



# The Gullah:

Rice, Slavery, and the Sierra Leone-American Connection

Joseph A. Opala

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JOSEPH OPALA is an American anthropologist who lectures at Fourah Bay College (University of Sierra Leone). His study of the Sierra Leone—Gullah connection began in 1977, when he conducted an archaeological and historical survey of Bunce Island under a grant from the U.S. National Endowment for the Humanities. In 1980, he did research in Oklahoma among the Seminole Freedmen and acted as an historical consultant for their community leaders. Since 1985, Mr. Opala has been actively engaged in spreading information on the Gullah in Sierra Leone speaking on SLBS, BBC, VOA, etc. and writing for the African press. He is a founder and co-chairman of the Gullah Research Committee at Fourah Bay College, an interdisciplinary group committed to a thorough exploration of this important topic.