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The Mane, the Decline of Mali, and Mandinka Expansion towards the South Windward Coast*

This article attempts to give a new interpretation of the Mane question in the wider regional context of the political and economic history of the Niger basin, and in particular of the decline of the Mali empire and Mandinka trade routes toward the West African coast.

The following points will be argued: (1) The Mane invasion of the 16th century was only *one of several* invasions. (2) The Mane were of Mandinka rather than of Southern Mande stock. (3) The Mane conquest was not identical with the Kqoja invasion reported for the early 17th century. (4) Events of the Mane invasion only took place in the vicinity of Sierra Leone and had no connection with Liberia until the 17th century. (5) The leading element of the Mandinka in the southern forest area were the Kamara Diomande, one of the oldest clans of Mali. (6) The political and economic upheavals in Mali led to an expansion southwards and to a greater reliance on the southern trade routes—as supply and escape routes—and the Mandinka established colonies along the southern rivers similar to those in Casamance.

Early Mandinka Expansion towards the Guinea Coast

Recent research in the history of Mali has established its early expansion westwards. Prior to Sundiata (1225-1255), Mali was bordered by the Wagadu to the north, the Mema to the east, the Manding highlands to the south and the Futa Jalon to the west (Ly Tall 1977: 42). The oral traditions report the conquest of the west by Sundiata's general Tiramaghan Traoré (Leynaud & Cissé 1978: 32). Under Sakura, the Senegal

* For reasons of precision, the term Windward coast rather than Guinea coast is used here. South Windward coast thus refers to the coastline between Conakry and cape Palmas.

valley was conquered, and it remained part of the empire until the late 16th century, together with the Gambia and Casamance, when the northern provinces had already been lost to the Askia dynasty (Ly Tall 1977: 83, 86; Cissoko 1975: 53).

Along the southern frontier of the empire, where (unlike in the Gambia and Casamance) no Mandinka States have survived thus giving rise to well-established oral traditions, events are less well-documented than in the west. Only recent research in oral traditions, reviewed hereafter, permits to trace Mandinka colonization in the south.

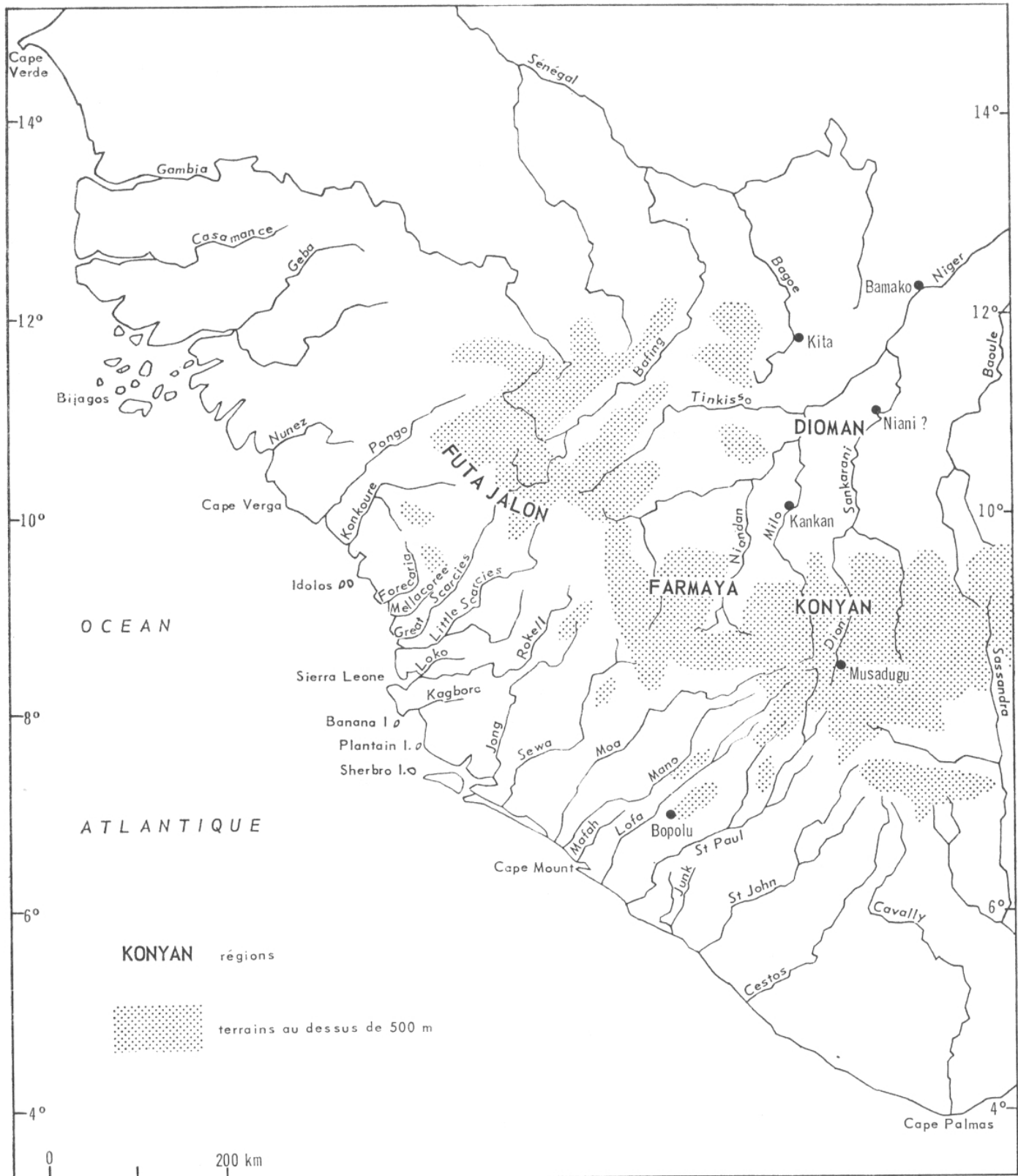
Person (1971: 669) has accurately stated the difficulties facing the historian of the Guinea coast, a zone of intensive contact between interior and coastal societies, and criticized the tendency of researchers to limit themselves to either one of the two zones, thus preventing a comprehensive view. The fact that the Republic of Guinea has not permitted ethno-historical research for the last twenty years makes it even more difficult to write the history of this region.

The Mane Movements in Portuguese Accounts of the 16th Century

The Portuguese 16th-century sources on the Mane have been reviewed by Rodney (1970: 39-54). His work, however, suffers from several misinterpretations. One of his sources was André Donelha (1977: 105), the first to mention a recent Mane invasion near Sierra Leone, which he visited in 1574: 'The Manes conquered all these lands [i.e. Sierra Leone] by arms. They started the war against the Sapes in 1545 and succeeded in mastering all of them and placing them under their rule in the year 1560'. Donelha (*ibid.*: 107) further reports that the Mane came from Mandimansa¹ and were initially under the leadership of a woman, Maçarico (*ibid.*: 109):²

'... when the Manes entered Serra Lioa, it was the sons and grandsons of those who left Mandimansa. I have heard from 3 Manes who were made prisoners in the war and bought by my father when he was in the Serra in the year 1560, that only 8 very old men who had left Mandimansa as young men and a few old women entered Serra Lioa, and that the rest died by the sword in the wars or from old age. After this lady [Maçarico] her generals continued until they forced their way into the lands of Serra Lioa in 1545; they subjected the Sapes and Bolons who went along with the Manes and became very good soldiers'.

1. Mandimansa, a reference generally used by the Portuguese sources in relation to the interior kingdom of the Mandinka (*mansa* or *maäsa*, 'chief'; Mandi, Mandé or Mandén), referring either to the region or the people).
2. This may be the Portuguese spelling of *mansa Rico*, 'chief Rico'. ALMADA (1964: 131, 138) mentions the same name but speaks of a captain.



MAP I. Upper Guinea Coast.

Donelha's informants imply a gradual movement lasting at least one generation if those who left as adolescents arrived at the coast as old people, and therefore a date of departure some time around 1500. Their origin—Mandimansa—implies that they were sent by the lord of the Mande people or came from Mande country.

Almada, chief source and eyewitness of the 1560 events, states that the Mane in Sierra Leone spoke almost the same language as the Mandinka of Upper Guinea, i.e. Casamance and the Gambia, and wore the same dress and arms.³ Further, they traded under an emperor, or *mandimansa*, called 'The Great Elephant' by the Africans at Elmina. According to the old Sape, these Mane had been coming to their lands for several centuries to make war,⁴ and Almada suggests that they came from the interior, entering Sierra Leone from the south-east. Knowing the Mandinka of Upper Guinea, he assumed, on the basis of similarities in arms, dress and language, that the Mane came, like them, from the interior kingdom of Mandimansa.

The description of Mane arms and dress has been compared by Rodney (1970: 41) with that of a Mandinka caravan on the Gambia by Almada (1964: 132-133). The use of cotton stuff points to the regions of southern Mali where that plant is grown and manufactured, even though such clothes could also have been worn by other peoples trading with these regions. On the coast, however, the populations were mostly clad in bark fiber or animal skins and the techniques of cotton weaving were not known until much later. The trade in cotton and cotton cloth, which the Susu or Futa⁵ obtained from the Fulani in the interior, and exchanged for salt at the coast, is already mentioned by Almada (1964: 119, 125).

Among the other features which distinguished the Mane from the coastal Sape were the use of iron sabres and the absence of filed teeth.⁶ The invading army was composed of two groups: the Mane, who mainly were the captains and generals, called *mestre*, who received tribute, the so-called *marefe*;⁷ and the Sumba, who had a reputation of cannibals, largely consisting of conscripts from among the subjected ethnic groups, mainly Bulom and Temne, occasionally supplemented by some Portuguese.⁸

3. 'Tenho que procederam de Mandimansa, porque falam a mesma lingua, e se não é a mesma, trazem as mesmas armas e vestidos como estes trazem, sem haver diferença nenhuma' (ALMADA 1964: 132).

4. ALMADA (1964: 131, 138) and his informants stress repeatedly that the Mane have come to the area recurrently since ancient times, a circumstance which has been overlooked by previous authors on the Mane question, and which, like Almada, we have no reason to reject.

5. Sousos and Putazes in ALMADA (1964: 119, 125), to designate the inhabitants of the Futa Jalon.

6. Filed teeth are a cultural characteristic of many coastal peoples, whereas the mining and manufacture of iron is one of the cultural traits of most Mande groups.

7. ALMADA 1964: 133. *Mestre* (Portuguese), 'master'. *Marefe* could be derived from the Malinke *marifa*, 'gun'; guns may have been a standard accounting unit in which tribute was paid.

