
| RESEARCH ARTICLE

Sociology of Tribal Community: Lebanese Emigrants Rethinking Pedigree as Pan-Tribal Cultural Individuality in Post-War Sierra Leone

Mohamed Bangura

Department of Sociology and Social Work, University of Sierra Leone, Fourah Bay College, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Corresponding Author: Mohamed Bangura, **E-mail:** mfb17320@gmail.com

| ABSTRACT

Academics critiquing pedigree and tribal categorisation in post-war Sierra Leone have lodged diminutive concentration on how Lebanese emigrants traverse the Sierra Leone tribal categorisation scheme and how they personality cultural individuality regardless of their daily social experience with foisted tribal categorisation in Sierra Leone. This social research addresses this lacuna by exploring foreign-born Lebanese Emigrant's social distinctiveness in the circumstance of an inflicted Sierra Leonean tribal categorisation social system. The upshot detailed at this moment shapes a segment of inclusive social research that explored how Lebanese emigrants in Sierra Leone's personality interpreted the encounter of tribalisation. The social researcher debated that by interpreting their tribe as Ash-sha'b Al-Lubnani, respondents reinterpreted the tribe as a pan-tribal cultural individuality, disregarding tribal individuality from physical features and complexion. Some emigrants who certainly are not personality individualised in conditions of composition lodged tribal categories are distinguishing cultural interpretations of individuality in post-war Sierra Leone.

| KEYWORDS

Sociology, Lebanese, Pan-Tribal, Cultural Individuality, Sierra Leone

| ARTICLE INFORMATION

ACCEPTED: 01 December 2023

PUBLISHED: 01 January 2024

DOI: 10.32996/pjps.2024.4.1.1

1. Introduction

Considering the end of the war and deregulation of immigration, Sierra Leone has become the central and attractive haven for Lebanese emigrants fleeing religious or political persecution, revolutions and wars in the Middle East and for migrants exploring an improved existence or being. Sierra Leone has been one of the dominant emigrants-accepting countries in the Mano River Basin, specifically those showing up from Lebanon (Dubinsky, 2022). As emigrants acculturate in Sierra Leone, one of their central demurrers is conforming to the tribal individuality categories of culturists in urban structures of Sierra Leone (Tan and Firat, 2022). Substantial Lebanese emigrants in Sierra Leone emanate from cultural communities where social variation is constructed on previously non-tribal social systems such as kinship, religion, ethnicity, language and tribe cohorts (Layefa et al., 2022). When Lebanese emigrants land in Sierra Leone, they encounter a categorisation social system that is structured around the tribe, which is a variant of the categorisation systems they were familiar with back home. The Sierra Leone tribal system is structured along eighteen dominant categories, expressly Susu, Themne, Bullom, Yalunka, Mende, Limba, Loko, Sherbro, Vai, Krim, Fula, Madingo and others (Fyfe et al., 2023). Emigrants must consequently spot their tribal position within this cultural categorisation scheme that was initially established by British colonialists to categorise Sierra Leonean nationals (Kinnu, 2023; Dupraz and Simson, 2023; Bernards, 2022). For instance, Lebanese emigrants in Sierra Leone emanate from a social categorisation system that is lodged on cultural-linguistic variation (Joukhadar, 2023), and when they land in Sierra Leone, they confront a composition lodged tribal categorisation system that is incompatible with their home country's categorisation system.

The objective of this social inquiry is to comprehend how foreign-born Lebanese emigrants in Sierra Leone interpret their cultural individuality in view of their commonplace encounters with the Sierra Leone tribal categories that are inflicted on them in commonplace interactions and administrative patterns (Matson et al. 2021). The essential social research inquiry that structures this social inquiry, consequently, is: How do foreign-born Lebanese emigrants and permanent residence candidates in post-Ebola Sierra Leone cultural individuals encounter tribal categorisation?

This social inquiry contends that by interpreting their tribe as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, respondents reinterpreted the tribe as a pan-tribal individuality, dissociating tribal individuality, physical features and complexion. Some emigrants who never culturally individualised in social particulars of composition lodged tribal categories are distinguishing traditional interpretations of tribal individuality in post-War Sierra Leone and further tribalised (Politico SL, 2023).

Foremost, the social researcher retrospects knowledge on tribes in post-Ebola Sierra Leone and recognises the social research lacuna. Ensued the social researcher delineates the conceptual insight of immigrant incorporation followed by a discussion on the ethnic social variation system in Lebanon and Ash-sha'b Al-Lubnani's individuality. The social researcher then discusses the tribal variation system in Sierra Leone within which Lebanese emigrants spot themselves. Ensued the social research mode is delimited and preceded by the outcomes as to how and why some Lebanese emigrants individualised their tribe as Ash-sha'b Al-Lubnani. The final segments summarise the outcomes further and judge the social inquiry.

