

**Conference and Workshop:
African Ethnonyms and Identity in the Era of the Transatlantic Slave Trade
September 8-9, 2022
University of Essex
Colchester, UK**

The documentation on Atlantic slavery, both in Africa and the Americas, is filled with ethnonyms: ‘Mina’, ‘Congo’, ‘Coromantee’, ‘Igbo’, ‘Mandenga’, ‘Jolofo’—the catalogue is substantial. Although sometimes dismissed as meaningless categories imposed by enslavers and imperialists, our contention is that ethnonyms are valuable pieces of information that represent unguarded moments when an acknowledgement of an enslaved persons’ humanity slipped into the archive, an unintended consequence of the inherent contradiction in defining people as property. Yet while essential to recovering the humanity of enslaved Africans, ethnonyms cannot be taken uncritically, requiring careful conceptualization and contextualization.

This conference/workshop seeks to assemble scholars interested in exploring the meaning of ethnonyms in the era of the transatlantic slave trade, ca. 1500-1866. We welcome presentations exploring any aspect of African ethnonyms, whether on a global or local scale, from any discipline, in any geographic setting, and from scholars at all career stages. Papers from the conference will be considered for publication in an edited anthology. We intend to hold this conference face-to-face but may be able to accommodate online presentations. Should Covid restrictions prevent face-to-face meetings, we will move the conference online.

Please send abstracts by June 1, 2022 to Sean Kelley, skelley@essex.ac.uk.

The University of Essex is located in Colchester, UK, a historic town one hour outside of London by rail. Accommodation is available on campus or in the town of Colchester. For more information, contact Sean Kelley at skelley@essex.ac.uk. Funded by the Documenting Africans in Trans-Atlantic Slavery (DATAS) Project, NWO/ESRC ES/T015314/1, www.datasproject.org.



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