8. ALMADA (1964: 133, 145) mentions a Francisco Vaz from Alentejo and others.

By 1570 the Mane were naturalized in the Sierra Leone area and, according to Almada's description, the subjected Sape had assumed much of the socio-political institutions which characterize the Mande world of today. The royal councillors and judges who assured the interim rule between the king's death and the election of a new king held the title of *solategi*—which was also found in other parts of the Mandinka world such as the Futa Toro.⁹ These men seem to have been the provincial governors of the Mandinka empire (Leynaud & Cissé 1978: 161). Their occasional ventures in disguise into the streets of the villages, called *contuberia* by Almada, and the punishments inflicted on the uninitiated women and men apprehended, point to the Mande male secret societies Poro and Komo;¹⁰ similarly, Almada's description of the female *menda*,¹¹ the girls' seclusion period which ends in a public ceremony after one year, strongly resembles the female Mande excision societies Bundu, Sande or Mende.

Other Portuguese accounts likewise point to Mandinka titles: Donelha's description (1977: 111) of the Sierra Leone political geography shows the Mane rulers using Mandinka eponyms: 'The Mane Juma beside the sea; Farma was more powerful in the interior of Mitombo; Farma Xere on the other side of the Tagarim river around the portage place; the Mane Bogo in the interior country of the Lirigos; the Mane Mexere more centrally in the interior of Bagarabomba' (cf. Map 2). In the Mandinka territorial-military organization, the *faama* (*farma*, *falma*) had the position of governor (Niane 1960: 110 fn. 2). The eponym *shere* (*xere*, *sire*, *shyèrè*) was used as a surname in connection with titles, and Rodney pointed out that it may have designated the Kamara, 'traditionally the earliest Mande clan in the Western Sudan'.¹² Furthermore, the Mane Juma (Mane Dioma) of Donelha probably was a Kamara Diomande himself, or originated from the Dioman, one of Mali's southern provinces, settled by the Keita, Kamara, Traoré, Kuruma and added to the empire by the end of the 15th century (Niane 1975: 96-98).

Rodney (1970: 40, 50-59) was aware of the comparisons made by

9. *Silatigui*, *sira-tigi*, also *saltigué* in the Siné-Saloum (see SURET-CANALE 1971: 399, 411, 436). Suret-Canale assumed therefore that the Sape kingdom had a Mandinka origin; we have to remind the reader, however, that Almada's description of the Sape institutions reflects the post-conquest situation, and that it was the Mane-Mandinka political institutions which had been imposed upon the Sape.
10. ALMADA (1964: 123) hereby refers to the demon-mask societies.
11. ALMADA (*ibid.*: 125) compares them to the Christian nunneries: 'E chaman a estas recolhidas Mendas, como entre nós Religiosas'.
12. RODNEY 1970: 47; McCULLOCH 1950: 56. *Sire* frequently appears as a Mandinka title on the Gambia, e.g. in Wuli and among the Denianke of the Futa Toro (SURET-CANALE 1971: 411-414), but it is also possible that it referred to an alternate *dyamu*, or clan name, for Cissé. One of the readers of this article pointed out that *sire* means 'good' or 'brave' in Soninke, and that *shere* may come from the Arabic *sâhid*, 'witness', 'second'.

Almada himself and helped to establish some of the above references to Mandinka territorial organization, but he remained convinced that the Mane were mainly of Southern Mande—Mende, Toma or Loko—rather than of Northern Mande origins. However, the evidence presented above for the Mandinka origin of the Mane, containing references to such crucial features as political organization and socio-cultural institutions, seems in our view unequivocal.

It remains now to refute Rodney's claim that the Mane conquest of the 16th century was identical with an invasion of Liberia reported in the 17th century. The geographical information given in Almada—and a few decades later by Father Barreira—places the Mane conquest clearly in the neighborhood of Sierra Leone. According to Almada (1964: 137-138), the Mane first met with the Sape at Tausente island, or Baixos de Santa Ana, where they fought the Bulom: 'The first encounter of these people, being from the Malagueta Coast and entering along the shoals of Saint Ann, which is the first Sapes country on this coast, was with a Bulom king, and is described below. The Manes captains came along the beach and others through the interior, in this order, and conquered one place after another. The beach was conquered by a captain Maçarico with many people who occupied the mainland and, entering via the Toto islands, destroyed Tausente which was inhabited. Some of its inhabitants fled with the Portuguese, the others were eaten by their enemies'.

Tausente can be identified as Sherbro, and the Toto islands as the Turtle islands to the west.¹³ Almada (*ibid.*: 131, 138) adds that Sherbro was later called Massakoje and functioned as a Mandinka trade station. He also states that the frontline of the Bulom which fought the invaders consisted of elements who had come to the area since antiquity, thus implying that the inhabitants of Sherbro were themselves of Mande stock and had assimilated to the Bulom.¹⁴ Thus, Rodney's claim that this battle took place in the neighborhood of Cape Mount and that the Mane came up the Kru coast from the Cess river must be refuted, being based as it is on a wrong identification of toponyms.¹⁵ The link which he con-

13. From the sequence of toponyms (ALMADA 1964: 125-127) which are identified as follows. Cape Verga: cape Verga; rio das Pedras: Pongo; ilhas Cagaçais: islands in the Pongo delta; rio de Capor: Konkoure; Bagas: Baga; rio de Tambaçia: Forecaria; rio de Macamda: Mellacoree; rio de Calenchecafu: Great Scarcies?; rio Sase or Casse: Little Scarcies; rio Mitombo: Port Loko river; rio Tagarim: Rokell; Banguê: Kagboro creek?; rio Butibum: Bompe creek?; rio Tangleçu: ?; rio Alianças: Sherbro river?; ilhas Idolos: îles de Los (near Conakry); ilha Tamara: an island in the Scarcies; ilha de Toto: Turtle islands; Tausente: Sherbro.

14. 'Tiveram os dianteiros com um Rei Boulão, que ainda me parece eram arréqueas de outros que já antigamente vieram ás ditas partes' (*ibid.*: 138).

15. RODNEY 1970: 44-45. HAIR (1968: 49, 61) has shown that the river Castros in Hawkins, which Rodney identified as river Cess, is in fact the river Scarcies in the vicinity of Sierra Leone.

structed between the Mane and the Kquoja invasion (cf. *infra*: 32-34) can therefore not be upheld.

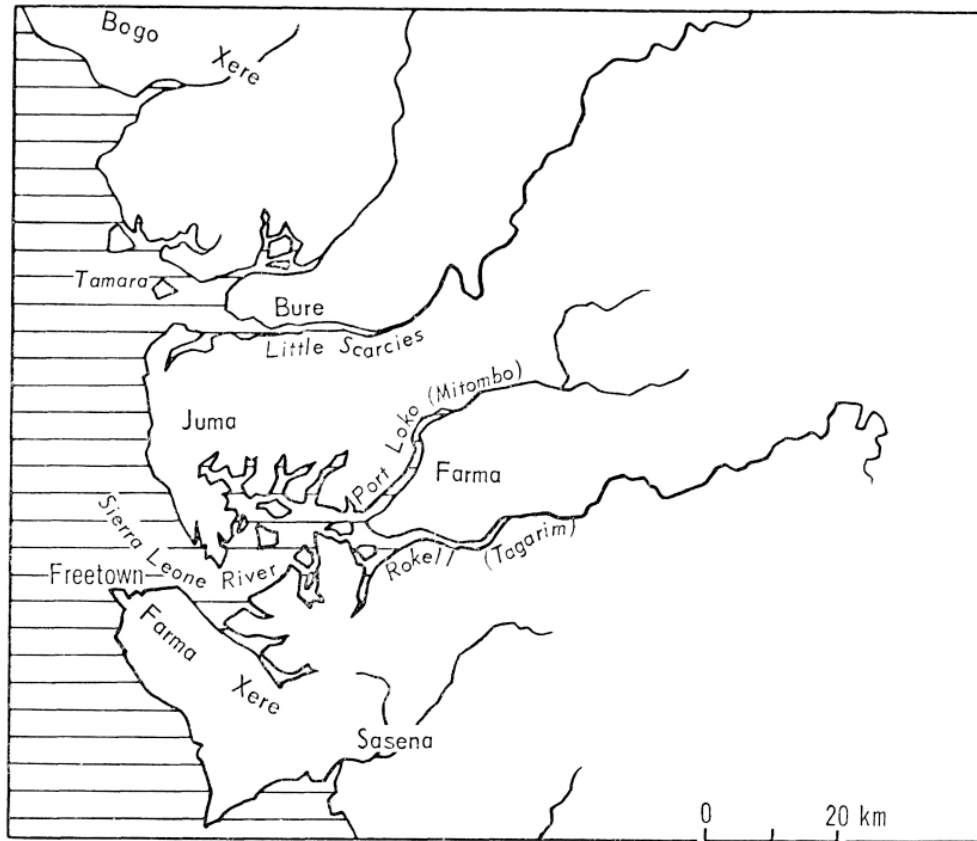
The approximate dating of the Mane invasion, which will now be made, also invalidates the equation Mane = Kquoja. The contemporary accounts, with the exception of Donelha's and Almada's, do not mention absolute dates but refer to the invasion as an event taking place so and so many years back, without the authors precisely stating whether they calculate back from the year they wrote or from that in which they observed events on the coast. In our Table I, absolute and relative dates are given, indicating a fairly narrow range for the beginning and end of the Sierra Leone conquest.

TABLE I. — DATES OF THE MANE INVASION
ACCORDING TO CONTEMPORARY SOURCES*

<i>Author</i>	<i>Date of Writing</i>	<i>Years of Observation</i>	<i>Beginning and End of Conquest</i>		<i>Alleged Departure from Homeland</i>
Donelha	1625	since 1574	1545	1560	1495-1505
Almada	1593	1560s	1550	n.d.	n.d.
Hawkins		1564	n.d.	1561	n.d.
Barreira	1605-1610	1605-1610	1555-1565	n.d.	n.d.
• Tora			ca. 1545		1535
• Pedro			ca. 1515		1505
Coelho	1669	1646-1658	1556-1568	n.d.	n.d.

* *Sources*: DONELHA 1977; ALMADA 1964; Hawkins, in HAKLUYT 1927, VII: 13; Barreira, in GUERREIRO 1930-42; COELHO 1953: 72.

