coastal forts. Its charter licensed it for a thousand years and gave it a monopoly of all African trade, including the slave trade. It lost its monopoly on the slave trade in 1698 and independent traders soon carried the vast majority of captives across the Atlantic. The RAC's finances suffered from the loss of it monopoly, and in 1752 Parliament dissolved the company and replaced it with the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa. The African Committee, made up of nine men, three each representing London, Liverpool and Bristol, managed the Company's affairs.[7]

Like other Atlantic towns and cities, Annamaboe grew as a conduit for trade. Its English, Fante, and Anglo-African traders provided the African trade goods—primarily enslaved peoples but also gold, maize and other provisions—that left the city for Europe and the Americas. In exchange, English traders brought in a variety of products from Europe and around the world—primarily fabrics, metals, manufactured goods, alcohol and tobacco—which the Fante and mixed-race traders distributed into the interior. In 1689 an RAC official called Annamaboe "the principal granary" on the Gold Coast, and a few years later William Bosman described the Fante state as "populous, it is very rich in Gold, Slaves, and all sorts of Necessities of Life; but more especially in Corn, which they sell in large Quantities to the English ships." Every slave ship required from 300-500 bushels of maize. After its introduction by the Portuguese, maize soon supplanted millet and sorghum as the chief crop. Because two maize crops could be planted each year, and the dry grain could be stored, it was possible for slave ships to find provisions there at almost any time of year, an advantage that greatly facilitated trade. The agricultural

DAAKU, Kwame Yeboa, Trade and Politics on the Gold Coast, 1600–1720: A Study of the African Reaction to European Trade. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970. KEA, Ray. A Cultural and Social History of Ghana from the Seventeenth to the Nineteenth Century: The Gold Coast in the Age of Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade. 2 vols. New York: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2012.

7 PETTIGREW, William A. Freedom's Debt: The Royal African Company and the Politics of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1672-1752. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2013.

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labor needed to farm the fields and clear the land helps explain why the Gold Coast was a net importer of slaves before the late eighteenth century, an importation that changed the ethnic makeup of the town and its hinterland.[8]

So long as the gold trade predominated, the inland towns of the Fante coalition were larger and more powerful than Annamaboe, but that situation changed with the growth in trade in provisions and slaves. The slave trade was fueled in part by the military conquests of the Fante, but especially by the expansion of the Asante Empire in the interior, an expansion that provided a steady stream of enslaved prisoners of war throughout the eighteenth century. The Fante successfully positioned themselves as the intermediaries in that commerce, and preventing the Asante from opening a direct path to the coast was one of the primary goals of Fante diplomatic policy throughout the era of the slave trade. The Fante operated large slave markets near their inland border where the Asante brought their prisoners for sale. The volume of the slave trade from the Gold Coast soared from the seventeenth to the eighteenth century:

8 LAW, Robin (org.). The English in West Africa, 1691-1699. The Local Correspondence of the Royal African Company of England, 1681-1699. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. v.3, p., 277 (first quotation), 284, 285, 287, 313, 354; BOSMAN, William, A New and Accurate Description of the Coast of Guinea. In PINDERTON, John. General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels in All Parts of the World. Vol. 16. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1814. p. 362 (second quotation.

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Volume of Transatlantic Slave Departures from the Gold Coast

1651-75	30,805
1676-1700	75,376
1701-25	229,239
1726-50	231,418
1751-75	268,229
1776-1800	285,643 1,120,710

Source: Estimates, Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, https://www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/about (accessed February 5, 2020).

As the slave trade grew the trade in gold declined, and since the Fante preferred that slaves be paid for in gold, the Gold Coast became a net importer of that precious metal. As one British official on the coast reported in 1773, "he who had got the Gold is sure to make the quickest dispatch – what the natives do with such immense quantities of the commodity, I know not . . . ."[9] The town's economic life was transformed from the late seventeenth to the early eighteenth as its economy shifted from gold to slaves. By the mid-eighteenth century the town had an estimated 20,000 residents, comparable to other Atlantic ports like Charleston, South Carolina, or Kingston, Jamaica, both among its primary trading partners. The majority of its residents participated in the slave trade, many directly as traders, but

9 FIENBERG, Harvey. Op. Cit. p. 53, 55-58, 63. LAW, Robin. The English in..., v. 3, p. 277. KLEIN, Herbert S. Atlantic Slave Trade. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010. p. 59. Richard Miles to William Bourke, 31 January 1773, T70/1482 (TNA) (quotation).

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others in the many occupations that supported the trade, including goldtakers, canoe men, and linguists.[10]

The symbol of British influence in Annamaboe were the two forts constructed there. The first, Charles Fort, was built in 1679 and abandoned in 1730; the second, Annamaboe Fort, was built in 1751. In the Atlantic World, the presence of a European fort usually indicated military strength; in the Americas forts were bases from where European states expanded their colonial enterprises and which allowed them to control territory. They were conceived as "fortified bastions of exclusion," as Alejandro de la Fuente observed of the fortified city of Havana in the late sixteenth century.[11] It would be a mistake to view European forts along the Gold Coast in that context. The forts were primarily trade establishments, housing only a handful of European men, and aimed more at their European rivals than the Africans. The forts were not English military outposts. Instead, they belonged to the private Royal African Company and then to its successor, the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa, and the companies hired the soldiers on five-year contracts. The English paid annual rent to the Fante for the land on which the forts stood, and they were there at the Fante's pleasure. The forts housed enslaved African men and women who cooked, cleaned, and provided for the needs of the officers and soldiers. The forts funneled European goods into the interior and enslaved Africans out into the Atlantic World. In addition, the forts provided a steady source of income for the Annamaboe elites: regular financial payments and gifts, known as customs and dashes, flowed into the pockets of the ruling elite and the townspeople in general. Over time, more and more Anglo-Africans found employment in the forts as writers, linguists, and soldiers. The forts physically di-

10 SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., p. 122-161.

11 DE LA FUENTE, Alejandro. Havana and the Atlantic in the Sixteenth Century. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011. p. 6 (quotation), 7, 76-80.

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vided the town between the Fishing and Pynins Towns or the Upper and Lower Towns.[12]

Disputes between the governor of the fort and the Fante were common, and the Fante usually carried the day. The two parties often argued over the payment of the dashes, gifts paid to encourage trade, and customs and over English efforts to limit trade at Annamaboe only to themselves. For example, James Nightingale, appointed governor of Fort Charles in the 1680s, had troubled relations and frequent disputes with the Fante. These trading issues often resulted in a palaver, a formal means of settling disputes all along the West Coast of Africa. Palavers have been described as "the art of settling matters through talk." Europeans grumbled about the long, drawn-out nature of these discussions, during which trade often stopped. But all disputes on the coast were settled through this means or violence often resulted. In May 1686, Nightingale had a "long palaver" with the caboceers, who forced him to give them large quantities of brandy. He forwarded their demands for additional payments in cloth and brandy to the RAC, and complained that he was "much troubled with them." The disputes at Annamaboe continued, and Nightingale complained that the caboceers "for some time shut up my gates," and allowed no one in or out of the fort.[13] In September he notified his superiors that he and the caboceers "were at variance through their insolences," and he warned that he would "no longer suffer the daily

12 DeCORSE, Christopher. Op. Cit. p. 165-187; SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., p. 1, 9-18, 60-62.