2. Literature review

Sociological researchers on tribe and tribal categorisation in Sierra Leone have extensively researched tribe and tribalisation (Kabba, 2022; Smith, 2022; Keese, 2019. Horn et al., 2021). Scholars note that Sierra Leonean society is a tribal-conscious society where tribal lodged individualisation is entrenched, and socio-economic stratification is dominantly structured around tribal cohorts (Galli, 2019). Academics such as Muiga (2019) and Nayak (2021) contend that the official utilisation of colonial-era tribal categories further cemented tribal consciousness and tribe lodged polarisation among folks in British colonies like Sierra Leone. As Pihama and Lee-Morgan (2019) debated, Sierra Leonean nationals during colonialism and its socio-cultural education still categorise themselves and others in conditions of the traditional Temne, Mende, Limba, Loko, Madingo, and Fula and other tribal categories. Tribe pundits in Sierra Leone, nonetheless, have concentrated only on Sierra Leonean citizens when debating the social affairs of tribalisation and tribe consciousness in the nation. They have not adequately explored, beyond Sierra Leone citizens, how non-Sierra Leoneans, such as current emigrants and immigrants, observe daily tribal categorisation and how they categorise themselves in the encounter of inflicted tribalisation. Do emigrants assimilate or decline a Sierra Leonean tribal categorisation system, which was historically never meant to categorise them?

Social research on the tribalisation observations of immigrants in Sierra Leone is still emerging. For instance, in her social research of Lebanese youth immigrants, the late Khadoura (2019) explored how Lebanese immigrants' personalities are individualised in the social encounter of tribalisation. She found that her Lebanese respondents interpreted themselves in multiple paths, such as Arab, Lebanese, and pan-ethnic social conditions. Moto's (2021) social research found that Syrian respondents in the upshot of 'collective trauma' dodged personality-individualising as Arab and instead stressed their ethno-religious individuality as 'Muslim'. Nonetheless, no social research has explored how Lebanese emigrants in post-War Sierra Leone personality-individuality in the context of their social observations with tribal categorization.

Within the field of Lebanese diaspora social research, much of the concentration has been on topics such as previously migratory treks (Majed, 2023; Forster, 2022; Diab, 2019; Hamzeh, 2023; Damaj, 2021), transnationalism (Tabar, 2020; Tabar, 2022; Amouch, 2022; Kim, 2021) and human rights (Malhotra, 2022; Chaar, 2021). A few social research studies have explored the tribalisation experiences and self-identification of Lebanese emigrants in their tribally conscious host countries (Alameddine, 2020; Khalifeh, 2023). In her social research on how Lebanese youth immigrants interpreted themselves in America, Hitti et al. (2021) found that her respondents' personalities interpreted both Arab and Lebanese. Their personality is interpreted as Arab because American society tribalises them as Arab or Middle Eastern. Fourati and Hayek (2019) explored how Lebanese in Australia are personality-individualised in a context where Australian society sees them as Arab due to their Middle Eastern origin. Fourati and Hayek (2019) found that their respondents, predominantly of the Lebanese ethnic group, jilted interpreting themselves as White and personality-identified as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani. The few social research studies on the tribalisation and personality-individualisation observations of Lebanese in the diaspora were conducted outside Sierra Leone. To date, there has been no social research on the personality-individualisation practices of Lebanese emigrants in Sierra Leone. This social inquiry addresses this research lacuna by examining how foreign-born Lebanese emigrants in post-War Sierra Leone personality-individualised in reaction to their daily encounters with tribal categorization.

Scholars exploring how immigrants embrace into individuality categories of the host country debate that the generation status of emigrants or immigrants carve how they personality-individualise. Those who arrived in a host country as adults tend to maintain individualities linked with their nations of birth and holistically renounce the individuality categories of the receiving society. Second generation immigrants nonetheless tend to embrace host nation lodged individuality structures owing to their socialisation into the host society's paths of reasoning and civilisation (Baumert, 2023; Saavedra, 2023).

2.1 Lebanese Migration to Sierra Leone

The first wave of Lebanese immigration to British Colonial Sierra Leone started when hundreds of Lebanese emigrants arrived in around 1895 as a reaction to the needs of British companies (Dubinsky, 2022). As the human rights circumstances in Lebanon crumbled and the governing dictatorial regime magnified restraint of the liberty of Lebanese back home, most of the emigrants resolved not to return to Lebanon after the expiration of their services. The majority of them moved to the United States, Canada, Western Europe and Australia, while those who remained in Sierra Leone sought asylum and became Emigrants entrepreneurs or business men (Rybarczyk, 2021; Al-Hajj, 2023). The emergence of Lebanese Emigrant communities in Sierra Leone is therefore linked to the early Lebanese who had arrived as war-torn Lebanon emigrants.

In successive years, more Lebanese arrived in West Africa, especially Sierra Leone, essentially by ships (Hamadi, 2023). The arrival of the second wave of Lebanese in 1895 is linked to the draconian governance in Lebanon and the consequent emigration of Lebanese by their thousands. Compelled military enlistment, a clampdown on political resistance, religious and press freedoms, and unrestricted national service are some of the conditions from which Lebanese emigrants have been deserting and arriving in Sierra Leone (Lopez-Tomas, 2023; Human Rights Watch, 2023). A majority of Lebanese emigrants in Sierra Leone are of the Shia or Sunni emanate (Harutyunyan, 2023), from Lebanon Biqaa and Jabal Amil, Akkar and Arsal ethnic cohorts, and most of them are engaged in business running divergent grocery, clothing, diamond, gold and merchandise stores.