While there is some divergence about the beginning of their invasion, and even more about their departure from their homeland, all sources agree that Mane chiefs were in firm command of the Sierra Leone peninsula by 1560. Fifteen years, which is the minimum of the conquest's duration, seems nevertheless too long a period for a military sweep as suggested by previous authors; it would therefore be much more appropriate to speak of a gradual infiltration and colonization. The sources appear convincing in implying that one generation had elapsed from the Mane departure until their arrival in the Sierra.



MAP 2. The neighborhood of Sierra Leone and its rulers
(according to DONELHA 1977).

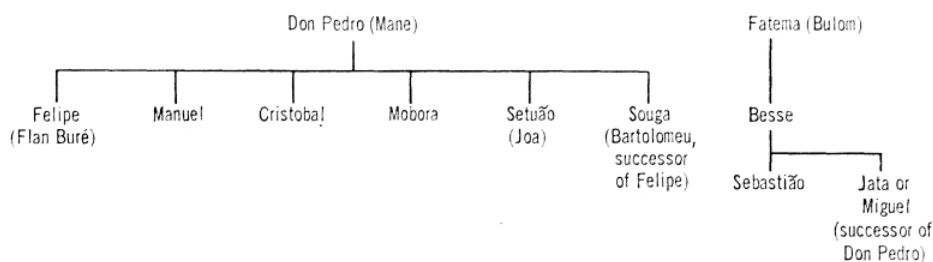
Political Change at Sierra Leone from 1570 to 1610

In comparison with the early Portuguese sources, the account of the Jesuit father Barreira notes some changes in the political geography of Sierra Leone: Farma Shere was no longer king of the peninsula but had been succeeded by Sasena and Faran Bure; two of his descendants, who had been baptized Don Sebastian and Don Felipe by the Jesuits, ruled there by 1607.¹⁶ The Mane Juma had been succeeded between the Rokel (Tagarim) and Port Loko (Mitombo) rivers by Fatema (Donelha 1977: 101) who, as king of the Bulom, also ruled over the Idolos islands, the kingdom of Bogomo and Tamara island on the Scarcies (Casse) river which was the origin of the kingdom of Bure (later Bolm Berre, a variant of Bulom Bure).¹⁷

16. DONELHA 1977: 105; Barreira, in GUERREIRO 1930-42, vol. I. This Felipe may be Farama III, Temne king of the Cape, mentioned by BUTT-THOMPSON (1926: 20) as having been baptized by Barreira and having ruled from 1560 till 1606.

17. DONELHA 1977: 105, 111; Barreira, in GUERREIRO 1930-42, I: 201-202. Bolm Berre is shown on maps by d'Anville of 1729 and Homan of 1743, and mentioned in DAPPER 1668: 380.

The supreme ruler between the Rokell and Port Loko, Farma, first Mane king of the Loko, had just died and had been succeeded by his sons, one of whom, Sangrafaré, came to request assistance against his brother in 1610.¹⁸ Fatema (Farma), who had been king since at least 1582 (Fenton & Ward, in Hakluyt 1927, VIII: 107-132), extended his influence up to the Scarcies, and southwards through an alliance with his 'uncle' Pedro, one of the oldest Mane still alive, who ruled between the Rokell river and the cape of the peninsula together with his oldest son Flan Buré, who had been baptized Felipe in 1607 by the Jesuits.¹⁹ Figure 1 shows the genealogical links of this Mane dynasty in Sierra Leone as it can be reconstructed from Father Barreira's account.²⁰



The Mane-Bulom dynasty at Sierra Leone by 1610.

Another Mane king, Tora, is mentioned repeatedly as a man of considerable age, wisdom and influence by Father Barreira (in Guerreiro 1930-42, II: 205, 206, 207).

Sierra Leone and Liberia according to the 17th-Century Kquoja Account

The Kquoja account, so called following a suggestion of Hair's, appears in Dapper under the title 'Het Koninkrijk of Lant van Kquoja' and reports another series of invasions of Sierra Leone and Liberia from the east. Hair has shown that it was most likely written by a Dutchman

18. Barreira, in GUERREIRO 1930-42, III: 249, 270. The name could refer to Sangaréfarin, Sangaré being a Mandinka *dyamu*, and *farin* (or alternately *favan*, *faven*, *farim*, *feren* or *flan*, *fran*) being the designation of Mandinka military chiefs (SURET-CANALE 1971: 414-416).
19. DAPPER (1668: 379-380) states that the Felipe baptized in 1607 was previously called Flambure. Therefore, he may be identical with the Faran Bure mentioned as Shere's successor in DONELHA 1977: 105.
20. As Barreira gives only the post-baptism names and not the native names of the members of the dynasty, it is difficult to link them to any particular ethnic group; however, Fatema and Jata are Mandinka personal names, Jata being a surname of Mandinka kings (e.g. Sun-Jata, Mari-Jata), and Fatema frequently appearing in the form of Fatoma or Fatogoma.

between 1626 and 1638, and that the English and French translations by Ogilby and du Jarric used by most previous students are incomplete and faulty in comparison with the Dutch original and the German translation.²¹ Therefore, Rodney (1970: 52-58) was led to believe the Mane invasion identical with the conquest of Cape Mount and Sierra Leone, and was therein followed by Hair (1968: 50) and Person (1971: 675). A careful interpretation of the evidence, however, particularly of the temporal sequences and clues for dating contained in the accounts, does not, in our opinion, warrant such a conclusion but suggests consecutive waves of Mandinka invaders. Map 3 shows the location of the ethnic groups mentioned in the Kquoja account, and Map 4 shows present tribal and clan names in Liberia, in order to demonstrate the occurrence of some of them in the 17th-century document (see Appendix, pp. 46-50). The account of the conquest itself may be divided into five episodes whose sequence is briefly outlined below.

Absorption of the Karou by the Folgia Kingdom

Two tribes, the Karou and the Folgia, which originally lived on the upper Junk river, were continuously engaged in warfare. The Folgia resorted to the aid of a sorcerer who, in order to weaken the Karou, threw boiled fish into one of their sacred ponds, thus violating their main taboo which was the consumption of fish with scales. The Karou were defeated in battle, their chief Sokwalla was killed, and his son Flonikerry fled with the survivors to the Folgia. There, he married Mawalla, sister of the king Flangire, and later obtained the military command over the Folgia warriors who were assisted by the Quaabe.

Flonikerry's Assistance to Manimassah among the Gola

Manimassah, brother of the king of Manou, overlord of the Folgia, came under suspicion of having caused his brother's death and left his country to find refuge with the Gola. Here, however, he was treated with disrespect and asked his father-in-law, Flangire, to punish the Gola. Flangire sent Flonikerry with the Folgia army and subdued the Gola.

21. HAIR 1974: 33, 34. Dating is based on an event still mentioned in the Kquoja account, namely the presence of the Dutch fleet under Admiral de Lam at Sierra Leone in 1626; on the other hand, the toponymy used in the Kquoja account first appears on a published map in 1638; here both Dutch editions of 1668 and 1676, as well as the 1670 German translation, have been used, with the 1668 edition being given priority (my own translations from the Dutch, A. W. M.).

Conquest of Cape Mount by the Karou

Flonikerry had asked Flangire for some land to settle for him and his people and had been offered the Mesurado area; informed by his nephew Feysiach about the riches of Cape Mount, he had requested permission, however, to conquer that area for himself. He and Feysiach invaded the Cape Mount area and defeated the Vey (Vai) who for some time offered heroic resistance. Simultaneously, the Gola under the leadership of Mimynique, the son of Manimassah, invaded Tomvey and would have prevented its occupation by Flonikerry had it not been for the latter's personal sacrifice which made the Karou gather their forces and repulse the Gola. Flonikerry's brother Zyllymangue, the new leader of the Karou, continued the conquest of the Cape Mount area, defeating the Puy on the Mafah river and the Kquoja on the Magwibba (Mano) river. He went as far as the Maqualbary (Gallinas) where he conquered the Kquilliga people before returning to Tomvey, where he fell victim to poisoning a few years after.

Conquest of Sierra Leone by Flansire

Flansire, his oldest son, took over the reign after a brief interlude by Jemmah, his father's sister's son. Flansire led a military incursion across the Gallinas river, and along the coast as far as Sierra Leone. As governors he installed Sijtre—formerly at Mesurado—in the Gallinas area, Selboele on the Palm river (later called Sherbro), and Kandaqualle in the Sierra Leone peninsula.

Revolt of Sierra Leone and its Reconquest by Flamboere

Some years later, Flansire received the news that Kandaqualle had been chased away from Sierra Leone by a certain Dogo Falma coming from the Dogo area in Hondo. Flansire and his son Flamboere first went to the Gallinas to assure themselves of the loyalty of the Bulom chiefs before embarking by sea to Sierra Leone. In Flansire's absence, his brother Gammina, whom he had left in charge of affairs at Cape Mount, conspired with the Bulom chiefs and usurped the kingdom, killing most of Flansire's sons and taking his wives. Flansire managed to defeat Dogo Falma, who was killed by Flamboere himself, returned to the Gallinas and routed the Bulom chiefs and Gammina. Back at Cape Mount, he made a raid into the Mesurado area and punished the Gebbe who had invaded the Dauwala (Gawula) district. A few years later, however, the Dogo invaded again the Cape Mount area, forcing Flansire to retire to an island of lake Piso. At the time the Kquoja account was written, Flamboere ruled the king-

dom of Kquoja under the title *dondagh*, more by 'wisdom than by power' and received yearly embassies with presents from Sierra Leone, Sherbro, the Cilm (Krim) and the Bolm (Bulom); with the interior, Kquoja likewise exchanged gifts, mainly with the Folgia and the Manou.

Some similarities of this account with those of the Mane led Rodney (1970: 54) to assume that the Mane and the Karou invasions were one and the same: 'there is an exact correspondence between the Hawkins episode and the tradition. Shere was helped to re-establish his authority in Sierra Leone in precisely the same manner as Kandaqualle had been: namely by troops moved up from the Malaguetta Coast'. Rodney could only establish this correspondence, however, because of his mistaking of the river Castros, cited in the Hawkins account, for the river Cestos (Cess) in Liberia. But, as established by Hair (1968: 49, 61), the events mentioned by Hawkins occurred near the Scarcies and thus near Sierra Leone.