13 LAW, Robin. The English in... Op. Cit., v. 2, p. 154, 155, 156, 160, 161 (first quotation), 162 (second quotation), 163, 164 (fourth, fifth and sixth quotations). On palavers see PEEK, Philip M. and YANKAH, Kwesi. African Folklore: An Encyclopedia. New York and London: Routledge, 2004. p. 663 (third quotation). CORRY, Joseph. Observations upon the Windward Coast of Africa: The Religion, Character, Customs &c., of the Natives; with a System Upon Which They May Be Civilized, and a Knowledge Attained of the Interior of this Extraordinary Quarter of the Globe; and Upon the Natural and Commercial Resources of the Country: Made in the Years 1805 and 1806. London: G. and W. Nicol, 1807. p. 42, 43, 48, 58, 59, 67, 70, 127. SMITH, Robert. Peace and Palaver: International Relations in Pre-Colonial West Africa. Journal of African History, n. 14, p. 599-621. October 1973. RØMER, Ludvig Ferdinand. Reliable Account of the Coast of Guinea. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000. p.165.

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affronts as fformerly." These disputes ended with Nightingale being stripped naked, beaten, and driven from the fort.[14]

RAC officials replaced Nightingale as chief of the fort at the insistence of the caboceers, who often forced the removal of governors or other personnel who displeased them. James Walker, who replaced Nightingale temporarily, reported that he was "endeavouring to live peaceably and quietly with the natives, but it is not my will but theirs must be done. Their good success in their rogeries has brought them to such a hight that they esteem and vallue a white man as nought, and as for the Castle, they say can distroy it at pleasure. Likewise say no man shall live their as Chiefe but whome they approve of [spellings as in original]." As a result of these continual palavers and disputes, the English abandoned Charles Fort in 1730. Ludewig Ferdinand Rømer, an employee of the Danish slave-trading company stationed on the Gold Coast from 1739–1744, wrote that the English "were so plagued by the Negroes at that place [Annamaboe] that they thanked God to be able to get away. The Negroes then tore the fort down completely and negotiated directly with the ships."[15]

As the slave trade continued to grow from Annamaboe, the French came calling and offered lavish gifts and financial incentives to the Fante to allow them to build a fort there. That threat panicked the British who were forced to outbid their rivals and rebuild their fort in 1751, though the power relations were much the same as before.[16] Before the RAC lost its monopoly in 1750, all trade in slaves was supposed to go through the forts, though the Africans resented that constraint on their free trade with the English and other interlopers who were equally eager to subvert it. After 1750, the Fante were completely free to trade with all comers, and Fante merchants trading

14 SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit.,18-25.

15 RØMER, Ludvig Ferdinand. Op. Cit., p. 67; SHUMWAY, Rebecca. Op. Cit., p. 74, 183-84, n.109.

16 SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., p. 54-64, 72-74. SHUMWAY, Rebecca. Op. Cit., p. 78-81. The 1753 treaty solidified the Fante-British alliance, and the Fante agreed not to allow any French citizen to settle in their territory. See "Copy of a Treaty," London Magazine.

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individually with the captains of the ships in the Road sold most of the captives.[17]

Despite the disputes between the Fante and the governors of the fort, not all interactions between the Fante and the English were so troubled. In their study of Atlantic port cities, Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, Matt D. Childs, and James Sidbury, observe that "Atlantic port cities in the era of the slave trade became sites of cultural incubation, bringing together peoples of different African and European identities and creating conditions in which they lived, worked, worshipped, fought, and died in close proximity."[18] The Englishmen who arrived at Charles Fort found themselves in a foreign land where their financial success, and even their very survival, depended on forging good relationships with the townspeople. The death rate for newcomers was high. In 1649, for example, thirty soldiers arrived at Cape Coast Castle from England; within two months over half of them were dead, and the survivors were so sick and weak that they were "scarce . . . able to carry their fellows to their graves."[19]

Ludewig Ferdinand Rømer explained how European men on the Coast managed to survive there. Newcomers, he reported, were shy and unsure how to act or to manage their salaries. The first step was to learn enough of the local trade language to communicate with the townspeople. At first, Africans and Europeans communicated through the Portuguese-derived trade languages that spread along the coast and were an important party of the evolution of an Atlantic culture there. Over time, however, the people of Annamaboe learned English, which became the chief language of trade on the Gold Coast. When asked if "English is understood by natives," George Cleveland,

17 SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., p. 122-161.

18 CAÑIZARES-ESGUERRA, CHILDS, and SIDBURY. Op. Cit., p. 17.

19 PHILLIPS, Thomas. A Journal of a Voyage Made in the Hannibal of London, Ann. 1693, and 1694. In CHURCHILL, Awnsham. Collection of Voyages and Travels: Some Now First Printed from Original Manuscripts, Others Translated Out of Foreign Languages, and Now First Published in English. London, J. Walthoe, 1745. p. 205.

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a ship captain who frequented Annamaboe in the late 1700s, replied "O yes, amazingly well."[20]

In the next step in the process of acculturation, the soldier became "acquainted with a Black in the town, who becomes his friend and gives him advice for his benefit." The African would lend him a bit of gold which he could use to purchase alcohol or tobacco from one of the ships in the Road, and then his "Black friend smuggles it in to land for him; and the White hucksters it." With those profits he could buy exotic animals like parrots, parakeets, and monkeys, which were popular trade items among the sailors on the European ships. Through these means, he could double his salary, and with those profits, his Fante friend would purchase a slave for him from the inland markets, allowing the soldier to become as established trader. Rømer noteded that once "a European has come that far . . . then he can survive." As the Englishman's profits grew and as he became more comfortable with the townspeople, the next step was "to have one of the daughters of the country, or keep a black mistress. . . . When the White's Negress has borne him a couple of Mulatto children he cares as much for her and his children as a man does who had his true wife and children in Europe. Some among the Europeans do not wish to leave their family on the Coast even if they know they could live better in Europe."[21]

The close relationships that emerged between the soldiers and the townspeople sometimes tested their loyalties. James Nightingale, chief of the fort in the late 1680s, sent three soldiers, who he claimed were "very turbulent and [re]fractory," to Cape Coast Castle for punishment or reassignment. He wrote that one of them, Jeremiah Mitchell, "has made many of the Capushers his friends, who desires when your Worship has ordered such punishment as your great pru-

20 SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., 24.-25. Examinations of George Cleveland, Peter W. Brancker, Jonothan Hibblethwaite, John Mark Cleland, 1791. PRO T70/161 (TNA).

21 PHILLIPS, Thomas. Op. Cit., p. 205 (quotations); RØMER, Ludvig Ferdinand. Op. Cit., p. 232-34. Nightingale complained that a Doctor Wolber, who was trading with the blacks at Annamaboe, "puts more confidence in a Black man then in a White . . . ." LAW, Robin. The English in ... Op. Cit., v. 2, p. 233.