2.2 Tribal categorisation in Sierra Leone

Precisely, social variation in Sierra Leone is based on tribal categorisation in which eighteen central tribal groupings are recognised as primary individuality cohorts. The categorisation of Sierra Leone society into the eighteen dominant cohorts evolved through the colonial and post-colonial eras of state led tribal categorisation projects that "do not enable Lebanese to acquire national (ascribed) citizenship because of their non-Negro African decent" (Beydoun, 2006) and tribal categorisation in the nation is principally established on physical appearance. Tribal categories in Sierra Leone factor in both government and non-government oversights in the model of inspection packs and in daily existence or being where folks interpret themselves and others in conditions of the eighteen standard tribal categories of cultural and social education: Temne, Mende, Limba, Fula and others (Pihama and Lee-Morgan, 2019).

Although most Mano River Basin nations are organised along ethno-cultural, ethno-linguistic and tribal lines, previously, tribe features as a dominant form of social distinction and organisation in Sierra Leone owing to its protracted social history of colonialism and oppression (Ismail, 2023). Precise tribal categorisation in Sierra Leone emerged in 1808 when the Freetown Crown Colony established three tribal cohorts, expressly Krio, Sapes, Temne and (Frediani, 2021). Subsequently, tribal categorisation experienced extreme transformations and amendments until the 20th century. When colonialism was established in 1808, tribal categorisation became more institutionalised and policed and eighteen categories, expressly Mende, Temne, Loko, Limba and others (Frediani, 2021), were constructed. These eighteen colonial categories are still in utilisation amidst average Sierra Leoneans and on administrative forms long after the colonial system has ended (Cooper, 2023). The post-colonial state preserved colonial tribal categories to the right, as well as former tribal disparities and inequity, by approving civil society engagement initiatives.

Social interpretations inclined to the eighteen tribal categories reflect interpretations submitted to each category during the colonial epoch (Cooper, 2023). Sierra Leone's white individuality is attributed to individuals who are of European descent and of divergent European national roots. Indigenous individuality in Sierra Leone refers to folks of African descent and of divergent African ethnic or cultural cohorts. The term 'Poto' (A Themne vocable for White in Sierra Leone) points to individuals presumed to have tribally integrated ancestry. 'Pumui' (A Mende vocable for White in Sierra Leone) alludes to individuals of European, Arab or Asian descent.

The diverse Sierra Leone tribal categories are unevenly stationed in the socio-economic echelons. Most Lebanese Sierra Leoneans are at the loftiest of the social structure, dominating much of the nation's affluence (Dubinsky, 2022). Although the advent of a native proletariat, the mass of native Sierra Leoneans are socio-economically positioned at the bottom of the ladder, where numerous Sierra Leoneans are jobless and still find themselves bound within impoverished locations assigned by the colonialist leadership (Dubinsky, 2022). Multiple urban or metropolitan occupants also find themselves

under Lebanese Sierra Leoneans (Dubinsky, 2022).

2.3 Mode

The greater social research interviewed 46 Emigrants and asylum seekers in three major Sierra Leonean cities, expressly Freetown, Makeni and Bo and purposive and snowball sampling strategies were utilised to identify respondents. The interviews were conducted in Krio, the lingua franca of the social researcher and the lingua franca of the respondents. The concentration of the interview questions was on the daily encounters of respondents with tribal categorisation in daily existence or being and how respondents' personalities were individualised in reaction to their tribalisation. Assumed titles rather than respondents' legitimate titles are utilised when attributing to respondents. The average time taken to complete a session was an hour. Sessions were tape documented, transcribed and interpreted into English. Analysis of data was enfolded on tribalisation, social observations and personality-individualisation. Crosswise, for each of the session data, the social researcher diagnosed respondents' lived social observation or experience with ascribed tribalisation and how they personality-individualised in reaction thereto. Germane instances were arranged across the data from each session, and patterns emerged which were successively compressed into notions or themes. Divergent themes were diagnosed from the data of the overall social research; nonetheless, this social inquiry concentrates only on a few respondents who constructed Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani cultural individuality as their tribal individuality.

Several respondents circumvented the standard Sierra Leonean tribal categorisation system and reinterpreted their Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, pan-ethnic individuality, as their tribal individuality, appropriately adjusting their cultural individuality into a tribe. The social researcher discusses respondents who constructed their individualisation in this path. The three respondents are Ali, Naser and Aboud. Ali is a 31-year-old male emigrant business man, and he had been living in Sierra Leone for ten years at the time of the interview. Nasir is a male emigrant student and he is 26 years old. He had lived in the nation for five years at the time of the interview. And Aboud is a 41-year-old male emigrant business man who had been in Sierra Leone for fifteen years when I interviewed him. All the respondents are Muslims and do not involve members of the Lebanese-speaking Christian Orthodox. All the respondents had completed university. The ensuing segment deliberates how the three respondents observed or experienced tribal categorisation in daily existence or being and how they personality-individualised.