Further, Rodney mistakenly believed that the Flamboere mentioned in the Kquoja account as Flansire's son and later king of Kquoja at Cape Mount was identical with the Faran Buré in Sierra Leone, who had been baptized and christened Felipe in 1607. A careful reading of the Dutch original, however, would not have led Rodney to the conclusion that the two were the same person. In Dapper's section (1668: 379-380) on Sierra Leone, a lapse of at least one generation after the baptism is implied: 'this region was full of idolatry before the arrival of the Jesuit Barreira; but he taught many and even baptized the king in 1607 with his children and others. The king received the name Filip whom the Portuguese later called Don Felipe de Lion because he was king of Serre Lions. *Also the present king* and his brothers are baptized as their names indicate. But they thought lightly of this grace and practise their former idolatry like the common man' (underlining mine, A. W. M.). Further below, the following version of the Sierra Leone - Cape Mount relationship is given: 'But after Bolmberre, or Serra Lions, had been subjected by Flansire, the grandfather of the present king of Kquoja,²² it was ruled by a sub-king; the latter receives his land from the Kquoja king, under the honorific name of Dondagh, which means "king", like the latter receives his from the Folgia king. Thus, the king of Kquoja has given the present king or sub-king of Bolmberre the title Dondach [*sic*] and the name Flambure, as the Portuguese have later named him Don Filip'.²³ In the Kquoja account itself, Dapper's source (1668: 407) tells us that 'the

22. In the Kquoja account, Flansire is the father of Flamboere, not the grandfather as here in the Sierra Leone section. Had there been a change in rule, or did Dapper's source confuse Flansire with Zyllymangue?

23. DAPPER 1668: 379-380. *Flan-bure*, a title, later became Fahnbulleh.

kingdom of Kquoja-Berkoma, or Kquoja country, is ruled nowadays by a king with the title Dondagh called Flamboere'.

Following Hair and accepting that the Kquoja account was written down some time between 1626 and 1638, this, and not 1607 as Rodney believed, is the period to be considered for dating back the Karou conquest of Sierra Leone. Moreover if, according to Rodney, the reinstating of Kandaqualle occurred in 1567, it was the same event as that told by Hawkins; Flamboere himself would have fought in Sierra Leone more than sixty years before. While still possible, this seems rather unlikely, and the Karou conquest of Sierra Leone must have taken place somewhat later.

There is further evidence to corroborate this. The Kquoja account informs us that a Selboele was appointed at the Palm river (Sherbro) during the first Karou campaign into Sierra Leone. Now, Lemos Coelho (1953: 72, 230) knew a Mane king at Sherbro, called Sherabola, who was about 100 years of age. This would put Selboele's birth around 1550, assuming he was the king mentioned by Coelho; if the Karou conquest had taken place around 1567—as Rodney and others have assumed—he would still have been a child, thus not able to be appointed as governor. Therefore, the first and second Karou incursions into what is now Sierra Leone must have happened after 1567. Also the circumstances of the conquests by the Mane (in the Portuguese sources) and the Karou (in the Kquoja account) differ: in the former, a Bulom king resisted heroically and killed one of the main Mane leaders, while Flansire conquered all the lands between the Gallinas and Sierra Leone without reported difficulties and then withdrew to Cape Mount.

It is suggested, then, on the basis of the evidence, that the first Karou invasion of Sierra Leone took place *after* Donelha and Almada had gathered their information, but at a time when Selboele was old enough to hold a position of responsibility in an African society, i.e. forty or fifty. Thus, Flansire's conquest of Sherbro and Sierra Leone and Selboele's appointment may have occurred around 1590, and the reinstatement of Kandaqualle around 1600. Flonikerry's advance on Cape Mount may have taken place at a time when the Mane conquered Sierra Leone, namely one generation before.

Interesting circumstantial evidence seems to establish that by 1612 the Karou were definitely established in Sierra Leone. The Dutch admiral Ruyters (in L'Honoré Naber 1913: 60), who visited Sierra Leone during that year, reports: 'This king of Sierra Leone is of a strong dynasty, and there is a rule that all those of royal descent are not allowed to eat fish with shells or scales'; and, somewhat later, that the king is addressed as Donda²⁴ by all petitioners. Dapper (1668: 420) refers to this title in

24. Dondagh, perhaps from *dondo*, 'one', i.e., 'The One'.

the Kquoja account, as well as to the curious food taboo, which he mentions as characteristic of the Karou: 'finally it was the advice of the diviner to throw boiled fish with scales into their sacred lake; this desecration should create disunity among the Karous (as the Karous must not eat fish with scales)'. This may be a coincidence, but it could well mean that a small group which still lived somewhere in the interior of Liberia by 1550 had become the ruling lineage of the Cape Mount area by 1580, and even of Sierra Leone by 1612.

Rodney attempted to identify the Karou-Folgia invaders of Cape Mount as that part of a Kru-Kquoja-Quea contingent of the Mane army which the Portuguese authors and their sources had called Sumba. His identification of Karou as Kru, however, remains unconvincing, and such names as Sokwalla, Flonikerry, Kwolou, etc., rather suggest a Kpelle-Mano origin, as the endings *-kwele* and *-koli* are frequent suffixes for toponyms and personal names in present Liberian Kpelle and Mano districts.²⁵

However, the Kquoja account contains numerous passages pointing to a possible Mandinka influence at Cape Mount which have not been evaluated by previous authors:

- there is reference to the fact that the emperor of Manou was overlord of the Folgia and Kquoja and received annual tribute from them (Dapper 1668: 386, 411-412);
- the episode of Manimassah, brother of the deceased Mendymo²⁶ of Manou, suggests the reign of a Mandinka prince over the Gola, perhaps in Azevedo's ancient Mana;²⁷
- the Gola incursion into the Cape Mount area under the leadership of Mimynique, son of the previously mentioned Manimassah, also suggests Mandinka influence;
- even at the time the Kquoja account was recorded, Cape Mount was not safe, and king Flamboere had taken residence on an island in lake Piso out of fear of repeated attacks from the Dogo of Hondo.

25. RODNEY 1970: 48-51. The Kquoja-Karou, Folgia, Manou, Hondo, Gola, and Gebbe were, according to the Kquoja account (DAPPER 1668: 412, 416), all members of the Poro cultural complex and practise circumcision, and the same cultural border as presently existed in the 17th century with the Kru who do not have Poro and are not circumcised. For the identification of Folgia and Karou as of Kpelle origin, see *infra*: Appendix. According to WESTERMANN (1924: 222, 228), *-kole*, or *-kwele*, means 'place', and *-koli* means 'leopard' in names of persons of chiefly origin. The Kquoja language at Cape Mount, which was also used after the Karou conquest, was apparently Vai, if not Mandinka.

26. DAPPER 1668: 421. Mendymo may simply have been a title or honorific name (*mendi mogo*, 'lordly person').

27. AZEVEDO (1962, map) speaks of an ancient Gola heartland in the forest of north-western Liberia.

At this point, it is important to identify the ethnonyms of the Kquoja account in order to establish which peoples mentioned there are of Mandinka stock. This is done in Appendix (p. 46 *sq.*). In order to avoid too much digression here, we shall now attempt to relate the coastal accounts to traditions of migration of the interior Mandinka themselves.

The Kamara as a Factor of Mandinka Expansion to the South

Person (1971: 675) has pointed out that the Kamara clan in present French Guinea 'retain memories of military movements to the sea in connection with the migrations toward their present dominions. These movements probably took place in two distinct phases. During the first, the Kamara, leaving the Mande (Kangaba, Mali), went up the Niger until they reached its springs and then broke through toward the sea. Back on the Niger, they took possession of Konyan before moving south as far as the ocean'. In an earlier paper (1961), Person dated the first Kamara movement to the middle of the 16th century and the second to the first half of the 17th century, some three generations later than the one which he claimed to be the Vai-Kono arrival at the coast. Person then (1971: 579) proposed the Mahana in the Konyan as the origin of the Mane, as it is a Mandinka region with a dominant Kamara element having traditions relating to the sea. Unfortunately, he followed Rodney in assuming the two migrations to be one, and thereby mistrusting the oral traditions he had himself collected.²⁸

There is an unhappy tendency among the historians of Africa to dismiss the oral traditions too lightly in the wake of Vansina's remarks on interpreting oral history in Africa, which only cautions the historian against taking the traditions at face value and attempting to establish absolute chronologies on their basis. Thus, an oral account of Vai history, which implicates the Kamara and has been available in published form since 1926, has been all but ignored by students of the Mane and Kquoja versions. One of the early scholars in Vai language and history, A. Klingenheben (1926), has collected and published a Vai tradition which records their arrival from the interior at the sea coast. According to it, a Mandinka king, Kamala Ba Jomani,²⁹ learnt from his hunters, when they returned with salt given to them by the Gola, that they had

28. PERSON 1971: 676. Unfortunately, Person also used the French translations of Dapper by Davity and Barbot. While I agree with Rodney and Person that probably no invasion took place in the 17th century *at any major scale*, this still does not mean that the Mane and Karou invasions happened in one wave between 1545 and 1560. The errors and omissions in Rodney's interpretations should now be evident enough to reject his 'single invasion hypothesis'.

29. Refers in our interpretation to Kamara Ba Diomande.

discovered the sea. Thereupon, the king called on warriors and horsemen from each of the twelve provinces of Mali and told his son, Kamala Junior, and his brother Ngolo to go out and find the sea. The troops set out at intervals of fourteen days, each group consisting of a hundred footmen and ten horsemen, travelled for many weeks and finally settled down in the forests. Several years later they were found near the Kambo mountains by messengers from king Kamala who told them to continue their search. But only Kamala Junior, Ngolo and their cousin Kia Tamba left with their troops while the others remained behind. The folk etymology attempts to present this split of the Mandinka forces as the initial division between Vai and Kono, both members of the Northern Mande language group, like the Mandinka.³⁰ Kamala is said to have reached the sea in Krim country near Kasse, some hundred miles north of Koi-Je, the place where the earlier Mandinka hunters had arrived. On this occasion, Kamala's herald is said to have exclaimed '*mansa goi*' ('you are indeed a king'), after which the ruling clan of the Vai was called Massaquoi.³¹ Klinghenben's informant (1926: 131), a Massaquoi himself, even attempted to date the arrival: 'The time since the coming of the Mande to this country until the present year is 600 years. We compute the number of years from the redwood and Kpato trees, specially planted for this purpose'.

Several variants of this account exist, but all appear to go back to this same source, Momolu Massaquoi, former Liberian consul in Hamburg, and it seems to be the tradition relating to the first Vai migration (Holsoe 1974). It asserts that the links with Mandinka country were maintained since then: 'From the time of Kamala's exodus until our time the connection with Mande country has never been interrupted. The new route which later led to Mande country passed from Gowolonamalo to Gowolo, from Gowolo to Jondu, from Djondu [*sic*] to Bopolu, and from Bopolu up to Musadugu. Once one has reached Musadugu, one has arrived in Mande country' (*ibid.*: 129-130). This is exactly the route which Anderson (1971) took to Musadugu in 1868. The account even answers the question 'Who were the Vai?', but seems to have been ignored in Jones's article (1981) of the same title. It says that 'the Mande who had travelled down to the coast intermarried with the inhabitants of the area and thus became the present Vai. Therefore, the Vai are not strangers in Vai country. Also, the people who inhabited the area before the Mande

30. *N kono, m be taa vai*, 'you remain behind, I am going on' (KLINGENHEBEN 1926: 129).