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dence shall think fit, that he may be returned." Mitchell himself begged to be allowed to return to Annamaboe because he "has a child who he pleads will be ruin'd, if he not return againe."[22]

Mitchell's superiors returned him Annamaboe as he requested, but by the following year the new chief of the fort, Ralph Hassell, sent him away again complaining that "There is nothing said nor acted but what he relates to the Blacks . . . ." A few months later he was back, but again the chief complained that he could not be trusted, and was spending time on a Dutch interloper "on board which all Cabushiers and traders resort . . . ." Once again, his friendship with the caboceers seemed to be the real cause of complaint against him. This time, the RAC moved him to another fort. The problem of soldiers from the fort colluding with people in the town was a recurring one. In 1699 Gerrad Gore, chief of the fort, faced a mutiny from a number of soldiers who he caught buying goods from interlopers, hiding them among their friends in the town, and selling them at prices lower than the fort's.[23] Mitchell's friendship with the local caboceers and his affection for his mixed-race child illustrate the complex relationships that emerged as the Fante and English lived side-by-side in Annamaboe.

In order to understand the intimate relationships between Englishmen and Fante women, we must go back to the arrival of the Portuguese on the West Coast of Africa. When the Portuguese first arrived there late in the fifteenth century they accommodated themselves to the West African communities in which they resided. Their relationships were governed by traditional West African norms and landlord-stranger reciprocities that allowed traders, hunters and others to travel through the region. The Portuguese settled and traveled only where Africans gave them permission to do so, recognized local rules of commerce, paid tolls, taxes and gifts, and submitted

22 LAW, Robin. The English in ... Op. Cit., v. 2, p. 161 (first quotation), 162 (second quotation), 163, 164 (fourth, fifth and sixth quotations). SMITH, Robert. Op. Cit., p. 599-621. RØMER, Ludvig Ferdinand. Op. Cit., p. 165. SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit.,22-24.

23 LAW, Robin. The English in...Op. Cit., v. 2, p. 197 (first and second quotations), 217 (third and fourth quotations), v. 3, p. 377 (fifth quotation). SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit.,22-24,80-88.

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to West African judicial processes known as palavers. These settlers were known as lançados, a term drawn from a Portuguese word meaning "casting one's lot." One important privilege granted to resident strangers was access to local women, usually women who were related to or subject to influential people in the community who sought a closer affiliation with the stranger in their midst. Often, these relationships included marriage, and the Portuguese referred to these marriages as cassare (from the Portuguese casar meaning "to marry"). In the early years of their arrival on the coast, the English often used the term consar, from the Portuguese, to define their marriages to local women, though by the eighteenth century they commonly referred to these partnerships as "country marriages." European men benefitted enormously from these relationships; African women served as interpreters of language and culture, maintained a house for the family, nursed their husbands during times of sickness, and had access to cheaper food. Given the unhealthiness of Europeans on the coast, care during illness was a major concern, and among the Fante "women in general perform the office of Surgeon, as well as of the Physician . . . Their manner of selecting different roots and herbs, and their choice of them, discover no mean knowledge in botany; there is scarcely a plant without its peculiar virtue among them."[24]

Women profited from these relationships as well and exercised important roles in theses trading societies, as did their mixed-race children. The children were much more African than Portuguese – they grew up in their mother's household in the African community and often their fathers were on the coast for only a brief time -- and for that reason are sometimes referred to as Eurafricans. The opportunities open to them depended in large measure on their mother's status, her social rank, her rights to land, her access to trade, and

24 MEREDITH, Henry. An Account of the Gold Coast of Africa with a Brief History of the African Company. London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1812. p. 233 (first quotation); LAW, Robin. The English in ... Op. Cit, v. 3, p. 120 (second quotation), 220 (third quotation), 450. SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit.,22-24.

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other factors peculiar to local customs.[25] While unions between African women and European men existed all along the West Coast of Africa, one crucial distinction between West African coastal groups lay between patrilineal and matrilineal societies. Patrilineal societies generally denied European men access to free women or women of high status as marriage partners, which could give their children a claim to leadership positions. In matrilineal societies the situation was markedly different. In these societies, Europeans were permitted to marry into free and elite families, though some continued to marry enslaved women as well. The Fante were somewhat unusual in that they had a dual lineage system. Matrilineal descent determined membership in clans, inheritance, social status, and succession to public office. Patrilineal descent governed the inheritance of spiritual attributes and also determined membership in the asafo, a military organization with important political, religious, and social functions.[26]

Such marriages, referred to by David Northrup as "commercial mariages," provided advantages for both parties. These women could inherit from their European partner, and they often parlayed the access to European trade goods that the relationship provided to expand their own business activities. In these societies, mixed-race children usually shared the same upbringing and opportunities as other children. As adults, they could often use their connections and cultural hybridity to continue trading and acting as cultural intermediaries, or they might disappear into the local societies. Eurafrican women adopted distinctive dress and a lifestyle combining European and African elements. Their clothing mixed elements from both cultures, they often lived in rectangular houses built for them by the Eu-

25 BROOKS, George E. Eurafricans in Western Africa: Commerce, Social Status, Gender, and Religious Observance from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century. Athens: Ohio University Press, 2003. p. 49-51; IBSEN, Pernile. Daughters of the Trade: Atlantic Slavers and Interracial Marriages on the Gold Coast. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. p. 21.

26 CHUKWUKERE, I. Akan Theory of Conception: Are the Fante Really Aberrant? Africa: Journal of the International African Institute, n. 48, p. 135-148, 2. 1978.

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ropean partners, and their diet combined local and imported foods and cooking styles. They often wore jewelry with Christian symbols, self-identified as Christians, and baptized their children, though that did not mean that they abandoned their traditional beliefs.[27]

The best recorded example of a "commercial mariage" at Annamaboe is the case of Richard Brew, one-time chief of the fort who resigned his commission to become a private trader, and who took as his country wife Effua Ansah, John Corrantee's daughter. Brew's relationship with Effua Ansah was life-long, and she bore him two daughters, Eleanor and Amba. It is highly significant that Eleanor was his mother's name, and the choice of one African name and one English name for the daughters reflects their mixed heritage. Along with those daughters Brew had two mixed-race sons from an earlier country marriage, probably born while he was chief of Tantumquerry Fort. He educated both sons in England, employed them in his business, and gave them his surname. Their home was an impressive Georgian mansion Brew built behind the fort, which he named Castle Brew. It served as both a counting house and a fortified residence, with large warehouses and holding rooms for slaves awaiting sale and guns mounted on its high roof. It was expensively and elegantly furnished with Windsor chairs, mahogany furniture, crystal chandeliers, the finest crystal and Wedgewood china, framed maps and pictures, and an extensive library.[28] He took advantage of the 1750 act replacing the RAC with the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa which included a provision making it lawful for British subjects trading in Africa to build houses and warehouses "under the Protection

27 BROOKS, George. Op. Cit., p. 51-52, 127-129. JONES, Hilary. Op. Cit., p. 9-11, 34-39. IBSEN, Pernile. Op.Cit., p. 3-16, 38-53, 114-139.