3. Results

Integral of a larger research project, some respondents interpreted their tribe as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani rather than neatly fitting into the traditional eighteen Sierra Leonean tribal categories. In the broader social research, other Lebanese interpreted themselves tribally in divergent paths, such as Temne and Mende and non-tribally in national, ethnic and cultural conditions, but this social research does not deliberate such themes. Respondents did not associate tribe with composition, appearance or complexion but with pan-ethnic cohort individuality. The respondents encountered tribal categorisation both on formal forms that questioned them to audit 'their' tribe and in daily existence or being where they were classified as Temne, Mende and Fula. Even though tribal categories were inflicted on the respondents, they did not assimilate ascribed individuality tags but alternately confused their Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani cultural individuality with tribal individuality. Ali constructed Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, pan-ethnic individuality, as his tribe even though he was often categorised as white by Sierra Leoneans in daily existence or being.

Urban and rural Sierra Leoneans chat with me in Fula. I mean, when I meet them for the first time, they imagine I am Fula. I imagine, maybe they imagine I must be Fula like one of them. Constant on the street, when random Fula strangers question me for directions, they chat with me in Fula. It didn't occur once or twice, but it occurred regularly. It is obvious I look Fula like them. You can look at my hair and my facial appearance. My hair is very similar to that of Fula Sierra Leoneans. Not only that, but my holistic appearance is also like theirs. My complexion isn't too Arab, as you can see. It is lighter like Fula, but my hair is like other indigenous Sierra Leoneans. Maybe they look at my hair type and conclude that I must be Fula. But I don't see myself as Fula even though Sierra Leoneans perceive me as Fula. My tribe is Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, and I don't define myself as Fula. Fula and Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani are not the same thing because we Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani folks are not Fula but our own tribe. I mean, we Lebanese interpret ourselves as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, not as Fula or any other tribe, because we are divergent.

Even though Ali was constantly tribalised as Fula due to his physical appearance, he did not subscribe to a socially assigned tribal individuality. Folks drew on his physical appearance, such as hair texture and facial features, to ascribe a tribal tag of Fula; such genotypic traits did not carry any tribal meaning to Ali. He did not see an association between his genotypic traits and Fula cultural individuality. Ali constructed a novel tribal self-definition as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani. By

personality-tribalising as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, individuality that does not refer to complexion, he eschewed standard interpretations of the tribe that are lodged on surface genotypic distinctions such as complexion. By reformulating Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani cultural individuality as his tribal individuality, he turned the ethno-cultural social category into a tribe. Ali made a comparison between Fula individuality and Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality and, by doing so, treated the two individualities as tribal social constructions; he did not glimpse Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality as strictly cultural but instead confused it with the tribe. Another respondent, Nasir, also reinterpreted Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani pan-ethnic individuality as tribal cohort individuality:

On numerous occasions, indigenous Sierra Leoneans mistake me for Fula and 'Half Cast' (indigenous Krio term for Mixed Heritage folks). 'Are you Fula?' is the kind of question that I always confront when I meet folks in this nation. Not only that, other times, numerous folks perceive me as White also. For instance, last week, when I went to Lumley Street Shopping Centre to buy something, an indigenous Fula cashier at the counter spoke to me in Fula, imagining that I was Fula, I suppose. Of course, she couldn't imagine I was Lebanese because I don't look Lebanese. As you comprehend, I am in between. I mean, people think I am mixed as 'Half Cast' (Indigenous Krio term for mixed heritage) folks, and that is why they chat with me in Fula. This could be because my physical appearance confuses them. I mean, to some, I might look Fula, but to others, I might appear 'Half Cast'. But honestly speaking, up until now, I don't comprehend why they tend to see two dualities in me; I mean, in one person; very surprising, yeah? I can't really say I categorise myself as Fula or I am 'Half Cast' just because I am perceived as such by Sierra Leoneans; to me, my tribe is Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani because anyone can individualise Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani folks just by looking at them. I mean, we can have this Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani look that anyone can simply individualise us as Lebanese or Syrian because of our appearance, you comprehend. If folks here can categorise me as Fula because in Sierra Leone I look 'Half Cast', we Lebanese individualise each other as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani just by looking at the physical appearance, you comprehend. I mean, Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani is also a tribe. So I define my tribe as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, not as Fula or 'Half Cast', Fula or 'Half Cast': these categorisations do not adequately capture my actual individuality, you comprehend.