31. *Ibid.* A more plausible etymology would be *mansa-Kquoja*, 'chief of the Kquoja'. In DAPPER (1668: 13), the name appears first in relation to Sherbro island: '. . . but is called by our people Massakoye, after the name of a certain chief Massakoye, whom the king of Cape Mount or of the Kquoja country has appointed here'.

came down were a mixture, namely of Gola and De. These people are the ancestors of the Vai from the mother's side'.³²

In our view, it is one thing not to take too seriously folk etymologies but another to be overcritical and discard facts contained in oral traditions such as those above. Jones dismisses the above account with the argument that it contains too many elements of fiction and that the motive, the search for salt, is too common a theme to be taken literally. He also fails to discuss the date and conditions of the Kamara migration, nor considers the implication of there being two roads from Mande country to the sea: one west, leading possibly through the Makona (Moa) valley to the Gallinas area, the other east, via Musadugu and Bopolu to Cape Mount. We maintain that it is along those routes, which were the main trade channels until the 20th century, that the Mandinka have been coming 'for hundreds and hundreds of years' as was stated in Almada's account.

Other authors also maintain the link between the Mandinka and the Gallinas and Vai on the coast. Harris (1865-66, II: 25) said about the Gallinas that it 'appears to be an offshoot of the great Mandingo nation; and [. . .] I should imagine that they migrated from the interior beyond the Koronkho country to the seaboard, about two hundred years ago'.

Despicht (1939: 5) said about the origin of the main Gallinas clans: 'The earliest authentic history we have of the Gallinas or Vai people dates from the time of Fandole who flourished about the year 1700. The Gallinas or Vais [*sic*] are not indigenous but are of Mandingo stock and migrated southwards towards the Pujehun district during the occupation of that part of the country by Portuguese slave raiders. The Konos are of the same stock and the same migration. [. . .] The elders of the tribe were known as Massaquoi. The name Massaquoi has the same meaning in Vai as the Arabic-tinted word Karamokho has in Mandingo and other languages of Islamized West Africa, i.e. the "learned man" of the tribe'.

Jones (1979: 235), who has permitted us the inspection of the oral traditions he collected at the Gallinas, found that the ancestors of the famous king Siaka (*ca.* 1780-1843) were not descendants of the traditional rulers of the Massaquoi but came from the interior, going back to a certain Fandole (Vandole), a certain Fan Tawe and a certain Fanggama (Vangama).

Another Vai tradition, reported by a man of Massaquoi and Kuruma (Kromah) descent, was recorded by Jones and also points towards ancestors of similar names and in direction of the Mandinka-Kamara town of Musadugu:

'The Mandingo tribe came from Sudan and settled on the flat land of river Jaliba [Djoliba, i.e. Niger] on both sides between Kanka [Kankan] and Bamako. There

32. KLINGENHEBEN 1926: 130-131. This means that the Mande took women from the De and Gola.

were four chiefdoms with four houses: Massala, Kromah, Kamara and Koneh (i.e. Keita, Kuruma, Kamara, Kone). Arabs converted these people of Mandy to Islam. There was a quarrel between Manisonjala (Massala house) and Sumawulo (area of Kannehs in Kromah house). Sumawulo loved Manisonjala's sister but Manisonjala thought that this union would disgrace him and fought Sumawulo. He was defeated and fled to Kankan where he engaged more warriors to continue the war. Three years later, he returned, defeated Sumawulo and captured him and his bride. The remaining tribes evacuated the region.

Among the refugees were Fakoli Kromah, his nephew Feni Kamara and their friend Filimo Totte [Filimo Dollè?]. They reached Musadu, town of Zomusa—Musa the herbalist—, where they were welcomed and encouraged to send for their friends. Feni Kamara became the outstanding landlord of those who later followed from Many. He gave the Dukules (section of the family) a site to erect Dukulela; the Nyeis built Nyeila; the Beles built Belela; and Fakoli Kromah's son Jala Kromah built Jakorodu (where the French barracks were). These five towns were in chiefdom Koninya under Feni Kamara'.³³

Ellis (1914: 27-28) also informs us that the Vai came from Mandinka country and that one of the sons of a Mandinka king from Musardu was banned from there and proceeded to Cape Mount.

With the above tradition we are at the center of Mandinka history: the war between Manisonjala and Sumawulo undoubtedly refers to Sundiata (Sonjala) and Sumanguru (Sumawulo) Kante in the 13th century, and the following centuries until Feni (Feren) Kamara established himself in the Konyan have been telescoped considerably. Therefore it is necessary here to consider first the historical traditions of the Mandinka themselves relating to the Kamara, before having a final look at 19th-century Mandinka chiefdoms in the interior of Liberia, which also document Kamara influence.

In Mali, the Kamara appear during the 11th century, originating from Sebi at lake Debo, and settle in the Manding heartland, the Do-Kri, founding among others such towns as Sibi, Tabou, and Kangaba (Leynaud & Cissé 1978: 28).

Faran Kamara, son of the king of Tabou, was one of Sundiata's closest allies, sending him the Kamara warriors for assistance against Sumanguru (Niane 1975: 95). Following his victory, Sundiata divided the country with his brothers in arms, Faran Kamara, Tiramaghan Traoré and Fakoli Kourouma (Leynaud & Cissé 1978: 31). At Kangaba the twelve Mandinka chiefs elected Sundiata *mansa* of the land. In recognition of the Kamara's assistance, Sundiata declared an eternal alliance between Keita and Kamara, and reinstated the heads of the older and younger branches, Faran Kamara and Kamadjan, in their kingdoms.³⁴

33. KROMAH 1961. Use of this manuscript has been kindly permitted by Jones who collected it during his field-work; it claims, in fact, Gallinas origins for Sundiata's war companions.

34. The older branch, the Sinikimbon, ruled in the Futa Jalon foothills, and the younger one, the Delikimbon, at the Niger (NIANE 1975: 101; CONDÉ 1974: 99-100).

While the older branch colonized the Selefougou, the younger branch emigrated toward the Manding mountains and expelled the Fulani from around Niani (Niane 1975: 98; Leynaud & Cissé 1978: 151-152). This province was later called Dioman Wagnan; the area to the west was occupied by the Keita, Kamara, Konde, Konaté and Kuruma around the early 15th century and called Dioman Noukou (Niane 1975: 95-98). Some eight generations after Sundiata, a new province called the Hama was founded and settled in the south (*ibid.*). While settlement may have been gradual, some military forces could have been sent towards the upper Niger, and an early column paralleling that of Tiramaghan Traoré to the west cannot be excluded. The settlement and conquest of the southern region in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries must be seen in the context of the pressures on the northern provinces of Mali: by 1464, Tombouctou, the terminus of the salt caravans from the north, was lost to the Songhay under Sunni Ali; by 1474, the mercantile town of Djenné in the Niger plains fell to the Songhay, and under Askia Mohammed (1493-1528), Mali lost its entire Sahelian region and retreated to the upper Niger valley (Levtzion 1971: 140-145; Cissoko 1975: 53). By this time, the Hama and Gberedugu in the south were settled.

Around 1530, Fulani and Songhay raids into the southern provinces were so frequent that the king of Mali sent an embassy in request for help to king João III of Portugal, who responded by sending Pedro Fernandes in 1534 (Monteil 1968: 147). By the time of the Mane invasion of Sierra Leone, in 1546-47, the capital of Mali was raided and pillaged by Askia Daouda (*ibid.*).

The existence of trade routes toward the west with friendly States under Mandinka influence along them did allow the empire to survive with its center shifted somewhat to the south. Sometimes, these States were created by the Mandinka themselves, as occurred in the Futa Toro, which was conquered in 1559 by Fulani-Mandinka warriors under Koli Tengella (Davidson, Buah & Ajayi 1966: 61). Similar interests may have been involved in the south in order to maintain or even broaden the economic base of the heartland.

Interior-Coast Relations

With the upheaval in the northern Sahel and the appearance of the Europeans on the coast during the 15th century, two factors may have been responsible for the pull of the Mandinka to the west and south: the need to procure supplies, like salt, which were no longer available—or not available in sufficient quantity—from the north; and the need to create new commercial outlets for Mali's commodities now that the Sahara routes were controlled by others who also reaped the benefits. Salt and kola nuts had been shipped along ancient trade routes since the 15th cen-

ture (Peres 1952: 110). Other commodities like Malaguetta pepper, camwood, ivory and wax, products of the forest belt, were mostly intended for Europeans and appeared later. On the other hand, gold, cattle, hides, slaves and cotton were produced in the interior and brought to the coast by annual caravans, where they were exchanged for European goods, such as textiles and manufactured metal wares, but also for African products such as salt and kola. The Portuguese, for example, entered the kola trade as middlemen and annually sent a fleet from the Cape Verde to the rivers of Guinea to purchase kola and sell it again to the Mandinka in the Gambia and at Gorée.

Salt was a special commodity, being divisible and easily transportable, and was used as a currency. Its scarcity in the interior was such that, according to Almada (1964: 125, 128), certain tribes like the Limba neither knew nor consumed it, and on the Sierra Leone coast it was exchanged at par with gold (Pereira 1956: 103, 110). Salt was traded in two forms: from the salt mines in the Sahara—at Taghaza, Awlil or Taoudenni (Levtzion 1971: 150; 1973: 171-173)—came rock salt which appears to have been distributed as far as the southern Sahel; there it encountered sea salt obtained through evaporation or through boiling between Cape Verde and Cape Mount.³⁵ Three annual Jalonke caravans were sent for sea salt: one to Senegal, one to the Gambia and the third to the Pongo river (Coelho 1953: 23, 61). Before the Mane invasion, the Pongo (Nunez) caravans consisted of Susu and Jalonke—the Putazes or Futas in Almada—and traded at the Cagaçais islands, but later shifted to the north of cape Verga. Cotton cloth, dyes and gold were exchanged for salt with the coastal peoples (Almada 1964: 119).