28 "Inventory of the Effects of Rich. Brew, Esq. deceased as taken this 5th day of August 1776 at his House at Annamaboe," PRO T70/1534 (TNA). HANCOCK, David. Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community, 1735-1785. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. p. 90-102; BERG, Maxine. Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. p. 115, 117, 144.

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of the said Forts . . . for the better carrying on of his or their Trade there."[29]

As the number of Anglo-African children grew, children born to men at every rank from common soldiers to governors, their care and future prospects became matters of concern to the Englishmen. Sir Dalby Thomas, Governor of Cape Coast Castle from 1705 until his death in 1711, proposed in 1709 that mulatto children should be "well Educated" and given jobs with the RAC. Thomas was personally invested in his proposal; just a few months before he sent "his Son a Black Boy" to England. That practice was common among the high-ranking officers who expected their sons to return to find good employment in the forts, and these men often cooperated to advance their children in the organization. Many of the Anglo-Africans were men of talent and ability, and the Company officials on the coast sought to remove any barriers from their advancement. In 1771, David Mill, governor of Cape Coast Castle, wrote his superiors to praise a Mr. Barrow "who though a Mulatto has had as good an Education & has profited as much by it as any person in your Service. Permit me therefore Gentlemen, to recommend him strongly to you and to entreat you would make an exception in his favour & order him to the Command of a Fort when it becomes his turn by Seniority." Surprisingly, the Company agreed to appoint Barrow to the next fort (though there is no indication that such an appointment was ever made). That door to advancement did not remain open.[30]

In 1794, Robert Collins, former chief of James Fort, asked that his Anglo-African son be given a fort, and the African Committee notified him "no mulatto, or Person of Color, can hold a seat in the Council in this Service upon the Coast, consequently the Committee regret they cannot comply with the request you made in behalf of

29 DONNAN, Elizabeth. Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America. New York: Octagon Books, 1969. v. 2, p. 482.

30 David Mill to CMTA, February 28, 1771; Same to same, March 12, 1772; Dalby Thomas to RAC, 20 & 21 September, 23 & 27 November 1705, T70/5 [TNA].

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your Son, which otherwise, it would have afforded them pleasure to grant." Collins made another appeal, and in response the Committee agreed that since he was "an old Servant" to the Company that they would appoint his son as an Assistant Clerk in the Accountants office at Cape Coast Castle with a salary of £60 per annum, a post that his son accepted. Increasingly, such well-paid positions in the forts went to Anglo-Africans. In 1780, for instance, John Roberts hired Henry Brew, the English-educated Anglo-African son of Richard Brew, as an Assistant in Accounting and noted that "the Young Man is well behaved, diligent, as capable a Writer, indeed much more so, than many in the Service." In 1792 Henry was promoted to Assistant Linguist, "he being the best Interpreter that can be found in the Country."[31]

Anglo-African often show up in skilled occupations that catered to Europeans. Some appear as tailors. For example, the executors of Richard Brew's estate paid Sam Suton, his "Mulattoe Taylor", £9.2; and in 1759 Brew paid "a Mulattoe for making a New Flagg" with cloth and one gallon of brandy.[32] The chiefs of other forts recommended to the Company to send "black boys" to England to learn trades, and some chiefs began to make such arrangements. John Clark, chief of

31 African Committee to Robert Collins, January 31, 1794; Same to same, May 7, 1794; Same to same, June 25, 1794 [TNA]. Collins held many posts on the Gold Coast before being investigated for illegal trading in 1779. See CMTA to John Roberts, Robert Stubbs, Stuart Beard, and James Morgue, November 1779, T70/162 (TNA). Collins died in 1805 at the age of 60. MONTHLY MAGAZINE AND BRITISH REGISTER, n. 401, May 1, 1805. John Roberts to Cape Coast Castle Council, July 11, 1780, T70/31 (TNA). There were two vacancies for "black Writers" at £40 salary at Cape Coast Castle in 1792. Cape Coast Castle Council Minutes, June 12, 1792, T70/153 (TNA). Englishmen attempted to protect their country wives and children after their deaths. William Calver, a gunner at Commenda, made out a will where he left his friend Samuel Lowling his chest, clothes, and silver buckles, and he left his "Wench what Gold I have in my Chest, & four Gold Rings." When Abraham Cross died at Cape Coast Castle in 1720 he left behind three Anglo-African sons and a daughter. He asked James Phipps, Governor of the Castle, to "protect them from being abused by any Body." Last Will and Testament of William Calver, 20 March 1730 and Will of Abraham Cross, December 14, 1720, Dead Men's Effects, RAC, T70/1499 (TNA). JUSTESEN, Ole. Danish Sources for the History of Ghana, 1657-1754. v. 1, 1657-1735. Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, 2005. p. 234n1. IBSEN, Pernille, Op. Cit., p. 19-20, 28-29, 52-53, 59, 190n30, 198n99, 198n100.

32 Annamaboe Day Books, May-June 1759, T70/986 (TNA). Richard Brew Estate Inventory.

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York Fort, wrote the RAC that "Robert Davis, Mustee, Goes for England for Learning, & will contract with the Compy for fives years, in any Station the Compy shall think fit."[33] Men like Thomas could afford to send their mixed-race children back to England to be educated, but the common soldiers could not, and the Company was increasingly reluctant to undertake that expensive enterprise.

One solution to the problem would be to educate mulatto children on the Gold Coast and prepare them for employment with the RAC. John Jameson, who took the office of chaplain at Cape Coast in 1712, suggested to the RAC that "a well Qualified School Master would be of Great use to instill good principles among the young Generation of Mulattoes and even some Blacks, who would in his opinion be thereby more in the Company's Interest." A school for blacks operated at Cape Coast Castle as early as the late seventeenth century and some prominent caboceers also sent their sons there. John Corrantee, chief caboceer at Annamaboe, was educated there in his youth. Philip Quaque, a Gold Coast native who traveled to England and became an Anglican priest and missionary, began the "Instruction of Mullattoe Children of both Sexes" at Cape Coast Castle in 1767. There was no regular school until 1789, when the Company of Merchants Trading to Africa approved a plan to open a "School for Mulatto Children" with an initial enrollment of twelve students.[34]

Given the high death rates and the difficulties in recruiting qualified men for the African service, fully manning the forts was a major problem. A 1744 report showed that the forts were woefully undermanned. Cape Coast Castle, for example, required 126 soldiers to be

33 On the coast, a mustee was the offspring of a mulatto and a European. Dalby Thomas to RAC, May 21-June 9, 1709, March 23, 1709, April 9, 1710, T70/5. John Clark to RAC, October 29, 1709, RAC T70/5. James Phipps to RAC, March 8, 1710, T70/5 (TNA).

