

ORTHOGRAPHIC NOTES

Maninka and Pular are the language varieties most commonly spoken on the goldfields of Senegal, Mali, and Guinea. *Maninka* (Malinké in French) is the Manding dialect spoken in eastern Senegal, western Mali, and Guinea. *Maninka* is also an ethnonym used by speakers of this variety, many of whom claim heritage from the thirteenth-century Malian empire. Manding is a language continuum of the Mande language family spoken by more than thirty million people in West Africa, from Senegal to Burkina Faso. I use the term *Pular* to refer to the dialect of Fula spoken in southern Senegal and northern Guinea. Fula (Fulfulde, Fula, Fulani, Pular or Peul) is a language continuum of the West Atlantic branch of the Niger-Congo language family spoken by more than fifteen million people from the Atlantic coast in Senegal to the savannas of East Africa.

I have italicized non-English-language words in their initial usage in the book. Italicized words are in Maninka unless indicated (by context or explicitly) as Arabic, French, Pular, or Wolof. For words derived from Arabic commonly used in English, such as *jihad*, I use established Latin spellings without italics. I worked with Falaye Danfakha to translate interviews from Maninka into French. Falaye and Mohamadou “Pape” Diallo helped with some translations in Pular, and I completed others independently. French translations are my own. Any consistent approach to orthography in this book proved elusive due to the diversity of languages, time periods, and national alphabetic conventions at play. This heterogeneity reflects the linguistic diversity of the region and the uneven legacies of colonial languages, and Arabic language instruction, on linguistic norms. In transcribing African languages, I use a combination of simple phonetic and the official orthography of Senegal, where I conducted most of my interviews. For

ease of reading, I do not use special characters or tonal diacritics. Whenever possible, I have avoided the use of plurals.

For the names of people and places, I generally followed French spellings and accents according to common usage in the West African country in question or as spelled by individuals and published authors. I have chosen to use the phonetic spellings of common words that begin with the sound “j,” such as juura and jalan. I retain the French spelling of “dia” for patronyms, such as Diallo and Diaby. When writing on the colonial era, I have kept the French names of colonies, such as “Soudan.”

All dates are Common Era (CE).