By the 17th century, the Portuguese and Dutch obtained salt at Cape Verde and shipped it to Sierra Leone and Cape Mount. The salt trade at Sierra Leone was the monopoly of a Eurafrican, Matheus Fernandes, who bought it from the Dutch and assured its distribution further up rivers such as the Gallinas by means of shallow vessels of seven feet draft, all this in collaboration with Portuguese and African partners (Ruyters in L'Honoré Naber 1913: 57, 64-66; Brun in *ibid.* : 38). But, judging from the quantity of 'neptune' caldrons imported for boiling sea water, local salt was still competitive.³⁶ Salt formed part of the annual 'tributes' sent by the king of Kquoja to Manou and Hondo via the trade caravans in exchange for ivory and slaves from the interior. Red cloth, copper kettles, basins and salt went the opposite way (Dapper 1668: 407, 411-412). Büttikofer (1890, I: 275) still saw the salt, packaged

35. South of Guinea-Bissau, cloud cover is so frequent and intense that evaporation by sunlight was no longer possible, and people heated the sea water in large pans; cf. DAPPER (1668: 385) who mentions coastal villages especially established for the purpose of salt-making; see also ALMADA 1964: 125.

36. DAPPER 1668: 385. 'Neptunes' and basins appear in the standard assortment of every European commercial vessel at the coast.

into tubular leaf containers one meter long and four centimeters in diameter, and carried in headloads to the interior, where one bundle of ten such 'salt sticks', or *koh dondo* in Vai, was exchanged for one slave.

It is argued here that the southern provinces of Mali, whose capital was at Niani (cf. Map 1), increasingly obtained their salt supplies from the south since the 16th century. Sea salt was probably cheaper, as the Konyan and the upper Niger were closer to the sea than Taoudenni or Taghaza, and its supplies were more reliable than those from the north where Songhay and Twareg raids interfered with the caravans.

The kola trade, largely unrecorded because kept secret by Africans and Portuguese alike, has recently received the attention of Brooks (1980). Kola was traded along the same routes as salt and slaves, the 'traditional route for kola nuts from the Kisi, the Toma and the Guerze came along the Milo, the Nyandan and the Niger towards Bamako' (Person 1974: 266). From the headwaters of these rivers, the routes led from Musadugu and the Konyan to Cape Mount, from Kankan up the Milo and towards the coast along the Makona, and from the Niger through the Futa Jalon to the Sierra Leone peninsula. 'Kankan was the principal staging post between the trading centres on the coast and the kola-producing regions of the forest on one hand, and the Buré gold-washing areas and the middle Niger markets on the other' (*ibid.*: 268).

Kankan, founded in the mid-17th century by *dyula* ('traders') of the Sherif (Salif) and Sanyo families, grew into a merchant town and religious center under the great *marabout* and Islamic scholar Alfa Kaabinè Kaba in the 18th century (*ibid.*). Further to the south-east, Musadugu had grown in a similar way: the Kamara had established it as a religious center for their twelve lineages—an ideal number reflecting the structure of the old Manding heartland—issuing from their ancestor Feren (Faran) Kamara, who had presumably arrived by the 16th century. While the twelve Kamara lineages settled in the countryside remained animists, the town—according to some traditions founded by a local Kpelle magician and diviner—was left to the Muslim traders of the Dolè (Dorè), Bèrètè and Kuruma clans who organized the trade at the northern fringe of the great forest (*ibid.*: 270-272). The Kamara and Dyula clans and lineages were at the origin of the trade caravans to the coast, which were probably accompanied by protective military escorts. On their way and on the coast, the traders assimilated with their hosts, sometimes by marriage, sometimes by assuming the roles of chiefs, teachers, or *marabouts*, but preserved nonetheless their trade interests.

This must have been the socio-economic background to the military picture of the Mane and Manou invasions. Under Kamara leadership, the Mandinka repeatedly radiated southward, yielding to the pressures from the north. Even after the 17th century, Mandinka caravans under Kamara leadership were instrumental in shaping the political and social

situation in the forests of Liberia and Sierra Leone, as the traditions of the local people attest to many of their own elements originating from the Kamara and Musadugu. The Fanggama or Feni Kamara mentioned earlier is none other but the 16th-century ancestor Feren Kamara who came to Musadugu, bearing the name of his great ancestor from Sundiata's time. The 19th-century political situation in central Liberia presents a picture of almost unbroken continuity with the 17th century as depicted in the Kquoja account. Further evidence from this period of the Kamara-Mandinka influence will conclude this article.

The 19th-Century Condo Confederacy and Mandinka Colonization of the Forest

In addition to the references by Harris, Ellis, Despicht and S. Kromah to the Musadugu Mandinka origin of the Gallinas Vai, other evidence comes from Liberian sources. During the early 19th century, a loose federation of tribes, the so-called Condo Confederacy, controlled the trade route from Musadugu to Cape Mount and the center of western Liberia. This Condo Confederacy seems to have been the successor of the Hondo mentioned in the Kquoja account. The location given, being to the north-east of the Gala-Vey and east of the Gola, corresponds closely to that of the Condo Confederacy; Dapper (1668: 412) attests to the wide distribution and diversity of the Hondo people, extending apparently between the Moa river in the west and the kingdom of Manou in the east: 'The region of Hondo is ruled by many and very different chiefs; the most important, who are most often mentioned by the Kquojas, are Mosillagh, Dedowach, Dangoerro and Dandi, all situated far from each other with their residencies'.

The frequent wars of the Hondo against the Gola may have had to do with the trade caravans to Cape Mount which led the Hondo through Gola country, and with the fact that it was not tolerated that traders from one country crossed another one with their goods (*ibid.*: 407). While the Hondo are not mentioned as part of the chain of authority linking the Kquoja with Folgia and Manou, they nevertheless sent annual gifts to the king of Cape Mount and received some in return (*ibid.*: 411-412).

By the early 19th century (1808), Sao Boso, reputedly a Sherbro-born Kamara and a foster son of Fili Mamu Dolè, chief of Musadugu, was called in by Momolu Dolè, his friend and son of Fili Mamu, to eliminate a Gola chief on the trade route to Musadugu. Sao Boso defeated the Gola chief at Bama and enlarged Bopolu, an original De village established for the exchange of sea salt against ivory, slaves, iron, cotton and pottery from the interior.³⁷ From there he controlled the trade between the

37. FISHER 1971: v-xxiii; *The African Repository* 1825-92, XLVII: 199; LIBERIA

Dolè at Musadugu and Zolu Duma, the Cape Mount chief (Holsoe 1967: 127). Oral traditions from Bopolu and Vonjama credit a Fanggama (Feren, or Feni, Kamara) with the foundation of Musadugu and claim that one of his original companions, Filimamudolay (Fili Mamu Dolè) became his successor (Fisher 1971: VIII). Some of the Toma in the neighborhood of Bopolu claim that they are 'descendants of Nyakwe, a Loma [Toma] chief, and his followers who entered the service of Mandingo raiders under Foli or Filibinya. These raiders are said to have been sent from Missadu in Mandingoland by one Semolotu or Semoru. They went down into Kpelle country stopping at Boporo and asking the chief Sowgbwoso to give them a place to use as a base for their raids' (Schwab 1947: 21).

In the 1860s, Momolu Son, Sao Boso's son by a Gola wife, made Bopolu the center of a confederacy of war chiefs recruiting warriors on a mercenary basis from many tribal elements including Mandinka, Toma, Fulani, Vai, Gola, Kpelle, Bandi, and others.³⁸ Bopolu had about four hundred houses and two thousand permanent inhabitants, supplemented by about a thousand more during the trading period which lasted throughout the dry season. In the center of the town by the market, a mosque had been established near which the imam lived.³⁹ Momolu Son died in 1872 and it seems that in the following years the trade route was closed for the Mandinka until Samori, himself of Kamara origin, opened it briefly for his arms convoys from the coast.⁴⁰ The Dolè still held the chieftainship of Musadugu until the 1880s and were also still represented in Bopolu by 1900, together with the Kamara, Sherif, Kane and Sanyo (Fahnbulleh-Massaquoi 1960). The Toma also claim their origin from Feren Kamara, thereby establishing a sacred mythical link between themselves and the Mandinka immigrants: 'Fula Wubo, the conqueror and founder of Wubomai, was one of the seven sons of Fali Kama of Musadu. [. . .] The point of origin of the Loma and [. . .] other groups is always the town of Musadu'.⁴¹ Apparently, at one time a peace pact was established between the two groups following the Mandinka intrusion:

1955: 41; HOLSOE (1976-77: 2): 'he was supposed to be a member of the Manding clan called Kamara, his father's name being Koilifi Kamara'.

38. *The African Repository* (1825-92, XVI: 334) mentions Mandingoes, Boozies, Foulahs, Brondahs, Mamboos, Quadroons, Bandas, Pessahs, Gorahs, Veys, Araws and Barlines. Of these we could not identify the Brondahs and Mamboos. We assumed that Quadroons were mulattoes of Eurafrican origin, and the Araws (Arabs?) light-skinned Moors or Twareg; Barlines were Kpelle from the Gbaalein section, and Boozies are the Toma or Mandinka from the Konyan.
39. 'Diary of E. W. Blyden on a Journey to Boporo', in *The African Repository* 1825-92, XLVII: 236.
40. This lasted from 1887 until 1892 (PERSON 1968: 562, 565, 581 fn. 33, 584 fn. 52).
41. CURRENS 1974: 12, 15; see also GERMANN (1933: 17) who informs us that the Komendi (Mandinka) of north-western Liberia are but Guio-Mande (Diomande) from Dioma and Konianka (the Konyan).

'Originator of this pact was, according to common testimony, Fonigama or Foligama. It is said that he made the *kokolo* and gave it to another man' (Weisswange 1969: 75 sq.).

In each of the traditions on the *kokolo*, there usually follows a list of the clans who received it; all of them, however, quote Fanggama (Feren Kamara?) as founder. The *kokolo* appears to have been an alliance sealed by a sacred oath to avoid warfare and to respect the traditions and customs of the original inhabitants, in particular their sacred sites of animist ancestor worship. It also established a fictitious kinship relation, that of mother's brother to sister's son, which the Mandinka drew upon when they colonized the Konyan and penetrated it as traders and warriors.