34 John Jameson to RAC, May 3, 1712, T70/5. CROOKS, J.J. Records Relating to the Gold Coast Settlements from 1750 to 1874. London: Routledge, 2013. p. 77; SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., 36-37, 80-86. CARETTA, Vincent and REESE, Ty M. (org.). The Life and Letters of Philip Quaque: The First African Anglican Missionary. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2010. p. 46, 127. The number of children in Quaque's school declined to only two by 1775.

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fully manned, but had only 67, and the situation was even worse at the out forts.[35] Some mulattoes served as soldiers in the forts, and their numbers increased over the eighteenth century. In 1757 it was reported that Cape Coast Castle had a garrison of about thirty whites and "a few Mulatto soldiers." In 1774 Governor David Mill pointed out the advantages of using Anglo-African soldiers. He explained that he had recently "enlisted 12 young Mulattoes as Soldiers, who are by far the fittest for this climate, and in order to avoid occasion to indent for soldiers from Europe, I shall get more Mulattoes, and . . . we shall be both better Garrisoned, and save the Money that soldiers from England cost us." The growing numbers of mulatto soldiers made the Company nervous, and they ordered their number cut to one-fourth its current level.[36]

The Company was not alone in its concerns about the growing number of mulatto soldiers. John Roberts, governor of Cape Coast Castle in 1780, wrote to his superiors: "White soldiers are much wanted, for there is not the least Dependence to be placed on the Mulattoes that we have for their Friends generally live in the Towns under the Forts where they serve, therefore when a dispute happens with any of those Inhabitants, much assistance is not expected from Mulatto Soldiers." His fears were justified; during a long-running dispute between the British and the townspeople at Annamaboe in 1791, eleven mulatto troops deserted from the fort rather than fire on the town. The "loyalty" of those troops speaks to the larger question of their

35 Great Britain House of Commons, Journals of the House of Commons. Vol. 21. London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1803. p. 476-477.

36 CROOKS, J.J. Op Cit., p. 31 (first quotation). NEWMAN, Simon P. A New World of Labor: The Development of Plantation Slavery in the British Atlantic. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013. p. 134 (second quotation). REESE, Ty M. The Drudgery of the Slave Trade: Labor at Cape Coast Castle, 1750-1790. In COCLANIS, Peter A. (org.). The Atlantic Economy During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries: Organization, Operation, Practice, and Personnel. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2005. p. 284. WINSNES, Selena Axelrod (trad. e org.). Paul Erdmann Isert's Journey to Guinea and the Caribbean Islands in Columbia: Letters on West Africa and the Slave Trade; 1788. New York: Oxford University Press, 1922. p. 150 (third quotation).

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own identity. In conflicts with other European powers, their loyalty went unquestioned, but if conflicts broke out between the forts and the towns, then the Anglo-Africans remained loyal to their African communities. Those loyalties speak to the fact that while Anglo-Africans might adopt certain markers of European culture, they were not, in fact, adopting British identities or becoming British. They remained integrated into their local communities where their chief loyalties lay.[37]

By the mid-eighteenth century Anglo-Africans occupied their own niche within Gold Coast societies. Their situation might best be compared to occupational groups like smiths, goldtakers or bards, groups identified by distinctive dress which publicly identified them as members of a social group, in this case as cultural intermediaries who facilitated commerce and smoothed relations between Africans and Europeans. One of the markers of their distinctive status was Christianity. Thomas Thompson, a missionary on the Gold Coast in the 1750s, reached out to the Anglo-African community at Cape Coast and Annamaboe. He expected a warm reception since "most of the Adult ones had been christened, some by Chaplains of Men of War, and others of them by the Chaplain of the Garrison . . . when there was one." In addition, and more significantly, he noted that they were interested in being baptized, "they having some Notion of a Privilege by it, and valuing themselves upon their Christian Name, accounting it an honourable Distinction." Certainly a Christian name was one very visible marker of Anglo-African identity. They formed "a small Congregation" and he baptized many of their children, but they showed little interest in his weekly services. Philip Quaque encountered the same situation almost twenty years later. Like Thompson, he recognized that the Anglo-Africans composed their own social group, and he called "a convocation of Mullattoe Gentlemen and Ladies" in 1769. He planned "to propose a few Questions particularly relative to

37John Roberts to RAC, October 31, 1780, T70/32 (TNA). Cape Coast Council Minutes, 11 May 1791, T70/153 (TNA). IBSEN, Pernille. Op. Cit., p. 117, 157-58.

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themselves, as they value their Sexes preferrable [sic] to their other Native People, calling themselves Christians because they are of the Race of white Men." They promised to attend services, but did not, in part because Quaque condemned interracial relationships, which angered the Anglo-Africans and the Englishmen in the forts, who both avoided him. Still, they sought him out to baptize their children, and most of the people he baptized during his long career were Anlgo-Africans.[38]

Additional evidence of a sense of corporate identity among the Anglo-Africans comes from the payments that chiefs of the forts made to the towns and from the creation of mulatto military companies. In 1756, when the French competed with the British to win the favor of the Fante at Annamaboe, Richard Brew, as chief of the Fort, made gifts to the various constituencies there "at extraordinary expense to gain the Interest of the Fantees." Among those receiving payments were various military companies including "the Mulattoes of the town." Towns on the Gold Coast like Annamaboe were divided into wards or quarters that served as administrative, economic, and social units and as the basis for urban military companies, known as asafo companies or bendefoe companies to the British. Brew's payment to the Anglo-Africans at Annamaboe in the face of the French military provides early evidence of a mulatto asafo company in the town. Mulatto companies certainly existed on the Gold Coast by the early nineteenth century, evidence of a corporate identity but also an indication of how Anglo-Africans were fully integrated into the lives of the towns.[39]

All of this suggests how the concept of race evolved on the Gold Coast during the era of the slave trade. Race was socially constructed,

38 BROOKS, George. Op. Cit., p. 128-129; SPARKS, Randy. Op. Cit., p. 84-85, 191-195. THOMPSON, Thomas. An Account of Two Missionary Voyages by the Appointment of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. London: Benjamin Dod, 1758. p. 30, 34, 54-55, 62, 72. CARETTA, Vincent and REESE, Ty. Op. Cit., p. 46-47, 70, 75-76, 77, 107, 120-21.

39 Annamaboe Day Books, January 24, 1756, T70/876 (TNA). SHUMWAY, Rebecca. Op. Cit., p. 104-105, 124-128, 144-152. NEWMAN, Simon. Op. Cit., p. 134. IBSEN, Pernille. Op. Cit., p. 162.