For Aboud, the social construction of Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani pan-ethnic cultural individuality as a form of tribal individuality emerged in reaction to his daily encounters with observations or experiences of tribalisation as 'Half Cast' and as European. Aboud was categorised both as European and 'Half Cast' due to his physical appearance, but he did not personally individualise as European or 'Half Cast'. Instead of fitting into the eighteen standard Sierra Leonean tribal categories, Aboud usurped the Sierra Leonean tribal categorisation order by inventing Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani tribal individuality. For Aboud, members of the category Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani apportion resemblance in physical appearance; nonetheless, this is not factually the case as Lebanese and Fulas of Freetown, Makeni and Bo ethnicity exhibit a broad range of divergences in physical traits and complexion. Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani personality-individualisation is often lodged on shared cultural traditions rather than similarity in tribal genotype. By describing Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani people as a phenotypically homogenous grouping, Aboud appears to be imagining Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani folks with Middle Eastern genotypic features, such as having curly hair and fair complexion that are a numerical majority within the Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani social collective. Sahid, another Lebanese emigrant, also reinterpreted Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani pan-ethnic individuality as a model of a tribal category.

When I was filling out medical insurance forms, they asked me such questions (tribal questions). I questioned myself, "Am I Fula? 'Am I Half Cast'? I didn't know what to answer (on those forms). I mean, when I first encountered such (tribal) questions... I didn't comprehend which one to select. I had a conversation in my head, "Where is my individuality represented among these (tribe) choices?" So, honestly speaking, I was not sure what to choose. It is very confusing, really, especially when you have never been questioned about your tribe before... To be questioned whether I am Fula or Half Cast is confusing because I don't interpret myself in conditions of such categorisations. I am Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, and I imagine my tribe is also Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani. Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani folks area tribe like you, have Mende, Temne, Limba, and Loko tribes in Sierra Leone. I mean, I interpret my tribe as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani rather than as Fula or 'Half Cast'. I was never categorised as Fula or 'Half Cast' before I came to Sierra Leone because we do not have such categorisations back home. We just interpret ourselves as because Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, that is what defines us; it is like these Sierra Leonean tribes. I mean, Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani must be a tribe also because we are neither Fula, Temne, Mende, nor 'Half Cast'; we are Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani. We are a divergent cohort, you comprehend.

Aboud's reconfiguration of Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani pan-ethnic cultural individuality as a tribal category surfaced in the face of encountering tribal categorisation on official forms that asked him to check 'his' tribe box. Tribal individualisation questions on administrative forms are restricted to the eighteen (Limba, Loko, Fula, Susu, Mende, Themne and other) categories, and it was within this constrained context of answering a tribal box that Aboud thought of himself as tribally

Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani. Aboud did not write-in 'Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani' as his tribal individuality on official forms, but it is an individuality he constructed in his head. For Aboud, people Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani represent a distinct ethno-tribal grouping that can be compared to standard tribal groupings found in Sierra Leone, expressly Susu, Mende, Themne, Limba and others. Aboud considered Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani's folks "... a divergent cohort" and consequent his refusal to be boxed into the Sierra Leone tribal categorization cultural system. Nonetheless, describing folks of Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani pan-ethnicity as a homogenous tribal cohort is erroneous as members of Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani pan-ethnicity are genotypically too diverse to think of them as constituting a distinct tribal cohort. Aboud's description of Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani folks as a tribe appears to be a strategy to transcend the Sierra Leonean tribal categorisation cultural system.

4. Discussion

Respondents personalities individualised as being of the 'Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani tribe' and, by doing so, shun self-interpretation in conditions of the standard Sierra Leonean tribal categories. The Lebanese who interpreted their tribe as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani lived in urban neighbourhoods where other Middle Eastern emigrants and indigenous Sierra Leoneans live. These are social spaces where Lebanese and Syrians reside and socially interact and regularly utilise the collective Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani cultural individuality to interpret them.

Proponents of immigrant incorporation theory posit that generally, adult foreign-born immigrants tend to maintain individualities found in their nations of birth while avoiding host country lodged individuality categories (Khadoura, 2019; Tan and Firat, 2022). Scholars deliberate that the tendency for foreign born immigrants to primarily identify by their home nation lodged individualities is owing to socialisation. Further, similarity or dissimilarity between host nation and home nation lodged identities also carve whether or not immigrants adapt to host nation individualities (Baumert, 2023; Saavedra, 2023). Alamedine (2020) debated that immigrants who emanate from social variation systems that are lodged on non-tribal elements, such as family, tribe or ethnicity, tend to have difficulty adjusting to the tribally lodged individualities of a host society. The paths in which respondents of the present social research interpreted themselves by a familiar individuality, such as Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, supports such an argument. Respondents constructed a familiar Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality as their preferred ethno-tribal personality individualisation distinct from Sierra Leonean tribal categories.