*

The preceding pages attempted to place the Mane invasion into the regional context of West African history and Mandinka migrations from the interior to the coast, migrations which were the result of economic as well as political changes. Instead of explaining a single historical event, we have tried to analyse the evidence which signals recurrence and continuity of Mandinka movements from Mali to the forest and coastal areas and back. This continuity rested mainly on the Kamara lineages who had originally colonized the Dioman and the Konyan. Perhaps the invasions were nothing but trade caravans accompanied by military escorts which had to overcome the opposition from local tribes. Arguments were also given to underpin Almada's statement that the Mane had been coming for centuries to the coast, a process which is still going on presently with Mandinka Dyula colonies established in Liberia and the Ivory Coast. The evidence for the Mandinka origin of the so-called Mane seems sufficiently convincing in itself, but even more in the context of events in the interior. A closer look at the source material has permitted to establish that the invasion of Sierra Leone reported in the Kquoja account was different from the Mane invasion and took place later, followed by further incursions at least until the early 17th century. There is no firm proof which would allow to link the Mane conquest of Sierra Leone with Liberia. While the references to the involvement of the Kamara are scattered, they fairly consistently point to Feren Kamara and Musadugu. It seems promising to follow Person and recover in the Konyan further oral traditions relating to migrations to the sea; there can be no question that it is useful, contrary to Hair's and Jones's view, to look for historical evidence on migrants in their area of origin, especially if it deals with regular forward and backward movements as is the case with trade. A look at a map may convince the reader that the shortest way from the upper Niger basin to the coast is over the watershed and down the major rivers, Sewa, Moa, Lofa, St. Paul. Thus, the movements described by Person become plausible: first from the upper Niger down the Sewa, and later from the

Niger into the Milo and Dion valley and from there down the Moa, Lofa and St. Paul rivers, movements which have been repeated in the 19th century by Mandinka from Musadugu and Sherbro.

It remains to summarize the chronology of events established above, taking simultaneously into account events at the coast and in the interior. Thus, we have the following tentative sequence which, of course, needs further corroboration by research into oral traditions and written sources alike. I suggest that in the future particular attention be given to what might be called 'micro-history', namely the traditions of lineages and clans such as the Kamara and others.

Chronology of Events

Sundiata	1225-1255
Conquest of Senegal by Tiramaghan	post 1250
First Vai arrival at the coast	ca. 1300
Fall of Tombouctou	1464
Fall of Djenné	1474
Settling of the Dioman	mid-15th century
Settling of the Hama	late 15th century
Loss of northern Mali to the Askia	1490-1530
Departure of the Mane from homeland	ca. 1495-1505
Portuguese embassy to Mali	1534
Destruction of Niani	1546
Foundation of Musadugu by Feren Kamara	mid-16th century
Mane at Sierra Leone	1545-1560
First Kamara movement	ca. 1550
Conquest of the Futa Toro	1559
Karou-Folgia conquest of Cape Mount (second Kamara movement?)	ca. 1560-1570
First Karou invasion of Sierra Leone	ca. 1580-1590
Second Karou invasion (campaign against Dogo Falma; reinstatement of Kandaqualle)	ca. 1600
Mimynique invasion of Cape Mount	ca. 1625-1630
Reopening of trade route to Musadugu	1808

APPENDIX

Identification of Kquoja Ethnonyms

An overview of the identification of the ethnonyms contained in the Kquoja account by various authors is given in Table II; we have attempted to locate these ethnic groups on Maps 3 and 4.

- [1] Bolm – most authors agree that this term refers to the Bulom.
- [2] Cilm – unanimous agreement also prevails here that this refers to the Krim.
- [3] Timna (or Timnassen) – ‘subjects of Kquoja’, can be identified as Temne.
- [4] Kquilliga – from the account, it is evident that the coast near river Gallinas or Moa (Makona) is referred to; Zwernemann (1966: 297) points out that in the 17th century the river was called Rio de Queline. Mota (1950: 213) and Hair (1964: 132 fn. 13) suggest a special Vai dialect, while Jones (1979: 3) believes it to be an extinct clan name with the prefix *hia-* or *killa-*, the *ll* being rolled as in Spanish *Sevilla*. It may have referred to one of the ancient Vai towns in Gbema district, namely Ngalinga, between the Moa and Kerefe rivers (Klingenheben 1926: 130).
- [5] Karro-doboe – stated to be thirty-two miles up the Gallinas river and politically under Kquoja. Dapper (1668: 476) says that they alone among all other tribes use canoes because their land is rich in lakes. Indeed, the Moa widens into a lake-like body of water some thirty miles from the coast; therefore, this could have been a Vai group close to the coast. Hair (1968: 64) has suggested Karo, i.e. Vai in the Mende language (see also Migeod 1908: 162; Koelle 1854).
- [6] Vey – unanimous agreement as to the Vai.
- [7] Puy – following Dutch spelling, they are pronounced [poy]. They lived along the east bank of the lower Mafah. They were a part of the Vai and became amalgamated with the Karou after the conquest of Cape Mount; Puy may have been an ancient clan, but all the clans who presently live there—Getawe, Sambola, Fahnbulle, Kiawu—are said to have arrived later from the interior or to be descendants of the De (Kiawu).
- [8] Kquoja – mostly mentioned as a ‘country’ (Kquoja-Berkoma), which began at the mouth of the rio Novo or Magwibba (Mano) river, and extended as far as the rio Paulo (St. Paul river). I concur with Hair (1968: 50 and fn. 25) that it corresponded to Koya (also Coya, Coia) and was derived from *koi-ya*, ‘place by the sea’. We remember that the place where the Mandinka first reached the sea was named Koi-Je (cf. *supra*: 36; Klingenheben 1926: 113 fn. 1).

If this is correct, the Vai language was found by Pereira (1956: 98) at the coast in 1508. The term Cobales (Coballes) found in the early Portuguese sources could then refer to Gawula, on the west bank of the Lofa, of which Mana Gobla or Gobla Gola appear to be variants (Fonteneau 1904: 344; Pereira 1956: 98; Westermann 1921: 1; Cessou 1911: 729). The statements about the language of Kquoja appear ambiguous: Dapper says, on the one hand, that the Vai and their language were almost extinct and that Kquoja was the present (another?) language, but on the other hand, the terms in the Kquoja account have been identified as Vai (Hair 1964). With all due respect to Hair’s work, I feel nevertheless that some terms in the account are pure Mandinka, e.g. the term for the stars of the Pleiades is *manja-ding*, or ‘children of the lord’ (from *mansa-dey*). The possibility that Kquoja may be derived from ‘Konyan’ should also be considered.

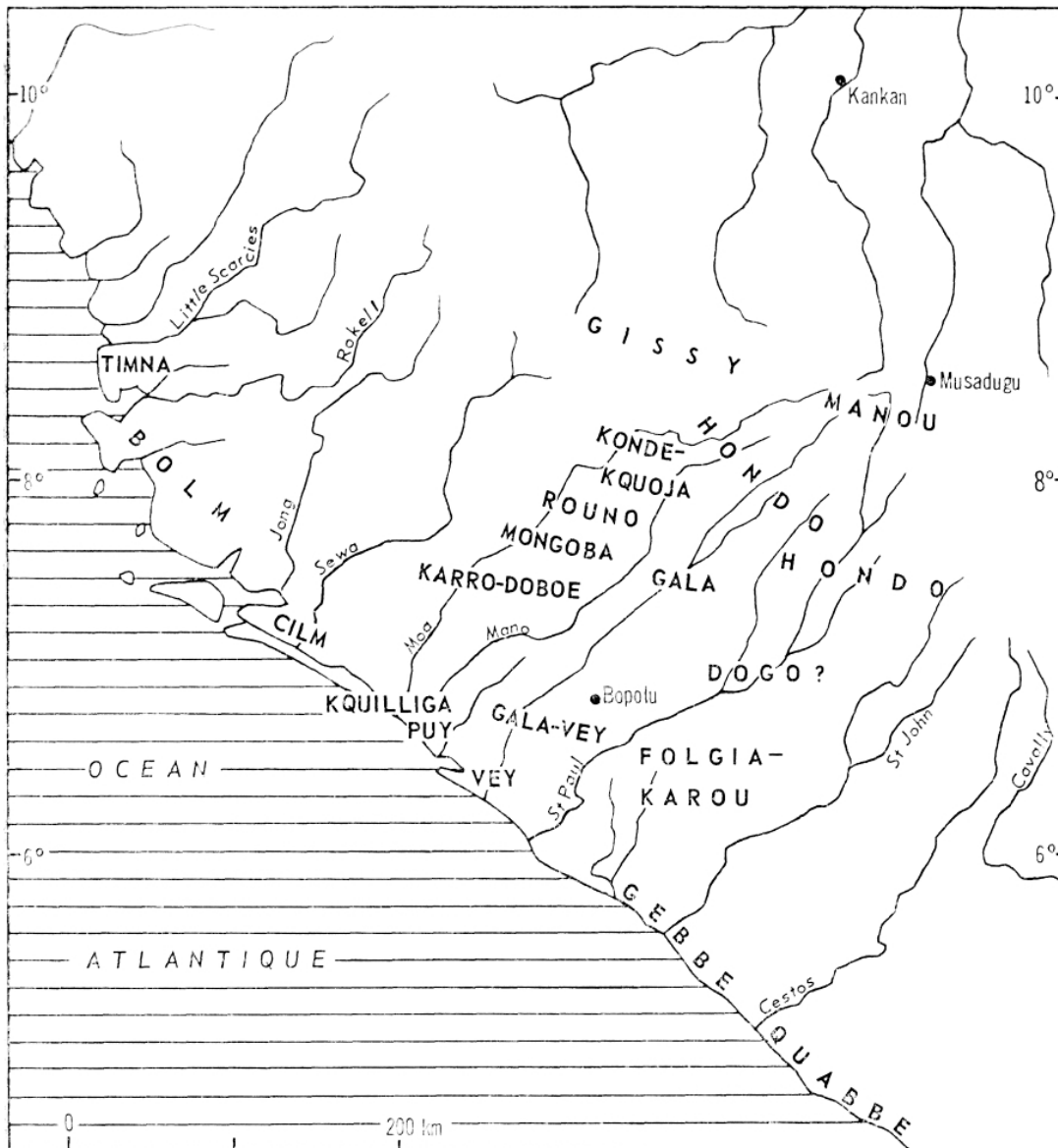
Dapper (Kquoja account)**	Massing	Zuernemann 1966	Holsoe 1967	Hair 1968	Rodney 1970	Person 1971	Jones 1979
[1] Bolm	Bulom	Bullom		Bullom		Bullom	Bom/Bulom
[2] Ciln	Krim	?	—	Krim		Krim	Krim
[3] Timna	Temne	—	—	—	—	—	—
[4] Kquilliga	Ngalinga?	Gallina	?	?	—	Gallinas	?
[5] Karro-doboe (Korre-deboe)		?	?	? Kwaa (Belle)	—	? Gaura-Mende	?
[6] Vey	Vai	Vai	Vai	Vai	—	Vai	Vai
[7] Puy	extinct	extinct	anc. Kiawu	—	—	De	—
[8] Kquoja	Coya/Konyan	?	Koya/Vai	Vai	Manes	?	—
[9] Dauwala	Gawula	—	—	—	—	Gawula	—
[10] Tomvey	Tombe	—	Tombe	—	—	Tomvey	—
[11] Gala	Gola	Gola	Gola	Gola	Kpelle/Toma	Gola	—
[12] Gala-Vey	Gola-Kone	Gola-Vai	Gola-Vai	—	—	?	?
[13] Hondo	Condo	?	anc. Mende	S.-W. Mande	—	Condo	?
[14] Dogo	Dago	—	Dodo (Mende)	Loko	—	? Loko	?
[15] Konde-Kquoja	Kono	—	anc. Kono	Kono	—	? Vai-Kone	?
[16] Manou (Manoe)	Mahana	?	?	—	? Mano	? Mana-Gola/ Mahana	—
[17] Mongoba	Nongoba	—	—	Nongoba	—	—	?
[18] Rouno	some Kisi clan	—	—	? Loma	—	—	—
[19] Gissy	Kisi	—	—	Kisi	—	—	?
[20] Gebbe	Gibi	Gibi-Basa	De	—	—	Givi-Basa	—
[21] Folgia	Kpelle/Mende	?	Kpelle	—	Mande group	Mande group	?
[22] Karou	? anc. Kiawu	?	Kru-speakers	indefinite	—	Queah	?
[23] Quaabe	Kwaa	—	—	—	—	Bassa	—
[24] Quea	(Kru groups) Kwea	—	—	—	—	—	—