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and scholars of mixed-race communities in West Africa have emphasized that the process of race formation changed over time and differed from one region to another. On the Gold Coast, as in other slave trading posts on the coast of West Africa where Europeans settled, the racial degradation of African captives was an essential part of the trade, but not all Africans were enslaved. Africans themselves largely determined who could and could not be enslaved, and Europeans came to understand the ethnic and class distinctions that governed their host societies. Some Africans were trading partners and hosts in positions of power, and the European slave traders relied on them for their economic success and for their very survival. These distinctions in race, status, and power played out through the institution of country marriages. Pernile Ibsen, in her study of marriages between the Dutch and the Ga in the town of Osu, located about 110 kilometers to the southwest of Annamaboe, argued that interracial marriages should be understood as "loaded transfer points of power" responsible for "the production of a new hybrid culture, new meanings, new people, and new practices."[40] Given the power dynamics in those early years of English settlement, white men were heavily dependent on their African country wives. The British supported Anglo-African children and their mothers on the Gold Coast and worked together to insure their well being even after leaving the coast. The institution of country marriages offers one distinctive variant on the interracial sexual relationships that existed all around the Atlantic World (and beyond) during the era of European expansion. Country marriages on the Gold Coast operated within an African culture where Europeans were at a distinct disadvantage. The fact that the Fante were both matrilineal and patrilineal was also crucial to the function of the marriages and gave Africans on the Gold Coast a means to integrate these new trading partners into their societies and thereby facilitated the slave trade. As might be expected, then, the frequency and importance of the country marriages declined drastically with the

40 IBSEN, Pernille. Op. Cit., p. 3.

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end of the slave trade. As the slave trade evolved and as Anglo-African communities grew up around the European forts, distinctions emerged between Africans and Anglo-Africans, and the latter gained greater access to trade, to education, to employment in the forts, and to other advantages. Over time, Anglo-Africans found a privileged position within an increasingly stratified society defined by race along with class and gender. The history of the Anglo-African community on the Gold Coast is a reminder that the construction of race varied across time and place. The racial terms the British employed on the coast were in use around the Atlantic world, though tailored to local realities. They referred to the children of Englishmen and Fante women as mulattoes, the children of a mulatto and an Englishman as a mustee, and the child of a mustee and an Englishman as a mustafee. The Anglo-African culture that emerged among the mixed-race communities on the Gold Coast was a hybrid, but embedded in an African society.

The Anglo-Africans were not the only residents of Annamaboe who traveled the Atlantic World. English captains often hired skilled African sailors for their voyages, and these men were easy targets for kidnapping. For example, in 1776, Benjamin Francis Hughes, captain of a Liverpool slave ship trading at Annamaboe, hired a Fante sailor named Amissa to sail with him to Jamaica. When the ship reached Jamaica, the captain kidnapped Amissa and sold him to a local planter. The captain returned to Annamaboe and told Amissa's family that he had died during the Middle Passage, but the surprisingly accurate web of information that circulated around the Black Atlantic worked in Amissa's favor. A year or two later, another Fante sailor returned from Jamaica with the news that Amissa was alive and enslaved there. Amissa's family, with the support of the entire town, complained to the Company, which commissioned the captain of another slave ship in route to Jamaica to redeem him. Company officials on the coast sent Coffee Abram, who knew Amissa, to Jamaica to positively identify him. He located Amissa in Jamaica, and after nearly three years in slavery, Amissa traveled to London with his friend Coffee Abram. The Company of Merchants Trading to Africa prosecuted

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Captain Hughes, and England's most distinguished jurist, Chief Justice Lord Mansfield, heard the case and recommended that the jury give exemplary damages to the victim. After deliberating for only a quarter of an hour, the jury found for the plaintiff and awarded Amissa £300 in damages. Amissa was eager to return home, and the Company "provided him with Cloaths and other Necessaries" and made plans to send him back to Annamaboe. They instructed their officials at Cape Coast Castle to "deliver him in Safety to his Friends and Relations, and inform them of the pains the [African] Committee have taken to see Justice done him."[41] In July 1779 Richard Miles wrote the Committee with the good news that Amissa had arrived and was "immediately sent down to the Chief of Annamaboe who delivered him to his Friends."[42]

African elites also traveled the Atlantic, particularly as a part of diplomatic relations between the Fante and the Europeans. In many cases, sons of African rulers acted as their father's surrogates, and fathers were often eager to have their sons learn as much as possible about the Europeans by living in their forts, by sailing on their ships, or by traveling to Europe to be educated. Cases of African elites sending their children to Europe to be educated go back to the earliest arrival of the Europeans along the West African coast in the fifteenth century.[43] Late in the eighteenth century, a group of Liverpool slave traders reported that, "It has always been the Practice of Merchants

41 For Hughes see Voyages 92491 and 92518, Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. RAC to Captain Eagles, November 11, 1778, T70/69; RAC to Captain Hughes, August 27, 1777, T70/69 (TNA). Amissa & Benjamin Francis Hughes, February 20, 1779, Hilary Term, 19 Geo. 3rd, KB 18/29.

42 RAC to Governor and Council, Cape Coast Castle, December 30, 1778. RAC to Guion, Forbes and Co., March 3, 1778. RAC to Joseph Roberts Wood, March 13, 1779. RAC to Governor and Council, Cape Coast Castle, March 11, 1779, T70/69. Miles to RAC, July 26, 1779, T70/31 (TNA). GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, March 1779. LONDON CHRONICLE, March 1779. OLDHAM, James. New Light on Mansfield and Slavery. Journal of British Studies, n. 1, p. 65, 27. January 1988. CHRISTOPHER, Emma. Slave Ship Sailors and Their Captive Cargoes, 1730-1807. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006. p. 61.

43 See for examples see HEYWOOD, Linda. Slavery and its Transformation in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491-1800. Journal of African History. n. 50, p. 1-22, 1. March 2009.

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and Commanders of Ships trading to Africa, to encourage the Natives to send their Children to England, as it not only conciliates their Friendship and softens their Manners, but adds greatly to the Security of the Trade, which answers the Purposes both of Interest and Humanity." They estimated that about two-dozen Africans studied in England at any given time, a practice that helps account for the literacy and English-language skills common among the leading merchants on the Gold Coast and in other parts of West Africa.[44]

As the Liverpool slave traders suggested, the sons of prominent Africans along the Gold Coast played an important part in diplomatic relations, and these young men were often taken into the forts, allowed to sail on European ships, and taken to Europe to be educated. [45] The best-documented cases of Fante elites using their sons for diplomatic missions from Annamaboe is that of John Corrantee, who was courted by both the British and the French as they vied for supremacy along the coast.[46] The French denigrated the British and "boasted mightily of the great Power of their King, the Magnificence of his Court, the Extent of his Dominions, the Number, Wealth, and

44 LAMBERT, Sheila (org.). House of Commons Sessional Papers of the Eighteenth Century. Wilmington, DE, 1975. v.71, p. 543. LOVEJOY, Paul and RICHARDSON, David. Trust, Pawnship and Atlantic History: The Institutional Foundations of the Old Calabar Slave Trade. American Historical Review, n. 104, p. 342-44, 2. April 1999. SPARKS, Randy. Gold Coast Merchant Families, Pawning, and the Eighteenth-Century British Slave Trade. William and Mary Quarterly, n. 70, p. 317-340, 2. April 2013. Thomas to RAC, T70/5. John Clark to RAC, October 24, 1711, T70/5 (TNA).

45 On the Gold Coast, the English "always looked upon it as a Surety for Traders to have a King's Son by way of Hostage." Joseph Debat to RAC June 26, 1762, T70/30. Africans sometimes held Englishmen as hostages as well. See Randall Logan to Joseph Blaney, March 2, 1714/15. Blaney to Martin Harderett, February 27, 1715; Robert Mason to The Chiefs at Cape Coast Castle, September 13, 1715, T70/3 (TNA).