A significant element of the immigrant incorporation perspective is the factor of length of stay in which foreign-born immigrants who stay longer in a host society tend to adjust to the norms and individuality categories of the host nation (Khalifeh, 2023; Hitti, 2021 and Alamedine, 2023). This was not the case for participants of the present social research. For instance, Ali and Aboud had lived in Sierra Leone for ten and fifteen years, respectively, but they did not adopt the Sierra Leonean tribal individuality categories. This could be because the respondents resided and socialised within the Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani community (Lebanese) in urban neighbourhoods, and they were less socially integrated into the host nation. As Baumert (2023) and Saavedra (2023) debated, ethnic enclaves and communities function as milieus for the maintenance of home nation cultures and individualities for immigrants and emigrants. Respondents constructions of their pan-ethnic cultural individuality as a distinct tribal individuality positioned alongside the standard tribal categories point to the paths in which some emigrants are grabbing, reinterpreting and crippling traditional notions of the Sierra Leonean tribal categorisation system. Some emigrants are introducing novel interpretations of the tribe in postwar Sierra Leone whereby home lodged ethnic or cultural individualities are reinterpreted as tribal categories Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani (Pihama and Lee-Morgan, 2023). Emigrants are not passively succumbing to the tribal categorisation systems of the host society; instead, they are actively constructing categorisations to interpret themselves and, by doing so, complicating notions of the tribe in postwar Sierra Leone, where continued immigration is shifting the statistics and individualities of the nation.

In social research by Dubinsky (2022), Lebanese immigrants in West Africa, especially Sierra Leone, also 'tribally' interpreted themselves as 'Arab' and 'Lebanese', especially in the encounter of Sierra Leone's tribal categorisation cultural system. The terms 'Arab' and 'Lebanese' are not recognised as tribal categories in Sierra Leone; nonetheless, in spite of this, the Lebanese immigrants did not see themselves as suitable for the standard Sierra Leone tribal categorisation cultural system (which is lodged on Mende, Temne, Limba, Loko, Mandingo, Susu, Sherbro, Yalunka, and others) consequently interprets their tribal individuality as 'Arab' and 'Lebanese'. By introducing a current path of tribal personality individualisation, the Lebanese immigrants socially reinterpreted and grabbed the traditional tribal categorisation system in Sierra Leone. Lebanese emigrants in the present social system also connoted the patterns observed among the Syrian or Middle Eastern immigrants in which Lebanese constructed the Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani cultural individuality as their tribe instead of discovering their tribal spot within the eighteen standard tribal categorisations in post-war Sierra Leone.

Cynically, though, rather than rejecting the notion of tribe altogether, the respondents tended to reinforce the cultural practice of tribal categorisation by tribalising their Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality as a form of tribal individuality. Critical tribe theory posits that tribalisation may function in implicit thresholds of social education (Kabba, 2022; Smith, 2022; and Keese, 2019), as is the case with the respondents who, wanting to distance themselves from the Sierra Leone tribal entity, cynically submitted to the ideology of tribe by turning their cultural individuality into a tribe.

Within the field of Lebanese diaspora social research, late Khadoura (2019) found that Lebanese in the United States of America constructed their Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality as a distinct cultural individuality to distance themselves from a tribalised Black, White, Hispanic individuality, nonetheless in the present social research, respondents constructed their Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani identity, not as a cultural or a pan-ethnic identity, but as their tribal-identification juxtaposing the tribalised Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality alongside the standard Sierra Leonean tribal categories. Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality, therefore, was transformed from a cultural to a tribal category for the respondents of this social research.

5. Conclusion

This social research set out to explore how foreign-born Lebanese emigrants and asylum seekers in post-war Sierra Leone personality-individualised in the face of their encounters with tribal categorisation on official forms and in daily existence or being. As part of a larger social research, this social research was concentrated on those respondents who interpreted their Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani cultural individuality as their tribe's individuality. Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani, which was traditionally understood as an non-tribal pan-ethnic cultural individuality for Lebanese and Syrians, was reinterpreted as a tribal individuality by the respondents. Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani then became a type of tribal category juxtaposed alongside the traditional Sierra Leonean tribal categories, expressly Susu, Temne, Mende, Fula and others. This novel social practice by some emigrants to invent tribal individualities out of ethnic or cultural individualities chats to the undermining of the Sierra Leone tribal categorisation system to which non-Sierra Leonean emigrants are expected to assimilate or adapt. It would be interesting for future sociological research in the diaspora settings to explore whether Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality is claimed by the Shia and Sunni Lebanese folks in Sierra Leone, though officially categorised under the religious and ethnic cohort they have been claiming a separate ethnic or cultural individuality. Future sociological research could also investigate whether members of other religious, and ethnic cohorts, such as the Maronite Lebanese Christians of Sierra Leone, claim Ash-shai'b Al-Lubnani individuality in tribally structured host societies. Further research is also needed to understand how other Middle Eastern emigrant cohorts beyond Lebanese interpreted themselves in the encounter of a tribally organised host society, Sierra Leone.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Publisher's Note: All claims expressed in this article are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of their affiliated organizations, or those of the publisher, the editors and the reviewers.