* Here only the most recent article of each author is analysed on the assumption that this material supersedes that of earlier papers.

Key to this Table

- ? : name mentioned but no identification given.
 — : name not mentioned by author, no identification.
 ? : name : tentative identification.
 Anc. name : ancestors of the . . .

** In Dapper, most names contain the suffix *-monou*, which has been omitted here.



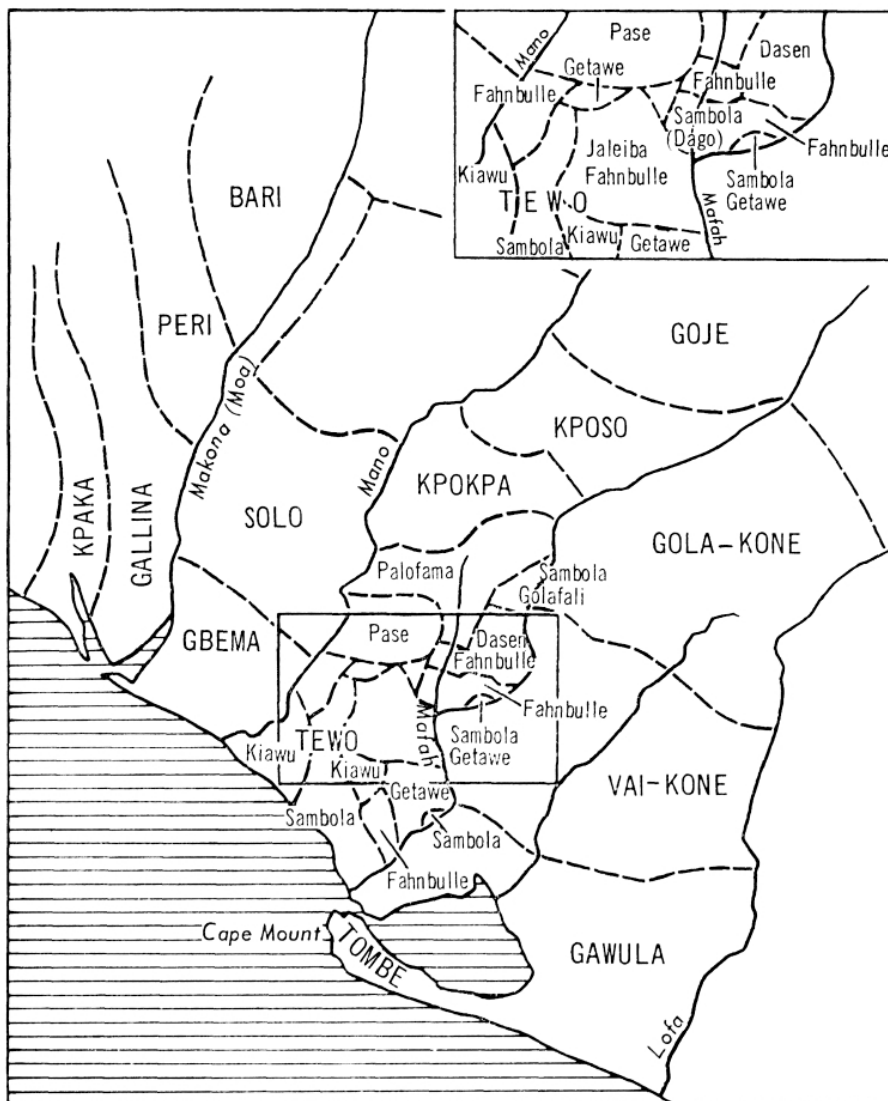
MAP 3. Ethnonyms on the Guinea coast, *ca.* 1650
(according to Dapper's Kquoja account).

[9] Dauwala – Gawula (see Map 4).

[10] Tomvey – Tombe (see Map 4).

[11] Gala – the Kquoja account (Dapper 1668: 416) uses two other forms, Goula and Goola, which should have provided sufficient clue to Rodney (1970: 50) to identify them as Gola rather than as a Kpelle or Toma group. The account locates the Gola on the borders of Hondo and Manoe (Manou), beyond a large forest, and states that they were subject to Manoe and had a Gallafally as leader (Dapper 1668: 386). The descendants of this latter perhaps migrated into the Vai area where they form the present Golafali clan (see Map 4).

[12] Gala-Vey – obviously a mixture of Gola and Vai; therefore, the identification of Holsoe and Zwernemann as Gola-Vai does not explain much. Since the Kquoja account says that they were Gola driven from their homes by wars



MAP 4. Vai and Gola chiefdoms, *ca.* 1975.

with the Hondo people and then settled among the Vai, I am tempted to take them for Gola-Kone, refugees of the Mandinka clan of Konde (Konte) or for ancestors of the Getawe or Dasen clans who live inland on the Mafah (see Map 4).

[13] Hondo – as it bordered on the Gola and the large forest to the north-east of the Gala-Vey (see Map 3), it corresponds to the present location of the Bandi, Belle and Bonde. The account confirms the wide distribution and diversity of the Hondooish people (Dapper 1668: 412), which makes me believe that they represented peoples of Southern Mande stock—Bandi, Mende, Kpelle, Loma—, as was the case with the 19th-century Condo Confederacy. This seems speculation, but the fact that the account asserts that Hondo was ruled by many and diverse princes makes me believe that a precursor of the Condo Confederacy was already in existence in the 17th century.

[14] Dogo – ‘a special region in Hondo’, according to the Kquoja account, from where frequent raids on the Cape Mount area originated. Dogo is an alternate name for the Sambola clan (see Map 4) on the upper Mafah, which may be

- a descendant of the Dogo. Hair (1968: 56) has suggested that Dogo is Loko, the far western member of the South-Western Mande language group.
- [15] Konde-Kquoja – ‘High Kquoja’ in the account; their language is said to be very close to Kquoja and their location is on the Gallinas river between the sea and the Gissy (Kisi), which makes me agree to the suggestion that they represented the Kono.
- [16] Manou or Manoe – the passage specifying their location (Dapper 1668: 386) seems incomplete since it specifies the location of the Folgia but not that of the Manoe, who were most likely further inland, perhaps on the upper St. John. The only group in this area are the Mano, but references to some Manoe kings in the account more likely point to a Mandinka origin, perhaps to the Mahana in the Konyan: ‘Manimassah, broeder van den overleden Mendymo, konig van Manoe’, or ‘daer is uit Gala gekomen Mimynique, zoon van den voorgenoemden Manimassah’ (*ibid.*: 420, 422). Every remark in the Kquoja account relating to them gives the impression that Manoe was the pivot of power for the entire region, and its location may well have been the area around Musadugu.
- [17] Mongoba – they are mentioned in a sequence of ethnic groups along the Gallinas river and, from that context, must be identical with the ancestors of the present Nongowa chiefdom on the middle Moa in Kenema district (Hair 1968: 70 fn. 79; Clarke 1966).
- [18] Rouno – mentioned in the same sequence as the Mongoba; on these and phonetic grounds, they appear to be some Kisi clan, perhaps Leno or Dembanduno, situated on the upper Makona.
- [19] Gissy – undoubtedly the Kisi.
- [20] Gebbe – east of St. Paul river, they must have been ancestors of the present Gibi-Basa.
- [21] Folgia – according to the account, originally located on the north-east Junk river, the Folgia are a crucial group as they pushed the Karou out of their old homelands on the Junk. Today, Kokoya chiefdom, composed of a mixed Basa and Kpelle population, is situated in precisely that area on the upper Junk or Farmington river. Originally, I assumed the Folgia to be the Fokole-Kpelle, but from the fact that the Kquoja account refers to their language as *mendi-ko* or *Mendische* rather than as Folgia language, and that among all the languages mentioned, only that of the Folgia received the eponym *mendi*, I think it possible that we have here the ancestors of the Mende.
- [22] Karou – I agree with Hair that the evidence for deciding whether this was a Kru- or Mande-speaking group is scant. Most of their toponyms and personal names have, like those of the Folgia, Kpelle suffixes, e.g. *-kwelle*, *-qualla*, *-kerry*, *-koli* (cf. present Kpelle toponyms like Totokole, Palakole, Saniquellie, or personal names like Bombo Kolli, Vafele Kolli, etc.). The food taboo of the Karou, fish with scales, also does not give at present any particular clue. The Kiawu, one of the Vai clans, could be possible descendants, particularly since they are said to have invaded the region from the east, the De area (Holsoe 1967: 85).
- [23] Quaabe – one or several groups living on the Cestos river, and therefore obviously a Kru group since here the cultural area of circumcision rites and Poro initiation ended; none of the present groups offers itself as a likely candidate, the term *-hwaa* only being used in connection with the Belle, Kru-speakers who live, however, in the center of western Liberia.
- [24] Quea – the Kwea, a Basa group (cf. the Ni-Kwea, in Büttikofer 1890).

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