46 The French "for that Purpose took extraordinary Pains to gain the good-will of the *Caboceir John* . . . . Neither will it appear at all strange or unbecoming in him, that he accepted . . . these Addresses, or entered into a Correspondence with them; for the *Fantinians [Fantees]* were never under any kind of subjection to the [Royal African] Company, even in its most prosperous Condition, but held themselves at full liberty to deal with whom they pleased, and to vend their Commodities how, when, where, and to whom they thought proper." LAW, Robin. The English in... Op. Cit., p. 26.

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Politeness of his Subjects."[47] In order to demonstrate that superiority, they urged Corrantee to send one of his sons, Bassi, to France to see for himself and report back to the Caboceer.[48] The French treated Bassi royally. He was given four lackeys and a chamberlain, introduced at court, and enrolled in the elite Lycée Louis-le-Grand where he learned to speak and write French. When he was christened "Louis Bassi, Prince de Corantryn by the Archbishop of Paris in Notre Dame Cathedral, King Louis XV acted as his godfather. His education complete,

> he was sent home in one of the Company's Ships, in a very handsome Manner, and with fine laced Cloaths to dazzle the Eyes of the Negroes, and to draw the Father over entirely to the French Interest."[49]

Corrantee was "highly pleased" with his son's stay in France, and he decided to send a second son, William Ansah, to England to gain further insight into the relative strength of the two nations.[50] In 1744, Corrantee asked the captain of a British slave ship to take the boy with him to England after he delivered his slave cargo to Barbados. When the ship arrived at that island, the captain kidnapped William Ansah and sold him into slavery. The captain died a short time later, leaving Corrantee ignorant of his son's fate, but once again the network of information that circulated the Black Atlantic brought the news that William Ansah was alive.[51]

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47 Ibidem, p. 28.

48 Ibidem, p. 28-29.

49 Ibidem, p. 30-31.

50 Ibidem, p. 37. According to the Gentleman's Magazine, William Ansah was the son of John Corranteee and Eukobah, the daughter of Ansah Sessarakoo, king of Aquamboo, and niece of the king of Akroan. See GENLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, n. 19, 1749. p. 89, 372.

51 LAW, Robin. The English in... Op. Cit., 42-45. Roberts, 4 Dec. 1749, in FISHER, Ruth A. Extracts from the Records of the African Companies [Part 3]. The Journal of Negro History, n. 13, p. 347 (quotation). July 1928. Those interested in the smooth conduct of the slave trade were eager to prevent kidnapping and the threat it posed to the trade. Among the "Acts of Parliament for Regulating the Slave Trade" passed in 1750 was a provision that stipulated that "no commander

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Corrantee demanded that his son be returned to him and threatened to go over to the French, and in 1749 the British on the coast scrambled to locate William Ansah and return him to his father. One of their agents sailed from Cape Coast Castle to Barbados, carrying a young man from Annamaboe to be a companion to William Ansah, who they quickly located in Barbados. The Company paid the man who had purchased him, and they transported William Ansah and his companion to England.[52] Once he arrived in London, William Ansah became an instant celebrity, and the plight of the Prince of Annamaboe, as he became known, garnered widespread sympathy and notoriety. The dramatic highpoint of his stay in London came when he and his companion went to the theater to see a performance of *Oroonoko; or the History of the Royal Slave*, Aphra Behn's sensational 1688 story of an African slave-trading prince who was captured and enslaved in Surinam. Behn's story, adapted for the stage by Thomas Southerne and widely translated, became one of the most popular plays of the day and an important source for the image of the noble African slave. Life and art met when William Ansah, bewigged, powered, and dressed in his finery, entered the theater to a standing ova-

or master of any ship trading to Africa shall by fraud, force or violence or by any indirect practice whatsoever take on board or carry away from the coast of Africa any negro or native of the said country or commit or suffer to be committed any violence to the natives to the prejudice of the trade." PICKERING, Danby. The Statutes at Large from the 23d to the 26th Year of George II. Cambridge: Charles Bathhurst, 1765. v. 20, p. 120. Slave traders knew that they could be prosecuted for kidnapping. When James Fraser, an English slave trader, encountered a French captain and crew who planned to kidnap pawns and sell them in the West Indies, he "remonstrated against the impropriety and injustice of it . . . [and] assured them that the Chamber of Commerce in France, and the African Company in England, would prosecute him and his Officers for so doing . . . ." LAMBERT, Sheila. Op. Cit., v. 71, p. 15. The RAC was eager to prosecute traders who violated the law. They condemned the "wicked & foolish behavior of separate Traders in the River [Gambia], who are often ye Cause of these Differences," and notified their officers on the Gold Coast that although "it is not in our Power to call them to immediate Acct., but upon proper Proofs of the Proceedings being sent home, we shall make it our Business to get them dismissed from their Employ & if not otherwise Punished . . . ." Poirier to Tobias Lesle, November 26, 1757, T70/29 (TNA). For examples of very early examples of the Portuguese kidnapping African elites see HEYWOOD, Linda. Op. Cit., p. 6.

52 LAW, Robin. The English in... Op. Cit., 47-51.

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tion. The audience was more focused on the prince than the actors onstage, and when he broke into tears and bolted out of the theater, there was not a dry eye in the house.[53] The prince caused a sensation in London, and his image, painted by a court artist and engraved, was sold on the streets while his dramatic life story was celebrated in drama, poetry, and in a popular biography.[54]

After making their mark in London, William Ansah and his companion set sail for Annamaboe.[55] William Ansah arrived back home in a state befitting a prince. A sailor on board the *Surprize* recorded his return to Annamaboe and his reunion with his father: "His Majesty the King [Corrantee] received us with all possible kindness and dignity. We delivered to him his son . . . magnificently equipped in a full-dress scarlet suit, with gold lace a la Bourgogne, point d'Espagne hat, handsome white feather, diamond solitaire buttons, & c. . . ." Great fetes were subsequently held in Annamaboe to celebrate his return.[56] As a part of their effort to curry favor with Corrantee, the British hired William Ansah as a writer in Cape Coast Castle, an appointment that also gave his father eyes and ears inside the British headquarters. The British hoped to use him to help them fight off French influence and had him negotiate on their behalf with the

53 The press covered the emotional scene. See GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, p. 89-90, February 1749. On the history of the play see SPENCER, Jane. Aphra Behn's Afterlife. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. William Ansah's baptism in London on November 30, 1749 also made the news. GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, p. 522, November 1749.

54 SYPHER, Willie. The African Prince in London. Journal of the History of Ideas, n. 2, p. 237-47 (quotation on p. 244), April 1941. See also GARZINA, Gretchen. Black London: Life Before Emancipation. New Brunswick, N.J., 1995. p. 11-14. SYPHER, Wylie. Guinea's Captive Kings: British Anti-Slavery Literature of the XVIIth Century. New York: Octagan Books, 1969. p. 59, 166-67. DAVIS, David Brion. The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988. p. 472-482. SPARKS, Randy. Two Princes of Calabar: An Eighteenth-Century Atlantic Odyssey. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004. p. 119-120. WELLER, Barry. The Royal Slave and the Prestige of Origins. The Kenyon Review. New Series. 14, p. 65-78. Summer 1992.