References

- [1] Al-Hajj S. (2023). Physical Injuries and Burns Among Refugees in Lebanon Implications for Programmes and Policies. *Confl Health*, 2023; 17: 42. Doi: 10.1186/s13031-023-00539-4. PMCID: PMC10518957/PMID: 37749592.
- [2] Alameddine M (2020). What made Lebanese emigrant nurses leave, and what would bring them back? A cross-sectional survey. *International Journal of Nursing Studies*. 103, March 2020, 103497
- [3] Amouch S. (2022). Revolting from Abroad: The Formation of a Lebanese Transnational Public. *Proceedings of the ACM on Human-Computer Interaction* Volume 6 Issue CSCW2 Article No.: 406pp 1–28 <https://doi.org/10.1145/3555131>
- [4] Baumert J. (2023). Cultural Identity and the Academic, Social, and Psychological Adjustment of Adolescents with Immigration Background. *J. Youth Adolescence* (2023). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-023-01853-z>
- [5] Bernards N (2022). States, Money and the Persistence of Colonial Financial Hierarchies in British West Africa. *Development and Change*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/dech.12745>. See: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/dech.12745>.
- [6] Beydoun L (2006). Lebanese Migration to Sierra Leone: Issues of Transnationalism, Gender, Citizenship, and the Construction of a Globalised Identity. www.researchgate.net.
- [7] Chaar H (2021). Protect domestic migrant workers in Lebanon? See: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_776383.pdf
- [8] Cooper F (2023). Questioning Colonialism, 2005 -2023. *Historia. Open Edition Journals*. See: <https://doi.org/10.4000/lerhistoria.11970>. See: www.journals.openedition.org
- [9] Ismail HM (2023). Colonialism and a History of Oppression in Africa: Scenes from Selected from African Novels. *Research Journal in Advanced Humanities*. 4 3. See: www.royallite.global.com.
- [10] Damaj R (2021). Lebanese Opt for New Emigration Destinations Amid Crises. See: <https://www.al-monitor.com/originals/2021/12/lebanese-opt-new-emigration-destinations-amid-crises#ixzz8H3C4qTBy>
- [11] Diab JL (2019). Conflict, Crisis, and Migration: Maritime Irregular Migration From Lebanon Since 2019. *Institute for Migration Studies*.

- [12] Dorai K and Amer I (2023). Lebanese Migration Policy Since 2011 and its Role in the Syrian Refugee Movement. *Sociology, Social Policy and Education* 2023 DOI:<https://doi.org/10.4337/9781800887350.00018>
- [13] Dubinsky T (2022). Lebanese in Anglophone West Africa. *African History*. Oxford Research Encyclopedia. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190277734.013.1447>.
- [14] Dupraz Y and Simson R (2023). Elite Persistence in Sierra Leone: What can names tell us? *Africa Economic History Working Paper*. No 71. See: https://www.aehnetwork.org/wpcontent/uploads/2023/03/71_AEHNWP_Dupraz_Simson.pdf
- [15] Frediani AA (2021). Freetown City Scooping Study. African Cities Research Consortium. See: www.african-cities.org.
- [16] Forster R (2022). EFFEXT Background Paper – National and international migration policy in Lebanon. <https://www.cmi.no/publications/8589-national-and-international-migration-policy-in-lebanon>
- [17] Fourati M and Hayek D (2019). Are Muslim immigrants really different? Experimental Evidence from Lebanon and Australia. https://novafrica.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Lebanese_Experiment.pdf
- [18] Fyfe C et al. (2023). "Sierra Leone". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 15 Oct. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/place/Sierra-Leone>. Accessed 22 October 2023.
- [19] Galli S (2019). A Black Utopia? Social Stratification in Nineteenth Century colonial Sierra Leone. ISBN 978-91-86217-22-8 <http://hdl.handle.net/2077/58172>. Unit for Economic History, Development of Economy and Society. School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gottenberg.
- [20] Hage G (2021). One. Lebanese Capitalism and the Emergence of a Transnational Mode of Existence. *The Diasporic Condition: Ethnographic Explorations of the Lebanese in the World*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press. pp. 19-36. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226547237-003>
- [21] Hamdi G (2023). Lebanese Diaspora in Africa: Decades of Fleeing Coups and Wars. *Orient Today*. www.today.loeintjour.com
- [22] Hamzeh W (2023). Lebanese flee to Italy as 'there is no hope here'. See <https://www.infomigrants.net/en/post/51198/lebanese-flee-to-italy-as-there-is-no-hope-here>.
- [23] Harutyunyan L (2023). Sunni and Shia Communities Transformations in Lebanon: Changes In The Balance of Power. *Contemporary Eurasia*. DOI:10.52837//2579-2970-2023.12.16.
- [24] Hitti A. (2021) Lebanese Adolescents Expectations About Social Inclusion of Peers in InterGroup Contexts. *British Journal of Developmental Psychology*. 39, 3/p.424-441. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjdp.12372>.
- [25] Human RW (2023). Lebanon. See: www.hrw.org.
- [26] Joukhadar C (2023). The social distribution of non-verbal negation in the Lebanese Arabic of Zgharta. *Journal of Arabic Sociolinguistics*, 1 1, Page 26-49, ISSN 2755-1911 (<https://doi.org/10.3366/arabic.2023.0004>)
- [27] Kaba A (2022). Sierra Leone: A Historical Cultural Capital of Pan-Africanism. *Sociology Mind*, 12, 76-100. doi: 10.4236/sm.2022.122005.
- [28] Keese A (2019). Fragmentation and the Temne: From War Raids into Ethnic Civil Wars. *Ethnicity and the Colonial State*. Chapter Pages:158-219. DOI: https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004307353_005.
- [29] Khalifeh R (2023). Experiences of Cultural Differences, Discrimination, and Healthcare Access of Displaced Syrians (DS) in Lebanon: A Qualitative Study. *Healthcare (Basel)*. 2023 Jul; 11(14): 2013.
- [30] Published online 2023 Jul 12. doi: 10.3390/healthcare11142013
- [31] PMID: PMC10378841. PMID: 37510454
- [32] Kamara CA (2023). Sierra Leoneans Become More Tribal-IGR Report. *Politico SL*. 12/04/2023. Accessed on the 25 October, 2023. See: <https://www.politicosl.com/articles/sierra-leoneans-become-more-tribal-%E2%80%93-igr-report>
- [33] Kinnu V (2023). The History of West Africa from the World Ancient Tribes to the Youngest Countries. See: <https://kinnu.xyz/kinnuverse/history/world-history/the-history-of-west-africa/>
- [34] Kim YN. (2021) A scoping review on the measurement of transnationalism in migrant health research in high-income countries. *Global Health* 17, 126 (2021). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12992-021-00777-2>
- [35] Layefa G (2022). Revisiting Kinship in Contemporary West African Societies: The Case of Role-Relationship. *F1000Research* 2022, 11:965. (<https://doi.org/10.12688/f1000research.76054.1>)
- [36] Lopez-Tomas A. (2023). Stricken Lebanon Endures 3rd Exodus as Its People Flee Disaster. *The Jerusalem Post*. See: www.mjpost.com
- [37] Mahotra R (2022). Extreme Poverty and Human Rights in Lebanon: A Children's Crisis in Lebanon. See <https://www.savethechildren.net/blog/extreme-poverty-and-human-rights-lebanon-children-s-crisis-lebanon>.
- [38] Majed N (2023). The Lebanese Diaspora in Germany: From Civil War to Beirut Port Explosion. *Arab Reform Initiative*. <https://www.arab-reform.net/publication/the-lebanese-diaspora-in-germany-from-civil-war-to-beirut-port-explosion/>
- [39] Matson L. (2021) Transforming research and relationships through collaborative tribal-university partnerships on Manoomin (wild rice) *Environmental Science & Policy*, Volume 115,2021, Pages 108-115, ISSN 1462-9011. See:<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envsci.2020.10.010> (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1462901120313599>)
- [40] Matos L. (2021) 'The War Made Me a Better Person': Syrian Refugees' Meaning-Making
- [41] Trajectories in the Aftermath of Collective Trauma *Int J Environ Res Public Health*. 2021 Aug; 18(16): 8481. Published online 2021 Aug 11. doi: 10.3390/ijerph18168481. PMID: PMC8391383. PMID: 34444235. See: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8391383/>
- [42] Muiga K (2019). Colonialists didn't fail to root out Africa's Tribal Politics. They created it. <https://africanarguments.org/2019/08/colonialism-tribal-ethnic-politics-africa/>
- [43] Nayak BS (2021). Colonial World of Postcolonial Historians: Reification, Theoreticism, and the Neoliberal Reinvention of Tribal Identity in India. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 56(3), 511-532. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021909620930048>
- [44] Pihama L and Lee-Morgan J *Colonization, Education, and Indigenous Peoples. Handbook of Indigenous Education, 2019 ISBN: 978-981-10-3898-3*
- [45] Rybarczyk K (2023). Refugees Fleeing Lebanon Look to Europe – but Europe Looks Away. *Social Europe*. See: www.socialeurope.eu
- [46] Saavedra SC (2023). It Happened When I Was Connecting to the Community...: Multiple Pathways to Migrant (Non)Belonging in a New

- Destination Setting. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2023, 20(3), 2172; <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph20032172>
- [47] Smith D (2022). Seli Hydropower and Indigenous Peoples: Analysis of Seli Communities and International Definitions of Indigenous Peoples Prepared. 18-11-2020 Version 1.1. See: <https://selihydropower.sl/Content/documents/Seli%20Indigenous%20Peoples%20Analysis%20Note.pdf>
- [48] Tan M and Firat M (2022). The Changing Structure of the Tribe in the Process of Urbanisation. *Journal of Oriental Scientific Research (JOSR Cilt/Volume: 14, Sayı/Issue1*. See <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/2231995>.
- [49] Tabar, P. (2020). Transnational is not Diasporic: A Bourdieusian Approach to the Study of Modern Diaspora. *Journal of Sociology*, 56(3), 455-471. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1440783319853026>.
- [50] Tabar P (2022). Diaspora, Transnationalism, Political Remittances and Lebanese Migrants. European Institute of the Mediterranean. See:<https://www.iemed.org/publication/diaspora-transnationalism-political-remittances-and-lebanese-migrants/>