55 On clothing see RIBEIRO, Aileen. Dress in Eighteenth-Century Europe, 1715-1789. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002.

56 EWART, J. Spencer. Colonel Edward Hamilton of the Honourable East India Company's Service. Blackwood's Magazine, n. 208, p. 773-74. December 1920.

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caboceers in Annamaboe. Corrantee had him write Lord Halifax, President of the Board of Trade, complaining of the treatment he had received from the Company officials at Cape Coast and warning that the lavish gifts the French were handing out threatened the British position at Annamaboe. That letter also made its way to the African Committee who criticized their officers at Cape Coast for bungling the negotiations with Corrantee. The British navy drove away a French fleet from the town and lavish gifts and payments to Corrantee and the caboceers brought them over to the British side. In 1753 the British began construction of their second fort at Annamaboe, a project that enriched the local community that supplied it, attracted more trade -- as indicated by the steadily increasing volume of the slave trade leaving the Gold Coast after that date -- and added to the wealth and power of Corrantee himself.[57]

Annamaboe flourished throughout the eighteenth century, but in 1806 a war with the Asante brought about the town's destruction. The Asante had been weakened by internal troubles until a new Asantehene took the throne in 1800. The Asante's smaller and weaker neighbors had grown more assertive during the period of Asante weakness, and in 1806 a relatively minor dispute broke out between the Asante and Assin, neighbors and allies of the Fante who recklessly involved themselves in support of Assin. As a result, an Asante army crushed the Assin and then invaded the Fante Nation, defeating every army that tried to stop them. The Asante also captured the Dutch fort at Cormantine and were within a few miles of Annamaboe. The Fante sought British protection, and Edward William White, chief of Annamaboe Fort, promised "all the assistance and protection in his power." On June 15 the Asante army marched on the town and the asafo companies mustered and marched out to meet the enemy. Heavy gunfire echoed over the town, and the women, children and the elderly fled inside the fort for protection. The Fante army was in full retreat, and the town quickly fell to the Asante who slaughtered the Fante soldiers

57 SPARKS, Randy. Where the Negroes ... Op. Cit., 54-66.

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who ran for safety. White turned the fort's guns on the Asante, but he had only thirty British and mulatto soldiers to face an army of thousands. As the fighting continued White himself was seriously wounded and only eight men could bear arms. The Asante attack ended with nightfall, but about two-thirds of the town's inhabitants were dead and about two thousand people were packed inside the fort without adequate provisions. Under the circumstances, the British had little alternative but to negotiate with the Asante. Governor George Torrane led a delegation from Cape Coast Castle and essentially gave in to all the Asantehene's demands. On one point they compromised. The Asantehene regarded all the Fante as his slaves and demanded that those inside the fort be turned over to him. Torrane convinced the king to take half of them while he sold the remainder, about one thousand people, into slavery for his personal profit. The Asante invaded again in 1811 and 1816, further devastating the region. H. W. Daendels, a Dutch official on the coast who witnessed the invasions and their aftermath, described it as the "total ruin of the Fantee Nation."[58]

At the same time the Fante were fighting for their survival, Great Britain enacted legislation to abolish the African slave trade to take effect on May 1, 1807. The British forts along the Gold Coast that had been used to support the trade were now employed to prevent it, and Annamaboe's slave trade economy virtually collapsed. There was some smuggling, but the steady flow of captives turned into a trickle, and the town lost the position it had long held in the Atlantic economy. The town's traders looked for legitimate commerce, and there was a trade in palm oil and other products with Great Britain, but that was a smaller and less profitable commerce than that in human beings. In his study of urbanization in Africa, Bill Fruend ob-

58 SPARKS, Randy. Where the Negroes ... Op. Cit., 220-227; SANDERS, James. Palm Oil Production on the Gold Coast in the Aftermath of the Slave Trade: A Case Study of the Fante. The International Journal of African Historical Studies, no. 15, p. 49-63, 1. 1982. COLLINS, E. (org. trad.). Journal and Correspondence of H. W. Daendels, Governor-General of the Netherlands Settlements on the Coast of Guinea**,** Part I, November 1815 to January 1817. Legon: Institute of African Studies, 1964. p. 25.

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served that "Towns that live by commerce and by rulers who depend on commerce cannot survive the removal or disappearance of that commerce, whether the disappearance is caused by warfare, by changing commercial demands, or the shift in trade routes that are often possible."[59] The abolition of the slave trade fell more heavily on some Gold Coast trading centers than others, but Annamaboe was especially hard hit given its reliance on the slave trade. British officials on the coast concluded in1819 that the town was "useless in the present day." By the 1850s the town's population stood at an estimated 4,500 or about a fifth of its population a century before.[60]

The movement of goods, ideas and peoples around it, defines the Atlantic World, and that movement operated through the urban hubs that grew up around the Atlantic. Much of the scholarship on the Atlantic World has focused on the North Atlantic, particularly on the British North Atlantic. A focus on an African Atlantic port offers an important corrective to that bias, a necessary one if we are to fully comprehend that world. While historians have long debated the profitability and economic importance of the slave trade, there is a growing recognition of the trade's impact on urbanization. Madge Dresser in her history of Bristol, for example, identified the slave trade as the driving engine of its "urban renaissance" in the eighteenth century.[61] A well-known eighteenth-century quip about Bristol's dependence on the slave trade suggested that "There is not a brick in the city but what is cemented with the blood of a slave," an observa-

59 LYNN, Martin. Commerce and Economic Change in West Africa: The Palm Oil Trade in the Nineteenth Century. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002. p. 39. FREUND, Bill. The African City: A History. Cambridge:

60 SANDERS, James. Op. Cit., p. 49-52.; J. H. Smith, W. Mollan, H. A. Adamson, J. Fountaine to African Committee, Cape Coast Castle, March 22, 1819, T70/1606 (TNA) (quotation). Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (Great Britain). Penny Cyclopaedia of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge: Second Supplement. London: Knight & Company, 1858. p. 282. The degree to which the abolition of the slave trade impacted African economies has been the topic of spirited debate. See LAW, Robin (org.).

61 DRESSER, Madge. Slavery Obscured: The Social History of the Slave Trade in an English Provincial Port. London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2001.

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tion that could have applied equally well to eighteenth-century Annamaboe with a change in building material.[62] Annamaboe, too, grew as a result of its position as one of the Atlantic's primary slave-trading hubs, and the town's population, economy, and social and cultural life were impacted by its Atlantic connections. There is no better evidence of the importance of that trade in supporting the town's livelihood than its dramatic decline in the wake of the Asante invasions and the British abolition of the Atlantic slave trade.

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62 THE ATHENÆUM: A JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, SCIENCE, THE FINE ARTS. N. 13, p. 51, January 1883, 51.

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